PROTECTION OF AUTHOR’S COPYRIGHT

This copy has been supplied by the Library of the University of Otago on the understanding that the following conditions will be observed:

1. To comply with s56 of the Copyright Act 1994 [NZ], this thesis copy must only be used for the purposes of research or private study.

2. The author's permission must be obtained before any material in the thesis is reproduced, unless such reproduction falls within the fair dealing guidelines of the Copyright Act 1994. Due acknowledgement must be made to the author in any citation.

3. No further copies may be made without the permission of the Librarian of the University of Otago.

August 2010
Declaration concerning thesis

Author's name: Graeme Downes
Degree: Ph.D
Department: Music

I agree that this thesis may be consulted for research and study purposes and that reasonable quotation may be made from it, provided that proper acknowledgement of its use is made.

I consent to this thesis being copied in part or in whole for

   i) a library
   ii) an individual

at the discretion of the Librarian of the University of Otago.

Signature: Graeme Downes
Date: 18.4.94

Note: This is the standard Library Declaration Form used by the University of Otago for all theses. The conditions set out on the form may be altered only in the most exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the Senate.

The form is designed to protect the work of the candidate, by requiring proper acknowledgement of any quotation from it. At the same time, the declaration preserves the University's philosophy that the purpose of research is to seek the truth and to extend the frontiers of knowledge and that the results of such research which have been written up in thesis form should be made available to others for scrutiny.

The normal protection of copyright law applies to theses.

Graeme Alexander Downes

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

28.3.94
Abstract

This thesis sets out to investigate the tonal procedures of the symphonies of Gustav Mahler, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the role played by progressive tonality in his works. Chapters 1 to 4 outline the theoretical and historical background from which the discussion on Mahler can proceed. Chapters 5 to 14 deal specifically with Mahler's music.

Contained within the first Chapter is a review of the history of the term "progressive tonality"—covering its origins and the subsequent debate over its validity and the alternatives that its detractors have proposed to replace it. The second chapter outlines the basic principles upon which the tonal system is based. From these principles is derived an axial system of tonality based on the functional equivalence of major-third-related keys. The system itself puts the chromatic, late nineteenth-century tonal system on a functional footing and in so doing enables the analysis of chromatic tonal schemes with regards to how they effect or avoid tonicization of the principal tonic. This system provides the basis for all subsequent discussions in this thesis.

The third and fourth Chapters analyse works of various nineteenth-century composers including Schubert and Liszt, but with particular emphasis on works from Beethoven's late period and the larger instrumental works of Brahms. This provides an insight into the body of tonal and structural techniques from which Mahlerian progressive tonality evolved.

Chapter 5 discusses the tonal characteristics of Mahler's early works such as Das klagende Lied and his earliest attempts at progressive tonality in his early songs and Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen. Chapters 6 to 14 provides a detailed discussion of the tonal procedures in Mahler's Symphonies and Das Lied von der Erde. Using the principles of the axis system outlined in Chapter 2, these chapters illustrate the tonal and structural principles that enabled Mahler to effect tonal progression. They also summarize the relationship between Mahler's progressive and concentric works. In addition these chapters make an assessment of the degree to which the language of Mahler's tonal schemes reflects programmatic interpretations of his work, both from the composer himself and from secondary sources.
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge Professor H. J. Steele for his assistance in the preparation of this thesis. I dedicate this work to Jo for her patience and sacrifice over the years that this work has been in preparation.
## Contents

Abstract  
Acknowledgement  
Contents  
List of Examples  
Chapter 1 Pro and Contra Progressive Tonality  
  Part I: Progressive Tonality and its Alternatives  
  Part II: Towards a Firmer Definition of Progressive Tonality  
Chapter 2 The Major-Third Axial System: Theoretical Justification  
  Part I: Basic Principles  
  Part II: The Axis System  
Chapter 3 The Major-Third Axial System: Historical Precedents  
Chapter 4 Evolving Towards Progressive Tonality  
  Part I: The Problem of the Finale  
  Part II: Beethoven  
  Part III: Brahms  
MAHLER  
Chapter 5 Mahler's Early Experiments  
Chapter 6 Symphony No. I  
Chapter 7 Symphony No. 2  
Chapter 8 Symphony No. 3  
Chapter 9 Symphony No. 4  
Chapter 10 Symphony No. 5  
Chapter 11 Symphony No. 6  
Chapter 12 Symphonies No. 7, 10 and Das Lied von der Erde  
  Part I: Symphony No. 7  
  Part II: Das Lied von der Erde  
  Part III: Symphony No. 10  
Chapter 13 Symphony No 8  
  Part I: Thematic Duality versus Sonata Form  
  Part II: Thematic Articulation of Tonal Duality.  
  Part III: Part II—Schlusszene aus "Faust"  
Chapter 14 Symphony No. 9  
  Part I: First Movement.  
  Part II: Second and Third Movements.  
Conclusion  
Bibliography
List of Examples

Chapter 1
Example 1-1  Lewis's tertial system.

Chapter 2
Example 2-1  Major Third Axis System.
Example 2-2  Pre-sixteenth-century cadence forms.
Example 2-3  Dominant—tonic axis progressions.
Example 2-4  V—I, modal variants.
Example 2-5  Vβ—I, modal variants.
Example 2-6  Vα—I, modal variants.
Example 2-7  Subdominant—tonic axis progressions.
Example 2-8  IV—I, modal variants.
Example 2-9  IVβ—I, modal variants.
Example 2-10 IVα—I, modal variants.
Example 2-11 Supertonic—tonic axis progressions.
Example 2-12 II—I, modal variants.
Example 2-13 IIβ—I, modal variants.
Example 2-14 IIα—I, modal variants.
Example 2-15 Iα—I and Iβ—I, modal variants.

Chapter 3
Example 3-1  Schubert, Symphony No. 9 in C (D 944).
Example 3-2  Schubert, String Quintet in C (D 956).
Example 3-3  Schubert, String Quartet in G (D 887) (first movement).
Example 3-4  Schubert, Sonata in B flat major (D 960) (first movement).
Example 3-5  Brahms, Piano Concerto no. 1 in D minor Op. 15. (first movement).
Example 3-6  Brahms, Piano Concerto no. 2 in Bb major Op. 83. (first movement exposition).
Example 3-7  Brahms, Double Concerto Op. 102. (first movement exposition).
Example 3-8  Liszt, B minor Sonata bar 1—7.
Example 3-9  Liszt, B Minor Sonata.
Example 3-10 Liszt, Faust Symphony, 1—21, Schenkerian reduction.
Example 3-11 Liszt, Les Preludes bars 3-5 and 416.
Example 3-12 Liszt, Mazeppa.
Example 3-13 Schumann, Quartet No. 1 Opus 41 no.1 in A minor.
Example 3-14 Schumann, Quartet Opus 41 no.1, ii, 41-45.

Chapter 4
Example 4-1  Beethoven, C sharp Minor Quartet Op 131, first movement.
Example 4-2  " － － － " second movement.
Example 4-3 """" third and fourth movements.
Example 4-4 """" seventh movement.
Example 4-5 """" Tonal progression.
Example 4-6 Beethoven, Sonata Opus 106, Hammerklavier.
Example 4-7 """" first movement subdominant voice-leading.
Example 4-8 """" second movement bar 160—72.
Example 4-9 """" Schenkerian graph, Largo introduction.
Example 4-10 Beethoven, Cello Sonata in C major Op. 102 no. 1
Example 4-11 """" 142-3 and 152-3.
Example 4-12 Brahms, Piano Sonata Opus 1.
Example 4-13 Brahms, Trio Opus 8 (fourth movement principal theme).
Example 4-14 Brahms, Piano Trio Op. 8.
Example 4-15 """" tonal contour.
Example 4-16 Brahms, Piano Quintet Op. 34.
Example 4-17 """" first movement principal theme.
Example 4-18 """" (second and third movements).
Example 4-19 """" (fourth movement).
Example 4-20 Brahms, *Ein deutsches Requiem*.
Example 4-21 Brahms, Symphony no. 2.
Example 4-22 Brahms, Symphony No 3 Op. 90 (first movement).
Example 4-23 """" first movement 116—120.
Example 4-24 """" (fourth movement).

Chapter 5

Example 5-1 *Das klagende Lied*—"Der Spielmann".
Example 5-2 *Errinerung* bars 30—33.
Example 5-3 *Lieder eines fahreden Gesellen*—tonal scheme.

Chapter 6

Example 6-1, Symphony No 1 (first movement).
Example 6-2, I-i, 206-7.
Example 6-3, Symphony No. 1 (second movement).
Example 6-4, Symphony No. 1 (third movement).
Example 6-5, Symphony No. 1 (fourth movement).
Example 6-6, Principal themes movements 1, 2 and 3.
Example 6-8, I-i, 12—15 and I-iv, 433—436.

Chapter 7

Example 7-1 Symphony No. 2 (first movement).
Example 7-2 Middleground Schenkerian diagram from Fig. 2-4.
Example 7-3 Middleground Schenker diagram of the development section.
Example 7-4 Symphony No. 2 (second movement).
Example 7-5 Symphony No. 2 (third movement).
Example 7-6 II-iii, Fig. 40-41 and II-i, Fig. 3 and 23.
Example 7-7 II-iii 501-512.
| Chapter 7 | Example 7-8 | Symphony No. 2 | Tonal structure movements 1—3. |
| Chapter 7 | Example 7-9 | Symphony No. 2 | (fourth movement, "Urlicht"). |
| Chapter 7 | Example 7-10 | Symphony No. 2 | (fifth movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-1 | Symphony No. 3 | (first movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-2 | III-i | 1—4. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-3 | III-i | 273-6. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-4 | III-i | 724—33 and III-vi-210. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-5 | Symphony No. 3 | (second movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-6 | Symphony No. 3 | (third movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-7 | III-i | 11—14 and III-iii, 576—579. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-8 | Symphony No. 3 | (fourth movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-9 | III-iv | 115—119 and III-iii 547—557. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-10 | Symphony No. 3 | (fifth movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-11 | III-i,1—4 and Fig. 28 and III-vi 1—4. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-12 | III-vi, Fig. 25—6. |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-13 | Symphony No. 3 | (sixth movement). |
| Chapter 8 | Example 8-14 | Symphony No. 3, tonal overview. |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-1 | Symphony No. 4 | (first movement). |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-2 | IV-i, development section. |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-3 | IV-ii, 5—8. |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-4 | Symphony No. 4 | (second movement). |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-5 | Symphony No. 4 | (third movement). |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-6 | IV-iii, 320—3 and IV-i, 126—131 and 212—15. |
| Chapter 9 | Example 9-7 | Symphony No. 4 | (fourth movement). |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-1 | Symphony No. 5 | (first movement). |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-2 | V-i, 120-128 compared with 35-42. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-3 | V-i, 154—6 and V-ii, 18—20 and 464. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-4 | Symphony No. 5 | (second movement). |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-5 | Beta axis relationships. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-6 | V-i, 238—45 compared with V-ii, 288—94. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-7 | Chronology of first-movement reminiscences. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-8 | Symphony No 5, Part 1. Tonal outline. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-9 | Symphony No. 5 | (third movement). |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-10 | Symphony No. 5 | (fourth movement). |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-11 | V-iv, 46-7 and V-ii, 463-4. |
| Chapter 10 | Example 10-12 | Symphony No. 5 | (fifth movement). |
| Chapter 11 | Example 11-1 | Symphony No. 6 | (first movement). |
Example 11-3 Related themes VI-iv, 328—31, 469—77 and 765—72.
Example 11-4 VI-i, 2—7 and VI-ii, 2—6.
Example 11-5 Symphony No. 6 (second movement).
Example 11-6 Symphony No. 6 (third movement).
Example 11-7 Tonicization processes, VI-iii and VI-iv.
Example 11-8 Symphony No. 6 (fourth movement).

Chapter 12
Example 12-1 Symphony No. 7 (first movement).
Example 12-2 VII-i 19—27.
Example 12-3 VII-i, 27-28 and 50-51.
Example 12-4 VII-i. Corresponding tonal sequences.
Example 12-5 Symphony No. 7 (second movement).
Example 12-6 Symphony No. 7 (fifth movement).
Example 12-7 VII-v, 1—7.
Example 12-8 Trinklied I, 5—9 and Der Abschied 568—72.
Example 12-9 "Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde".
Example 12-10 "Der Abschied".
Example 12-11 Symphony No 10 (first movement).
Example 12-13 Symphony No. 10 (fourth movement).
Example 12-14 Symphony No. 10 (fifth movement).

Chapter 13
Example 13-1 Symphony No. 8, Part I, Veni Creator Spiritus.
Example 13-2 Veni I theme VIII-i 2—5.
Example 13-3 Veni Ia.
Example 13-4 Veni Ia themes, bars 135—41.
Example 13-5 Infirma I theme.
Example 13-6 Cycle of Dominants, Figure 30—38.
Example 13-7 "Firmans virtute" and "Infirma" themes.
Example 13-8 VIII-i, 254—61.
Example 13-9 "Veni" and "Accende" themes.
Example 13-10 Tonal Outline of Part II.
Example 13-11 II-v and VIII-ii—tonal progressions towards E flat major.

Chapter 14
Example 14-1 IX-i, 3—6.
Example 14-2 IX-i, 27—32.
Example 14-3 Thematic relationships between IX,i and I,iv.
Example 14-4 Symphony No. 9 (first movement).
Example 14-5 IX-i, 29—30 and 81—2.
Example 14-6 IX-i, 356—63.
Example 14-7 IX-i, 390-1 IX-iv, 11-14.
Example 14-8 Symphony No. 9 (second movement).
Example 14-9 IX-ii, principal theme bar 1—7 and 369—75.
Example 14-10  IX-ii  261—4 and IX-iv, 3—4.
Example 14-11  IX-iii, 109—11.
Example 14-12  Symphony No. 9 (third movement).
Example 14-13  IX-iii, 311—19.
Example 14-14  Symphony No. 9 (fourth movement).
Example 14-16  IX-iv, 70—4.
Example 14-17  IX-iv, 88—92.
Example 14-18  IX-i  408—13 and IX-iv, 114—19.
Example 14-19  IX-i, 307–8 and IX-iv, 117.
Example 14-20  IX-i, 314—16 and IX-iv, 122—5.
Example 14-21  XI,iv 130-1.
Example 14-23  IX-iv 142—3.
Chapter 1
Part I: Pro and Contra Progressive Tonality

In musicology, as in any field of knowledge, the act of categorization is usually preceded by two basic steps. One must first collect the evidence, then isolate specific trends or recurrences of particular phenomena before these related events can be collected under the name of some species, school, style or technique. Any categorization has to carry with it the weight of such investigation in order that the categorizing term can convincingly encompass all its constituent members. Unfortunately, the physiology of Mahler's tonal procedures was not adequately scrutinized before the term "progressive tonality" was arrived at; the outer appearance only was considered. This, by and large, is how the term has stood since it was invented, and, understandably, the lack of thorough investigation at its foundation has led to a great deal of debate as to its validity. But of the various alternative terms that have subsequently been offered, most have failed to provide more than a different appraisal of the end result with little effort to fill the prerequisite steps.

The purpose of this study is not to clutter the musical dictionary with more terminology that can only hope to "describe" the end result a little better, but rather to start afresh, to collect the evidence and isolate specific trends and recurrent procedures so that the term progressive tonality (which is already familiar and therefore unlikely to be ousted from the musical dictionary anyway), can be used with greater assurance. This initial chapter will cover the use of the term since its inception and the attempts made so far towards completing a fuller understanding of its workings.

The term first came into existence from the pen of Dika Newlin in her book *Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg*, where, with reference to Mahler's *Lieder eines jahrenden Gesellen* she writes:

> This principle of progressive, rather than concentric, tonality is not only adhered to in each of the songs of this cycle, but also subsequently becomes an important constructive element in the symphonies.\(^1\)

A simple observation that some of Mahler's works end in a key other than that with which they began does little to identify the composer's rationale for deviating from the norm. Newlin's book leaves too much to the discretion of the reader, and in the end it asks more questions than it answers. Christopher Orlo Lewis objects that the term implies the existence of two separate tonal languages as opposed to a specialised handling of traditional "concentric" tonality,\(^2\) an implication that sits uncomfortably with the consistency of Mahler's style accompanied by his willingness to use both systems. What factors

---

\(^1\)Dika Newlin, *Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg* (New York, 1947), 129.

\(^2\)Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, (Studies in Musicology, 79), (Ann Arbor, 1984), 2.
led Mahler and Nielsen, independently and with little or no precedent in their chosen genre of symphony, to the rejection of concentric tonality? Certainly my musical dictionary is quick to cite these two composers as the foremost exponents of the practice, and it is surely surprising that such a remarkable coincidence has not sparked greater curiosity as to what caused progressive tonality to emerge precisely at this point in history.

Other writers seem to want to credit Robert Simpson with identifying the "principle". Although Simpson himself denies parenthood, he uses the term when discussing Mahler. He prefers, in his own book on Nielsen, to use the term "emergent tonality", and in respect of the Fourth Symphony he notes that the work "... evolves the key of E major out of apparent chaos." Still it would seem that no great animosity exists between Simpson and Newlin regarding their preferred terminology. "Progressive" literally implies that one tonality is established only to pass on to another, as opposed to none being established but one eventually "emerging" from a set of half-realized options. The two writers are in agreement at least on the idea that there is in operation some principle of tonal organization that differs from the common practice of the nineteenth century. Simpson makes some advances on Newlin's term inasmuch as he delves into some of the important characteristics of Nielsen's progressive tonal works, but a fuller appraisal of his interpretations would be out of place here.

In contrast to Simpson, Hans Tischler sought to disprove the validity of the term "progressive" as a qualifier of tonality, justifying his disclaimer by contending that the responsibility for such deviant tonal construction lies in the subjective whim of the composer.

The term "progressive tonality"... is rather misleading since this trait is not the product of purely musical considerations. It is herewith proposed to call this procedure "dramatic key symbolism". Elsewhere Tischler interprets specific tonal centres and the emotional realms they symbolize, such as "C-sharp minor (expressing mourning and pain)-A minor (signifying tragic fighting and wounds)...", (Fifth symphony).

Such a position could only be defensible if the genre of symphony was

---

considered an extension of music drama and perhaps Tischler, like Eric Sam­
son, had the works of Wagner in mind while formulating his opinions.\textsuperscript{10} But
even on a simplistic level it is difficult to uphold the position that Mahler's
symphonic processes are in any way comparable to opera. In Wagner's op­
eras an association can be established between a tonality (B minor for exam­
ple) and some combination of word, plot or character (the Valkyries). Once
the association has been forged, the tonal symbolism is usually reaffirmed
(\textit{Die Walküre} Act III—\textit{Götterdämmerung} Act I). This is not feasible in the
case of a Mahler work like the Fifth Symphony where words and actions do
not intrude, nor any written programme provided. This rules out the possibili­
ty of a universally perceived symbolism as we have in the Wagner example
cited above.

If we assume that Tischler's dramatic key symbolism is correct we are no
better off. The audience would still have to share Mahler's own subjective
associations in order to comprehend the music; a coincidence highly unlikely
in one individual, let alone many. Tovey is at his most humorous when ex­
posing the folly of expecting universal acceptance of subjective interpretations
even when they come from the composer himself.

Beethoven, for instance, when setting Scottish melodies, wrote to his Edin­
burgh publisher, Thomson, that the key of A flat did not fit a certain tune
that was sent him, inasmuch as that tune was marked \textit{amoroso}, whereas the
key of A flat should be called \textit{barbaresco}. Again, in one of his sketch-books,
we have B minor referred to as 'black'. \ldots To me, the character of A flat is
the character of most of the movements Beethoven wrote in that key. B mi­
nor I feel to be a not very dark brown, partly because of its relation to D mi­
nor, which I happen to think of as bright red, for reasons as inscrutable as
those of the blind man who, on acquiring his sight through an operation,
described scarlet as like the sound of a trumpet. But I also happen to feel that
Friday is remarkably like the colour of A minor. This may perhaps be be­
because I think of A minor as a fish-like white; but I have not the slightest
idea why both Tuesday and E major should seem to me grass-green.\textsuperscript{11}

The only remaining alternative is to resign ourselves to the fact that Mahler's
music was never meant to be comprehended by anyone except Mahler. Fol­
lowing "dramatic key-symbolism" to its logical conclusion becomes ludicrous
and so some other explanation must be sought.

To be entirely fair to Tischler it does seem probable that certain keys held
distinctive associations for Mahler; it is a question of how far this should be
taken. For example, there are many similarities between Symphonies 2 and 8,
in terms of the choral forces employed and an obvious similarity between the

\textsuperscript{10}Jim Samson, \textit{Music in Transition: A Study of Tonal Expansion and Atonality 1900—

\textsuperscript{11}D. F. Tovey, \textit{Beethoven}, (London, 1944), 8.
redemption of Faust and the redemption of all mankind. With the key of E flat featuring so prominently in both works it would follow that the subject of redemption was inextricably bound to that key. The same could be said of A minor after comparing the conclusions of Das klagende Lied, Errinnerung, the Sixth Symphony finale, and the first "Trinklied" in Das Lied von der Erde. Each exhibits a bleak outlook that could be considered synonymous with that key. But, if Tischler were correct, someone coming straight from a performance of the Prelude to Tristan would doubtless be mystified to hear A minor expressing tragic hopelessness rather than romantic longing. If Das Lied or any of the aforementioned A minor works were to be pitched a semitone lower it would not seriously alter our appreciation of them or devalue their symbolic currency by placing them outside the related family of works in that key. The essence of a Mahler symphony lies in the relationship between its various keys and not the keys themselves. If this line of argument fails to convince then we need only isolate other prominent keys in Mahler's music, such as D major. This key supports an array of expressive content in Symphonies 3-iv, 5-v, 7-iii, and 9-i.

Although Tischler's gesture of defiance against the concept of progressive tonality proves flimsy, it is of interest because of the unspoken premise upon which it is based. By suggesting that the keys themselves are responsible for expressive effect, Tischler more or less advocates the autonomy of all tonal centres. This brings us to the theories of Graham George where tonal autonomy is also an underlying axiom, despite the fact that our notion of tonality, paradoxically, depends upon the existence of a fixed point of reference, or tonal relativity. George seeks to do away with the idea of a separate "species" of tonality and instead explains such phenomena as resulting from two or more "interlocking" structures of the usual closed or cor.centric variety. This enables him to maintain that the eventual tonal goal is both prepared by and achieves closure with an earlier occurrence of that tonality. So, with regard to Mahler's Second Symphony, he claims that the occurrences of E flat in the first movement justify the conclusion of the entire work in that key above and beyond the claims of any of the other important tonal centres such as E, A flat, F, D flat and of course the original tonic C minor. He concludes that the Seventh Symphony is either a C major work preceded by an E/B interlocking structure or, if the C major occurrence in the first movement is considered as structural rather than decorative, an E/C interlocking structure overall. Accordingly, neither of these works, nor any of Mahler's others, establishes a case for the existence of progressive tonality. George however ignores the Ninth Symphony, a work which would have undoubtedly proven

problematic. D flat plays no part in the work at all until the finale itself.

George's views raise a number of problems, mainly because they endanger the very coherence of the terms of reference with which we discuss tonality. If the tonic is able to relinquish its position to another key not heard for the best part of 30—40 minutes, as is the case with the Mahler Second Symphony, then we are faced with a contradiction of terms. The prerequisite steps towards the establishment of a tonic, to the point where it can unequivocally be classified as one, does, in the process, rule out the option of vacating that position. If this was not the case then so many tonal compositions would not be obliged to conclude in the key in which they began. The same applies for the concluding tonality. In the same way that a chord has to do more than just "occur" to be considered tonic, so, at the deeper structural levels, must a tonal centre. Such stock articles of our vocabulary with which we discuss tonality are otherwise rendered meaningless.

George's theories, like Tischler's, tacitly invoke tonal autonomy, but simultaneously reaffirm tonal relativity, because relativity is inherent in the language they use to explain their concepts. The two positions are of course mutually exclusive, in that E flat for example, cannot be both tonic and relative major of C minor at the same time. The paradox is clearly illustrated when George turns his attention to Nielsen; where, on the subject of the Second Symphony, he triumphantly concludes:

... we still have, incontrovertibly, a structure consisting of B minor and G interlocking, followed by a self contained tonality of Eb (another major 3rd below the previous tonality, as G had been below B), followed by the relative major of B minor to its dominant: a far cry, surely, from the faceless generalisation of 'progressive tonality'.

His declaration that the work ends in the "dominant" of the "relative major" depends on the existence of tonal relativity, with B minor being the point of reference. But his position contradicts both the work of Nielsen and that of Mahler; which is to say we do not perceive these works as ending on a structural dissonance, but rather in the tonic. For this to be possible some change in status has occurred during the work so that, in the case of the Nielsen Second, our perception of A major has shifted from being the dominant of the relative major to being tonic. It is the nature of this process that is surely the crux of the matter, one which both George and Tischler ignored. Clearly if no change in status has occurred then such grand gestures as we find at the end of Nielsen's 2nd, 4th and 5th Symphonies would be mere hollow bombast. Such tonal justification is essential to the integrity of Mahler's concluding passages also. George, in his efforts to construct a rival theory, has lost touch with the reality of the music.

We must concede at this point that tonal autonomy is a valid proposition with respect to certain types of composition. George's analysis of baroque

---

operas and oratorios, where each song or number is a separate, tonally closed unit, may well merit further investigation. Tonicity (the status of being tonic) can be bestowed on a key through structural or dramatic emphasis (being heard first for example). But tonal relativity can easily be obscured in such circumstances, because each individual number (being tonally closed) can temporarily claim as much right to tonicity as any other. This means that tonicity can more easily be transferred than in a continuous movement. Samson is aware of this point also and on the basis of it sets Tristan apart as a watershed work because "... its 'progressive' tonal scheme—A minor/B major—is required to support a discourse of symphonic continuity."16

To take a Schenkerian position there is, in any tonal composition, no such thing as tonal autonomy, since at the deepest structural level a tonal composition presents a horizontal projection of the tonic triad.17 As we have already seen, the vocabulary of traditional analysis tends to agree with this position—dominants and subdominants being inherently relative terms. Without tonal relativity the whole fabric of "tonality" as a perceived system disintegrates; the dominant would cease to be a structural dissonance and become just another key. A classical symphony would no longer be compelled to end in the key in which it began. Tonality as a language, which allows us to speak of dark or bright, close or remote keys, is no longer possible as each new tonality would assume tonic status. As it seems impossible to jettison the principle of tonal relativity altogether then we must explain Mahler's tonal processes on the basis of its existence.

The arguments against "progressive tonality" have primarily sought to oust "progressive" from the musicological vocabulary and, while failing to offer any acceptable alternative, have in the course of their efforts fallen foul of the basic concepts of "tonality". Despite these challenges the term is firmly ensconced in the literature on Mahler and Nielsen. Rather than replace it, most popular Mahler authors have opted to accept it. As we saw earlier, Simpson more or less embraced the term, modifying it to his personal taste (and to the work of Nielsen rather than Mahler) but without greatly expanding its scope. This remains the case with many other writers despite the obvious disquiet its vagueness instills.

The obvious shortcomings of the term are readily apparent when we encounter Barford's compulsion to bolster it when discussing the Mahler's Fifth Symphony.

An overall feeling of tension in the Symphony arises from its progressive tonality. It begins in C sharp minor, and ends in D major; but it gets there via A minor (second movement) and F major (adagio), the scherzo being also...
in D. If these centres are synthesised in a chord, they produce a full major seventh with D as root. This is not to say that the Symphony grows out of this chord; but it is a striking symbol of the tension implicit in the whole scheme.\textsuperscript{18}

Barford comes close to admitting the futility of his own argument, reducing it to an analogy before it looks foolish. It is a striking example of the pall of inadequacy that surrounds the term and the onus felt by its adherents to dispel it.

Deryck Cooke likewise embraced the term;

Another powerful expressive element in Mahler's music is his use of 'progressive tonality'—the procedure of resolving a symphonic conflict in a different key from that in which it was stated.\textsuperscript{19}

Tonality as an expressive force in Mahler will become more apparent as this thesis progresses. But we risk giving Cooke's observation more credit than it warrants, since it reverts to the position that expects the symphonic conflict to be stated in the surface levels only rather than be a latent force in the background tonal scheme of the work.

Popular literature on Mahler by Blaukopf,\textsuperscript{20} Kennedy,\textsuperscript{21} and Gartenberg,\textsuperscript{22} get around the problem by neglecting to mention it, a failure caused more by the difficulties posed by the subject rather than by the scope of their respective books. It is after all an attribute that sets Mahler's music apart from that of his predecessors and should therefore rate a mention, no matter how fleeting. Mitchell uses it with such confidence as to suggest that all argument on the matter has long since ceased. His use of it corresponds to that set out by Cooke; that it is an expressive element used to help express a radical change in mood or perspective.\textsuperscript{23}

Part II: Towards a Firmer Definition of Progressive Tonality

The examples, pro and contra, examined thus far have done little to raise progressive tonality from its state of limbo. The detractors have failed to propose a viable alternative, the adherents have done little to advance our understanding of its workings. In order to find a sound basis for further investigation we turn to Schoenberg, for whom it is a fairly straightforward affair; a standard composition practice of the time, and although he does not invent a term of his own, his description of the practice can easily serve as a definition of the terminology of others.

\textsuperscript{21}Michael Kennedy, \textit{Mahler}, (London, 1974).
\textsuperscript{23}Donald Mitchell, \textit{Gustav Mahler: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death}, (London, 1985), 76.
From the outset the tonic does not appear unequivocally, it is not definitive; rather, it admits the rivalry of other tonics alongside it. The tonality is kept, so to speak, suspended, and the victory can then go to one of the rivals, though not necessarily.\textsuperscript{24}

This is the most informative description we have received so far and is surely an advance on both Newlin's undefined term and the alternative theories of Tischler and George. It intimates that such a background compositional aim is precisely the opposite of the classical norm: that is, the success of a progressive tonal scheme hinges not on the establishment of the tonic but on the inability or refusal to do so.

Lewis and Bailey, advancing on Schoenberg's description, arrive at the position of advocating the principle of the "double-tonic complex" in post-Wagnerian tonal structures. This is a situation where two tonalities are "co-existent" rather than set up in opposition as is the case with common-practice tonality.\textsuperscript{25} V. Kofi Agawu hints at a similar idea when referring to a "solar" third-related system, as opposed to the classical "polar" tonal system based on tonic-dominant opposition.\textsuperscript{26} This state of co-existing tonics takes as its basis the closeness of third-related keys or the existence of what is called a "double-tonic sonority" (a term this thesis will continue to employ). The favoured example of this is the minor triad with an added seventh, a-c-e-g in \textit{Das Lied von der Erde}; a sonority that contains both the principal tonal centres of that work, A minor and C major.

Other writers seem to tunnel from different sides of the same mountain. Similar views are held, independently it would seem, by Joseph Straus with regard to Stravinsky. He writes:

\ldots I have identified a significant body of works by Stravinsky which are organized upon what I will call a tonal axis. A tonal axis is a nucleus of pitches with three defining characteristics:

1. It must consist of overlapping major and minor triads (for example, EGBD, E\textsuperscript{b}GB\textsuperscript{b}D, and so forth). In other words, it must have the appearance of a minor or a major seventh chord.

2. It must function in the piece as a referential sonority. It must occur prominently as a discrete harmony within the piece, particularly in cadential situations. It must be the essential harmonic generator of the piece; other harmonies derive from it and relate to it.

3. It must embody a conflict or polarity between its two constituent triads. All


\textsuperscript{25}Christopher Orlo Lewis, \textit{Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony}.

\textsuperscript{26}V. Kofi Agawu, "Mahler's Tenth Symphony," \textit{Nineteenth Century Music}, 9 (1986), 225.
axes have the appearance of seventh chords, but not all seventh chords function as tonal axes. Each of the overlapping triads which constitute the axis must be shown to have a palpable identity and centricity of its own.27

The remarkable thing is that Straus could just as easily be discussing Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* as Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* or *Symphony in C* and clearly these works share common principles of construction. The *Symphony of Psalms* opens with a double tonic complex whereby E and G are specified as the tonal combatants because of the peculiar spacing of the opening E minor chord, which outlines an enclosed octave G within the E minor context. The *Symphony in C* invokes a C—E double tonic complex based on the sonority c-e-g-b. Despite the obvious stylistic differences between Stravinsky and Mahler, it is clear that both composers exploited the potential of using a four-note referential sonority to promote the possibility of more than one tonic.

Although there is basis for further investigation here, we still run up against the same fault that Lewis perceived in Newlin's term: the implication that Mahler moved at random from one tonal language (concentric) to another (progressive). The tertial complex theories of Lewis and Bailey continue to imply the use of two tonal systems. Mahler's works would seem to vacillate between the traditional dominant-tonic system and a contemporary third-related one.

... structures predicated upon the double-tonic complex depend upon a Schenkerian structural dominant frequently at the foreground, occasionally at the middleground, and only rarely—in the classical sense—at the background.28

The implication of a heterogeneous system is at odds with the stylistically homogeneous outcome we perceive. In a work like the Fourth Symphony, the third-related background structure of the entire work (G—E), would be at odds with the traditional handling of elements of sonata form in the first movement. Lewis cites the Second Symphony as a work where Mahler prepares the pairing of third-related keys (C and E-flat) in the first movement, but Lewis does not explain how this process can co-exist with the traditional elements of sonata thinking, including the use of a structural dominant and its subsequent resolution. Added to this is Mahler's preparation of the final tonality (E-flat) with its dominant (B-flat minor), and the use of several perfect cadences to reinforce its primacy. The apparent paradox of a composer employing a late romantic tonal system for the bulk of his symphony only to take refuge in a grand archaic gesture at the last in order to finish with a bang is as disquieting as any of the other paradoxes noted earlier in the chapter.

One duly notes Lewis's emphasis on the preference for third-related keys

---

but I would hasten to add that few conclusions have been drawn as to what effect they have, or more simply, to uncover a composer’s motivation for their use. Lewis can only justify them on the strength of the potential of the late romantic tonal system but does not succeed in reconciling them with the latent tonic-dominant mainstay which reappears at crucial structural points. He also fails to draw any distinction between major and minor third key relations, but considers all four third relations as "equally closely related" to the tonic key. Thus, Lewis is able to render diagrammatically the romantic tonal system in the following manner:

Example 1-1 Lewis's tertial system.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
G^b & G & G^# \\
E^b & E & C \\
A^b & A & F^b & F & F^# \\
\end{array}
\]

Each third relative of the tonic has in turn a "secondary" complex of third related keys. As a result of this system, Lewis pronounces the destruction of close and distant relationships of classical tonality; "the key a tritone removed is as close a relative as the dominant—both are distant by two thirds." One must concede that in a late-romantic, post-Wagnerian tonal system it is as easy for a composer like Strauss to use tritone modulation, as he does in the opening paragraph of *Don Quixote*, as the more common dominant. It would surely be possible to find it in Wagner (see the modulations between E flat and A major in Siegfried's Rhine journey in *Gotterdammerung*). But it does not necessarily follow that all tonal centres become "equal" on the basis of availability. If this were the case we would expect to find as many tritone modulations as dominant ones and the key a tritone removed used as a secondary tonal area in a sonata form as often as any other; but this is not the case. Nor is the idea that each of the four third-related keys are equal; they all stand in different relation to the tonic and must therefore create a different impression than one of its neighbours. The problem with Lewis's argument of equal availability is the implication of an attending expressive and even structural equivalence.

It is also apparent that Lewis has difficulties divining the true functions of form in Mahler. This stems from desire to separate form from the tonality that articulates it, as when he discusses the first movement of the Ninth:

\[ \ldots \text{[the first movement] differs from the common-practice sonata form. That earlier model is a structure dependent upon the polarization of two key areas articulated in such a way that a large-scale structural dissonance occurs. In} \]

29Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, 7.
31Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, 8.
classical sonata movements, the prolonged dominant which is the goal of the
Development—and which is most often the key of the Second Tonal Area—is
essential in two respects: it prolongs the tonic in creating the Schenkerian
"fundamental structure," and it supports the "dissonant" second section which
needs to be resolved as a whole. Post-Wagnerian tonal language, however, is
not necessarily predicated upon the Schenkerian Ursatz, and therefore allows
the tonal goal of the development to be other than the dominant. If the sonata
design is to remain coherent, then the musical structure must be predicated
upon some tonal design which will allow for the sense of conflict and resolu­
tion essential to the dramatic idea of the sonata.32

On the one hand Lewis tries to establish the case for double-tonic complexes
and here tries to place upon third-related sonata structures the responsibility of
maintaining the conditions of conflict inherent in traditional sonata handling; a
task contrary to the non-conflicting qualities that governed their formation.

Returning to the Schoenberg quotation that preceded this section, we have
ascertained that the primary compositional tactic is the refusal to establish the
tonic. This is something that traditional sonata is incapable of achieving. The
resolution of the polar dominant has the effect of establishing the home key,
recurring Schenker's axiomatic triangle, I—V—I, the harmonic imperative for
the successful horizontal projection of the tonic triad at any structural level.33
If Schoenberg's line of reasoning means the abandonment of the sonata as a
referential structural norm then so be it. If we take a strict Schenkerian view,
that only the "prolongation of a division (interruption) gives rise to sonata
form", then we are compelled to abandon it.34 This is not a favoured option,
as certain elements of traditional sonata thinking remain, but to be true to the
actuality of the music the writer must claim either a degree of freedom from
preconceived formal definitions, or conversely undertake a thorough reexamination of the principles of sonata form in order to arrive at a more
accommodating model.

The aspect that each of the above theorists holds in common is that, to a
greater or lesser degree, each of them has sought to qualify our notion of to­
nality, whether it be by postulating "progressive", "emergent" or "interlock­
ing" tonality, or even by Tischler's "dramatic key symbolism". The overriding
impression is that the notion of "tonality" is inviolable and tacitly agreed upon.
It is surely the case that among the main combatants in this argument there is
none that has seriously scrutinized what they actually mean by "tonality".

The problem of defining tonality lies in its ever-changing outward appear­
ance from one generation or style to the next. Errors that arise in discussing
tonality in a given era usually derive from importing the frames of reference

32Christopher Orlo Lewis, Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony, 13-14.
33Heinrich Schenker, Free Composition,15.
34Heinrich Schenker, Free Composition,134.
from a different period, usually the classical. Because tonality articulates form, the two are inextricably bound, and the problems stem from the fact that sonata form, a classical model, comes into conflict with the nineteenth century's widening harmonic vocabulary. What we lack in our discussion then is the constant factor that remains active throughout nineteenth-century tonal works, a factor that resides at a deeper structural level than sonata form itself and is inviolable in spite of changing outward appearances of the form. We therefore will need to investigate the factors that generate form in tonal music which will include the generating force behind sonata form. The task of the next chapters will be to dissect form and tonality to find the basic principles which sustain tonal music universally.

It is only through obtaining this information that we can describe Mahler's systems as they appear to be: homogeneous rather than heterogeneous and historically disparate entities. Tonal works of any description depend on the existence of a tonal hierarchy, and the process that is essential in achieving this is the cadence. This in turn can be stripped down to the almost sub-atomic level of the intervallic motions upon which cadences are built. The results gained from investigating the constituent elements of tonality will allow us to either consolidate the position of progressive tonality as a term, or alternatively, expand the scope of the term to such a degree as to render it obsolete.
Chapter 2
Major Third Axial System: Theoretical Justification.
Part I: Basic Principles

It is clear from the first chapter that our frames of reference for the discussion of progressive tonality are insufficiently defined. Taking the definition of tonality for granted has been the greatest source of error, with the consequence of making the debate over the validity of "progressive" as an adjunct to tonality seem at best premature. In order to proceed we need to be sure of the axiomatic principles on which tonality is based. Once in possession of this information we can make a more considered appraisal of the nature of progressive tonal schemes and categorize them according to their adherence, modification or rejection of these traditional principles or axioms. During the course of the first chapter I hinted at a number of axioms regarding tonality and form and it is on these that I wish to focus now.

Tonality is a system where one triad establishes itself as the focal point, to which all other tonal centres are relative. (I hesitate to suggest that it is hierarchical in its relativity, despite the traditional view to this effect based on the cycle of fifths. Reasons for this hesitation will become clear as this chapter proceeds). We have already seen that this cornerstone of tonal relativity is imbedded in the very language with which we describe tonality and that the Schenkerian view also prohibits any notion of tonal autonomy. The next step is to identify clearly the methods by which a tonal centre becomes the focal point in this system. To do this it is preferable to set out a limited set of assumptions or axioms and then proceed from them.

I propose to use the basic axioms of Schenker's theories divorced as much as possible from the techniques of graphic linear analysis normally associated with their expression. This is in no way an attempt to deny the validity of his graphic analysis technique, but is rather in deference to those not initiated into the finer complexities of its language. It is hoped in this way to address both Schenkerians and those who adhere to the more traditional forms of analysis, and in so doing perhaps to illustrate that the main differences between them are more in their manner of presentation than their underlying principles.

Schenker's most fundamental axiom is the concept of structural levels, designated as foreground, middleground and background events.\(^1\) Even without the work of Schenker it would be difficult to dispose of this view, so often does traditional analysis uphold the same position.\(^2\) The second movement of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony in F major for example may in consecutive paragraphs be described as an example of the traditional use of the

---


subdominant key for the slow movement, and then as a sonata form movement with a modulation to the dominant. The use of "subdominant" here is relative to the tonal structure of the entire work: the use of "dominant" is relative to the second movement in isolation. Both are correct, the apparent anomaly derives from a difference in perspective analogous to the difference between a "background" and a "middleground" event. Another example of the notion of structural levels in traditional analysis is evident in Tovey's endeavor to define the difference between being what is often called "on" a key and being "in" it. He formulates his argument in the form of the question "when is a key not a key?" with answer being, "when it's a dominant". This is, in Schenkerian terms, a momentary confusion between a perceived foreground event (being in the key of G for example) and the eventually revealed reality of it as part of a larger middleground event ("on" the dominant of C).

A necessary adjunct to the idea of structural levels is the notion that any functional procedure will hold true on all levels. Tovey describes tonality as being a "...long-range view of harmony". It naturally follows that each level is governed by the same rules, so that, for example, a chord of the dominant seeks resolution in the same way that any passage "on" or "in" the dominant key seeks resolution to the tonic key.

The second axiom upon which Schenker rests his theories is similarly fundamental to much traditional analysis—that of the "sacred triangle":

May the musician always carry in his heart the image of the bass arpeggiation (Fig.7)! Let this triangle be sacred to him! Creating, interpreting—may he bear it always in ear and eye!

By extension, every triad, whether it belongs to middleground or foreground, strives for its own triangle. Schenker's triangle is a I—V—I harmonic progression. It is the desire of any given triad to gain tonicity through this fundamental step that generates form; or, conversely, tonality articulates form by the fulfillment of the desire for a structural dominant and its resolution at each successive level. This is not to say that a key cannot be established by other means—the subdominant may suffice in works of limited scope or in any isolated tonal segment. But ultimately V—I is the most unequivocal means of tonal definition and a tonic will seek ratification by the strongest method.

By twisting Tovey's riddle a little further we can paraphrase Schenker's notion of a triad "striving for its own triangle" by saying that a chord is not a key is not a tonic. A musical work will, in different ways, embark upon the same mission—to create a tonal frame of reference the centre of which we call

---

3D.F. Tovey, Beethoven, (London, 1944), 14.
4D. F. Tovey, Beethoven, 7.
5Heinrich Schenker, Free Composition, 15.
the tonic. This process I intend to call tonicization. My choice of language is quite deliberate, for in truth the process of a work amounts to forwarding a key as a prospective "tonic" and attempting to "tonicize" it at each subsequent structural level by the provision of the appropriate structural dominant. Finally, on completing the requirements at each level, the work has successfully achieved the "tonicization" of that key. In other words, the musical processes have successively elevated a chord to being a key and finally to holding the position of tonic, where we the audience unanimously regard it as the focal point to which all other tonal areas are relative.

Consequently, tonality and form become inseparable. Sonata form, for example, can be seen as a highly evolved form which aims at the tonicization of a key at all structural levels within the confines of a single movement. At this point however, it is necessary to step back and continue our investigation of tonality as an independent issue. We have already assumed the position that tonality and harmony are manifestations of the same system at different structural levels and are therefore governed by the same rules. The example given of this was the equivalent demand for resolution of the dominant at any structural level. But musical forms do not rely on tonics and dominants alone—other tonal centres are used and clearly relate differently to the tonic. We need to ascertain the nature of these relationships so that, if these other tonal areas are used instead of the dominant, we can proceed to investigate any structural ramifications.

We saw in the previous chapter from Lewis's work on Mahler that tertial tonal relationships were a favoured option over the usual dominant of classical tonality and the work of both Lewis and Straus showed that double-tonic complexes invariably involve tonal combatants that are third-related. But at that point I expressed the need for further investigation, because the weight of evidence suggested that composers still favoured some tonal centres over others despite the equal availability afforded by an increasingly chromatic harmonic language. If tonality is a comprehensible part of musical language, then we should be able to justify at every point the reasons why a composer would choose to use one tonal centre over another. Why did Brahms, for example, prefer A and D flat major to the other third relations available to him (A flat and D minor) as second tonal areas in the first movement of his Third Symphony in F? Why is the relative minor so rarely used as a second tonal area in nineteenth-century sonata forms when, being analogous to the usual modulation to the relative major in minor-key works, it would seem the most logical second option?

Ultimately, these questions can only be answered if we consider the nature

6 Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, 134. Schenker uses language similar to this when noting that "V is usually preceded by a tonicizing II which has the effect of V—I in the key of the dominant."
of the relationship between each tonal centre and the tonic, thereby divining the reason for any composer choosing one key from so many options at any one instance. If we find that several keys relate to the tonic in the same way then we can justify the notion of an axial system such as those considered in the first chapter. But because tonality is a relative system the formation of any kind of axis must be based, not on equal availability, but on the basis of shared characteristics in their relationship to the tonic.

We have briefly seen examples of axial systems as perceived in the works of Stravinsky and Mahler cited by Straus and Lewis respectively. Lendvai furnished the first and singularly most famous example of it with respect to Bartok's music. I must state categorically at this point that the axial system to be outlined in this chapter bears no relation whatsoever to that which Lendvai perceived in the music of Bartok and the scope of this present thesis does not permit any comparison between the music of the two composers.

An extended tonal system was a natural outcome of the use of the chromatic mode as the basis for composition rather than the diatonic mode. This can easily explain the emancipation of voice-leading in Mahler at a foreground level, legitimizing other tonal centres to define the tonic cadentially in a way hitherto reserved for the true dominant and subdominant, in other words, tonic definition by cadences other than the traditional perfect and plagal cadences of classical tonality. But it would be a mistake to regard the extended range of tonal options as a mere structural ramification of the enrichment of the basic harmonic language. As we shall see in the next chapter and the remainder of this one, axial tonality is latent in the classical tonal system (and systems prior to it) and is employed by nineteenth-century composers even at points where the harmonic language is comparatively unaffected by chromaticism.

Part II: The Axis System

If we wish to tonicize C, and for argument's sake we only have step-wise movement at our disposal, then certain steps are obligatory, while others need to be avoided. For example, we cannot proceed in whole-tone steps if we expect to realize our aim. The whole-tone scale that would result would be incapable of determining C as having greater structural significance than any of the other scale members. Tonicization of C, or any of the other whole-tone scale members for that matter, can only be achieved via the introduction of notes from the other whole-tone scale.

It is no surprise therefore that the tonic defining notes and subsequent tonic defining harmonies and tonal centres with which we are most familiar—the bass fifth or fourth, the leading note and the falling semitone for example (the familiar dominant and subdominant to tonic progressions)—involve notes progressing from one whole-tone scale to the other. Taking the lead from the

---

preservation of the word "dominant" in subdominant, we can label the whole-tone scale on which these tonic defining notes lie as the dominant whole-tone scale. But the subdominant and dominant, F and G relative to C, are only two of the dominant whole-tone scale members. What of the other scale members, D flat and A, and E flat and B? The rest of the chapter will illustrate how these other dominant whole-tone scale members share similar tonic defining characteristics to the dominant and subdominant, which results in an axis alignment of the keys a major third apart.

Thorough investigation of common practice among prominent nineteenth-century composers (examples of which form the basis for the chapter 3) together with the theoretical investigations contained within the remainder of this chapter, reveals the relative functional equivalence of tonal centres related by the interval of a major third. Just as G functions as a dominant relative to C, so the keys related to G by the interval of a major third (B and E♭) will have an equivalent function relative to C: in other words, they too will function as dominants. As both B and E flat function as equivalent dominants I preserve the roman numeral V that is associated with the true dominant and use it to denote dominant function. Thus the roman numeral V will be used to label all members of the dominant axis. In order to distinguish between the axis members, they are given Greek symbols to designate their position relative to the true dominant G. Thus B can be labelled Vα and E flat labelled as Vβ. The true dominant G remains as V. By continuing this process through the remaining primary tonal centres (tonic and subdominant), we arrive at a full picture of the axis relationships in a tonal context of C.

Example 2-1 Major Third Axis System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subdominant</th>
<th>Tonic</th>
<th>Dominant</th>
<th>Supertonic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IVα</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Iα</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVβ</td>
<td>D♭</td>
<td>I♭</td>
<td>A♭</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The method of labeling each member of the axis resembles those used by Lendvai in his work on Bartok. As I have already stated the axis system here bears no relation to Lendvai's and the use of Greek symbols is purely a matter of convenience. The symbols are used only as a means of identifying each tonal centre relative to the true or traditionally accepted representative of any tonal function. Thus the major third above the tonic is designated as Iα, the major third below as I♭. In this chapter and the remainder of the thesis Roman numerals will continue to be adapted in this manner although at specific points it will be advantageous to use them in the traditional way (A flat labelled as bVI instead of I♭ in the key of C). In all cases upper case designates a major key and lower case a minor key as is the usual practice.
The inherent equality of the constituent notes in the augmented triad makes it no surprise that triads built upon its members should attain some functional kinship. This triad can be interpreted as being derived from the whole-tone scale, indeed it is the triadic expression of that scale. As we have seen, the whole-tone scale is incapable of establishing a tonic, except perhaps by emphatic reiteration. The augmented triad is a symmetrical division of the octave, that can further be subdivided down to the smallest interval, a unique property that sets it apart from the diminished seventh, which can be subdivided no further than the interval of a minor third. Each major or minor triad that is built on the notes of an augmented triad (triads of C, E and Ab for example) have a relationship in common with other augmented triads. For example, the augmented triad g-b-eb, functioning as an enhanced dominant (its most common function), is the enhanced dominant for each of those triads C, E and A flat: that is, the chord g-b-eb has equal potential to resolve as an enhanced perfect cadence to C, E or Ab, minor or major.

As we shall see in the next chapter the capacity for functional equivalence of major third-related keys had long been latent in the tonal system. It would be premature to conclude that Mahler's use of it can be explained as a result of the accumulation of historical precedent, because the system is equally able to be justified on theoretical grounds. In order to do this we should continue to dissect the tonicization process, revealing the tonic defining capabilities of cadences by stripping them down to their intervallic composites. These linear musical materials, the tonic-defining voice-leading, have, in different combinations, always been at the heart of tonal music. In their most potent form these steps are found in combinations at points of cadence. The following is a short glossary of the terms used to describe these tonicizing voice-leading steps that are available in a melodic context.

Dominant functions
leading note—resolution by upward rising semitone
perfect whole tone—resolution by upward rising whole tone

Subdominant functions
plagal leading note—resolution by falling semitone
plagal whole tone—resolution by falling tone

In addition to the linear considerations are the bass motions, the falling fifth and falling fourth and their inversions. These will be the focus of the latter part of the chapter.

All of these characteristic means of tonic definition are no doubt familiar; they are of course, the constituent parts of all cadences. The terms used to

---

describe them do just that—a leading note is a semitone, a whole tone is a whole tone. The prefix "perfect" denotes a rising resolution as is the essential characteristic of the perfect cadence: the prefix "plagal" denotes a falling resolution, the essential characteristic of the plagal cadence. The bass motions are self-explanatory. In monophony it is generally possible to define a tonic by any two of these linear methods at any one time. A standard cadential practice would be for the antepenultimate and penultimate notes to transcribe the tonic with the note above and below before converging to resolution. In polyphonic music naturally a greater combination of tonic defining motions can be employed. When we consider what is generally considered to be the most potent tonicizing force, the perfect cadence (V–I), it is no surprise to find it can employ (in the major mode) all of these linear tonic-defining motions in conjunction.

Obviously due to the stylistic requirements or limitations at any time, a greater or lesser emphasis on different combinations of voice-leadings predominate in different periods. The New Grove article on cadences maintains that until the sixteenth century cadences in polyphony were governed entirely by linear considerations, primarily the descent by step to the final of the prevailing mode and secondarily the ascent by step to the final or octave above the final: often motion by step was interrupted by the leap of a 3rd.

Example 2-2 Pre-sixteenth-century cadence forms.

These cadences clearly employ various combinations of dominant and subdominant linear tonic-defining characteristics.

a) Phrygian cadence: mixture of perfect and plagal note functions, the most characteristic of which is the plagal leading note; hence the prevailing plagal character of this cadence. Tonic definition is not clear cut however. If the double leading note cadence is the most potent and normative method of tonic definition then the phrygian cadence represents a retrograde form in inversion; in other words an interrupted cadence. As such it is always likely to be succeeded by a stronger cadential form. It is also easier to interpret it as iv6/3—V in the minor mode than vii6/3—i in the phrygian mode. But in the context of music where linear considerations govern tonicization and bass progressions are excluded, it is more likely to attain tonic rather than dominant defining status.

b) and c) double leading note cadence. As the name suggests, a cadence where

10 W. S. Rockstro et al., "Cadence", New Grove, 584
dominant note functions prevail—a forerunner to the modern perfect cadence. (Examples of these cadence types turn up at all structural levels in Mahler's music and are designated as vα—I when using the axis system).

d) consecutive fifth: as above for b and c.
e) "Landini" cadence: dominant note functions prevail as in b, c and d but notable for the upward-leaping third. There is the possibility of this note having a concomitant plagal whole-tone voice-leading which, along with the G sharp converges on the fifth of the tonic triad. This, as later examples show, is analogous to the enhanced tonic defining capacity of the perfect cadence on the addition of the seventh, which combines a subdominant function to the prevailing dominant functions already present. The New Grove article notes that the Landini cadence became the most important variant of the double leading note cadence, and this may explain why it gained such popularity.

Historically, the next important development is the addition, to the already existing voice-leading considerations, of the tonic-defining bass motion; most significantly that of a falling fifth. The perfect cadence, the sacred triangle upon which classical tonality depends, is brought into full fruition, with the increased potency over earlier models due to the addition of tonic definition by leap to tonic definition by combinations of melodic steps.

With the development of chromatic harmony and the desire for non-periodic structures in the nineteenth century, the tendency towards total reliance on the perfect cadence with its tonic definition by leaping bass, begins to be reversed. Compositional aims both poetic and dramatic, enforce the avoidance of the cadential structures that dominated the classical period. It is easy to observe in many works this reversal of tactics throughout the century. The first tonal area of the exposition of Brahms's Fourth Symphony contains only one emphatic perfect cadence, a far cry from the corresponding section in the Fourth of Beethoven. Albeit in a different context, the leading note, in the form of the appoggiatura, increasingly became a more important, though necessarily a less potent tonic defining motion. In Tristan, the task of defining the tonality of A minor in the Prelude is carried out by this function more than by the all important falling fifth of the perfect cadence, which is left as a latent force only. The earlier cited New Grove article backs up this position noting that with the music of Stravinsky and Hindemith there is a return to the principle of linear progression in all parts. This is true at times of Mahler also where the chromatic freedom of the nineteenth-century harmonic system provides the ingredients for a greater array of tonic-defining procedures than was hitherto used. Mahler regularly constructs hybrid cadences, such as a phrygian cadence with dominant bass motion (V♭7♭5—I) or define the tonic by new combinations of tonic defining melodic steps (e.g. V♯75—I).

---

11 Heinrich Schenker, Free composition, 15.
traditional perfect cadence no longer holds a monopoly, which is to say that
the leading note function that characterizes it is no longer confined to confir­
ing the tonic note, but, like the double leading-note cadence of the middle
ages, could define the fifth or even the third. Cadences less emphatic than the
traditional perfect cadence had the advantage of being able to define the tonic
without disrupting continuity.

What we can assume of an axis system based on keys a major third apart, is
that these keys will exhibit a degree of neutrality or functional equivalence
based on the premise that tonality is a deeper structural level application of the
harmonic laws of the foreground. As tonality is a relative system, then we
should expect that the relationship of axis-related keys with any key outside
that axis will bear some similarity. That is, the triad of each axis member
should have functional voice-leading motions in common when placed in rela­
tion to any key from another axis.

DOMINANT AXIS. G-Eb-B (in the context of C).

Major modes:

Example 2-3 Dominant—tonic axis progressions.

Characteristics: The most important tonic defining motion is the leading note,
which is common to all axis members hence justifying the axis status of these
keys on melodic grounds. At the foreground level the addition of the minor
seventh to any of the dominant axis members produces notes that relate to the
tonic as plagal leading notes (f→e in G7→C, db→c in Eb7→C) or plagal
whole-tone (a→g in B7→C).

Modal Variants.

Example 2-4 V→I, modal variants
Despite modal variants, the common note (g—g) and plagal whole-tone (d—c) remain constant.

v—I perfect whole-tone (b—c)

V—I perfect whole tone (d—e) becomes leading note (d—e).

v—i: perfect whole-tone (b—c) and leading note (d—e)

Beta Dominant:

Perfect whole tone (b—c) remains constant.

Example 2-5 Vβ—I, modal variants

Vβ—I: Traditional relative major. Close relationship based on the two common notes (g—e). Dominant relation remains through perfect whole-tone (b—c) and the potential for a bass fifth progression (g—c)

vβ—I: double leading note e—c, f—g, diminished potency as bass fifth disappears.

vβ—i: e now common note, leading note f—g

Alpha Dominant:

Root and fifth as leading notes (b—c, f—g) remain constant.

Example 2-6 Va—I, modal variants

va—I: Common medieval cadence, combines double leading note (group constant) with plagal and/or perfect whole-tone motion (d—c, d—e).

va—i: same as Va—I, triple leading note (d—e).

Vα—I: common note (d—e) and group constants.

Naturally many (though not all) of these progressions are rare, even in Mahler, as actual cadences. But they do appear at the deeper structural levels. These V—I progressions consistently utilize the leading note and often some of the other dominant voice-leading motions as well. This is the cornerstone of the axial theory. Naturally the subdominant progressions, being the reverse of the various V—I progressions, have subdominant voice-leading motions in common. For the sake of fully clarifying the system these are all listed below.
The note in common between the true subdominant and the tonic is the tonic note itself (c relative to C). In IVβ—I the common note also comes from the tonic axis (e). This state of tonic residue is in part responsible for the more relaxed relation between tonic and subdominant; contrary to V—I where the common note preserved is a dominant triad member (g in this case). In the context of a IV—I cadence, the tonic is defined by three characteristic steps, the plagal leading note (resolution by falling semitone), the bass fourth and the plagal whole-tone (resolution by falling whole-tone). As the above example clearly shows the other axial members share these characteristics relative to a given tonic. As with the dominant axis the two outer axis members are either enhanced or diminished in their linear, tonic defining capacity. Here it is the beta subdominant, with each triad member in a plagal leading note relationship that provides a potent definition of the tonic (note also that the bass fourth is still possible). IVα is less potent in a cadential sense, but is common at the deeper structural levels.

Modal Variants:
True subdominant:
Tonic common note (c—c), remains constant.
Example 2-8 IV—I, modal variants
Beta Axis:
Two plagal leading notes ($d^b-c$, $a^b-g$) remain constant.

Example 2-9 IV$\beta$–I, modal variants

\[
\begin{align*}
IV\beta-i & \quad iv\beta-I & \quad iv\beta-i \\
& \quad \text{IV$\beta$–i f–e now f–eb} \\
iv\beta-I & \quad fb-e & \quad \text{common note substitutes plagal leading note (f–e)} \\
iv\beta-i & \quad fb-e & \quad \text{instead of f–e}
\end{align*}
\]

Alpha Axis:

Example 2-10 IV$\alpha$–I, modal variants

\[
\begin{align*}
iv\alpha-i & \quad iv\alpha-i & \quad iv\alpha-i \\
& \quad \text{IV$\alpha$–I} \\
& \quad \text{Plagal whole-tone (a–g) remains constant.} \\
iv\alpha-i & \quad \text{IV$\alpha$–I this is the traditional relative minor. Close relationship based on two} \\
& \quad \text{common notes c and e. The subdominant relationship sealed by the plagal} \\
& \quad \text{whole-tone (a–g) } \\
iv\alpha-i & \quad \text{plagal leading note (e–eb) replaces common note (e).} \\
IV\alpha-i & \quad \text{IV$\alpha$–i two plagal leading notes (c#–c, e–eb).}
\end{align*}
\]

Supertonic Axis.
In most cases tonal centres from this axis function as the dominant of the dominant or as the subdominant of the subdominant or as a whole-tone divider between two tonic axis members. The possibility always exists between triads of the same modality to align themselves as parallel whole-tone chords. This will, if the step is repeated, lead to a more stable tonic axis member as is the case in Mahler Second Symphony (II–iii, 190–257) or the Beethoven F major Quartet Opus 135, (second movement). II–I cadences, with the characteristic lydian sharpened fourth leading note (II$^\#3$–I), are a common cadential device in Mahler (see conclusion of the Seventh Symphony first movement). The sense of closure is gained by the leading note to the fifth of the tonic chord. This can be interpreted as a truncated II$^\#3$–V–I cadence, and on occasions Mahler supplies the dominant in the bass telescoping II–I and V–I (see Kindertotenlieder, song I bars 19-20).
SUPERTONIC AXIS D-Gb-Bb (in the context of C)

Example 2-11. Supertonic—tonic axis progressions

\[\text{II—I} \quad \text{IIβ—I} \quad \text{IIα—I}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Progression</th>
<th>Plagal Whole-Tone</th>
<th>Perfect Whole-Tone</th>
<th>Leading Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a—g</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>f—g</td>
<td>f#—g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f#—g</td>
<td>IIii—II</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>g—b</td>
<td>g#—b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d—e</td>
<td>IIii—II</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>f—g</td>
<td>f#—g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>IIii—II</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>g—b</td>
<td>g#—b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Modal Variants:
True Interdominant: seventh as the common note (c), root as plagal whole-tone (d—c) remain constant.

Example 2-12. II—I, modal variants

ii—I: greater subdominant character with addition of plagal leading note f—e.
ii—i: Parallel plagal whole-tones to each tonic triad member
II—i: double leading note (d—eb, f#—g), therefore and like II—I, has cadential capability

Beta Axis:
Double perfect whole-tone (f—g, bb—c) remains constant; dominant voice leading prevails.

Example 2-13. IIβ—I, modal variants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Progression</th>
<th>Plagal Whole-Tone</th>
<th>Perfect Whole-Tone</th>
<th>Leading Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IIβ—I</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>f—g</td>
<td>f#—g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IIβ—i</td>
<td>IIii—II</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>g—b</td>
<td>g#—b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II—i</td>
<td>IIii—II</td>
<td>d—c</td>
<td>f—g</td>
<td>f#—g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iiβ—I and iiβ—i: enhanced subdominant characteristic due to inclusion of plagal leading note (db—c).

IIβ—i Slight reinforcement of the dominant trait with the addition of the leading note d—eb.

Alpha Axis:
Balance and cancellation of plagal and perfect leading notes (f#—g, db—c) remains constant.
Example 2-14 IIα—I, modal variants

\[ \text{Example 2-15 Iα—I and Iβ—I, modal variants} \]

INTER-AXIAL RELATIONSHIPS

The inter-axial relationships are notable, for each axis has a constant relationship, the lower or beta axis containing the constant plagal leading note ab—g and the upper or alpha axis a constant leading note b—c. With the exception of iα—I and Iβ—i the axial constant giving either a dominant or plagal orientation is offset by a contrary leading note. These slight dominant or subdominant functions cannot destroy the relative neutrality of these keys based on the relationship of the root notes. Overall the dominant or subdominant characteristics in relation to each other tend to cancel out, and, in conjunction with the inherent whole-tone related equality of the root notes, endorses a neutral relationship between the axis members.

Having considered the process of tonicization by stepwise motion we should now turn our attention back to the bass. The traditional means of tonicization are the perfect and plagal cadences. In these the principal tonicizing notes in C are the roots of the chords and their thirds, i.e. f—a in a IV—I cadence and g—b in a V—I cadence. This is not to deny some tonicizing ability of the fifths of these chords, but it is by the semitone resolutions and the bass motions that we most readily identify the essential properties of plagal or perfect cadences. As the tonic whole-tone scale cannot tonicize its own members, then tonicization must come from the dominant whole-tone scale. Hence all of the intervals consistent with the tonic whole-tone scale, the major second, major third, tritone and their inversions, are unable to achieve effective tonicization. On the other hand, intervals that are consistent with the dominant whole-tone scale, the fifth, minor third and semitone and their inversions, can achieve tonicization.

What begins to emerge from the system of major third passivity is that their neutrality is based on the inherent neutrality between the members of the whole-tone scale emanating from the tonic, in this case, C-D-E-F#-G#. By corollary, the members of the whole-tone scale emanating from the dominant G-A-B-D♭-E♭-F-G are also neutral in relation to one another.
Just as the major triad is a conflation of tonic axis and dominant axis notes c—e and g, so the major scale is a conflation of two whole-tone fragments.

\[ \text{C-D-E—(F#-G#-A#)} \quad \text{C-D etc} \]

\[ \text{F-G-A-B—(Db-Eb)} \]

The minor scale presents its own set of problems because of its chromatic alterations. It is inherently more dissonant because the weight of dominant whole-tone representation is greater, in the same way that the minor triad itself is inherently more dissonant because the third is neutral to the fifth of the chord not the tonic, (c- e\text{b}—g as opposed to c—e —g).

\[ \text{(Ab-Bb—) C-D—(E-F#-G#-A#)—C-D etc} \]

\[ \text{Eb.F-G-A-B—(Db-Eb)} \]

Of the tonic defining voice leading motions the leading note and plagal leading note (here f and b) are the most potent because that motion necessarily crosses from one whole-tone scale to the other. The same considerations govern the bass. The tonic defining bass motions most common are V—I and IV—I both of which represent tonic definition by leap from the dominant whole-tone scale to the tonic whole-tone scale.

The axis system is constructed on the grounds of common relative voice-leading functions. It is not a theoretical construct with no basis in reality. Nineteenth-century chromaticism produces many examples of dominant or subdominant cadences involving axis members other than the true one at the foreground level. At the deeper structural levels, the coherence of sections, movements and ultimately entire works are inextricably bound up with axial substitution. The next chapter will show the viability of these axis relationships in practice rather than theory. If any doubt exists on theoretical grounds for major third functional equivalence, the weight of historical precedence is certainly overwhelming.
Chapter 3
Historical justification for the major third axial system

The axial system outlined in the preceding chapter is consistent with the normal tonal practice illustrated in the majority of tonal works. For example, the most common tertial relationship in the classical period is the use of the relative major as the second tonal area in minor-key works. When interpreted with the aid of an axial system, this amounts to no more than an axial substitution for the true dominant. Thus the two major-third relatives of the tonic function as tonic substitutes, the upper minor third as a dominant substitute. The only remaining tertial relationship, the lower minor third, is very much the exception in sonata form works; Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata (first movement, B♭—G) and the B major Piano Trio of Brahms (first movement, B—g♯) come to mind. That this should be the least preferred option is not entirely unexpected for the relationship of that key to the tonic. The previous chapter showed the lower minor third to belong to the subdominant axis, the use of which is contrary to the concept of duality and dramatic opposition that pervades sonata thinking. Modulation to the subdominant effectively transforms the tonic into a dominant, which could conceivably place its tonicity in doubt. Both of these exceptional works will be discussed more fully in the chapter 4.

The nineteenth century saw the increase in the use of third-related tonality that attained deeper structural significance, firstly as Schenkerian third dividers between tonic and dominant,¹ but increasingly as tonal goals independent of any subsequent attainment of the dominant. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight some of these and uncover the reasons for their use. This is not an attempt to draw some historical genealogy or to trace the source and subsequent influence of one particular compositional practice. Such influences do exist, as between Schubert and Brahms for example,² but the affinity between them is based on similar responses to similar compositional problems, just as it is between Brahms and Liszt, despite the animosity that would have precluded any exchange.

What Dahlhaus came to call the "doctrine of originality" is the root of the common compositional problem.³ The pursuit of this aesthetic created a tendency towards the concision of thematic material, a tendency at odds with the attendant aspiration to monumental scale. Composers therefore had to invent ways of manipulating the former to produce the latter.

¹Heinrich Schenker, *Free Composition*, 29.
²James Webster, "Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity" (I and II), Nineteenth-Century Music, II/I (July 1978), 18-35 and 52-71.
... it is no accident that thematic-motivic manipulation and sequential repetition shifted at the same time from the development section to the exposition. It merely implies that Brahms, on the one hand, and Wagner and Liszt, on the other, were attempting to solve the same problem by different means—namely, how to present the motivic material of a movement broadly and accessibly... when both periodic structure (the "four-squareness" derided by Wagner) and cadential harmony (in interaction with the metrical scheme) were disintegrating.4

Both the options Dahlhaus cited have important ramifications for tonality, firstly:

The spinning of broad melodic paragraphs out of one small motive can become monotonous, however, no matter how variously the material is presented, unless it is alleviated and balanced by constant harmonic variety. The enrichment of the fundamental bass is the correlative, both technically and aesthetically, of developing variation.5

and secondly,

... when musical ideas are wholly original, significant at every instant and expressed without padding, as Richard Strauss said, they are apt to be extremely short.6

With Wagner such musical ideas are not subject to the "... laws governing the distinction between "open" and "closed" syntactic structures...", to the point where:

The idea that the Yearning motive in Tristan needs a motivically analogous and harmonically complementary clause to "complete" it is inexpressibly trivial; the only suitable means of continuing the motive is sequential repetition, which leads it into tonally remote regions.7

The side effects of either expository technique threaten the ability of tonality to articulate form.

Rhythmic structures that tend to dissolve into "musical prose," and harmony riddled with atonal fissures, are highly unlikely to establish musical form by setting up "rhythm in the large" (Eduard Hanslick) and a key scheme.8

But despite these features governing the development of nineteenth-century music, there is, in a composer like Brahms, and even in one of such anti-establishment standing as Liszt, an apparent need to conserve sonata form within the genres of sonata, quartet and symphony. On closer examination there is not the degree of formal degeneration as Dahlhaus's comments might lead us to expect. Nor do such works retain only a schematic vestige based on

4Carl Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music, (Berkeley, 1989), 256.
5Carl Dahlhaus, Between Romanticism and Modernism, 63.
6Carl Dahlhaus, Between Romanticism and Modernism, 45
7Carl Dahlhaus, Between Romanticism and Modernism, 45
8Carl Dahlhaus, Nineteenth-Century Music, 255.
the traditional contrasting thematic characteristics of the form. As this chapter will demonstrate, the interdependent chromaticism and "prosaic" expository processes can be reconciled with the need for tonally-articulated form through the use of an axial system.

Schubert's "Great" C major Symphony drew effusive praise for its "divine length" from Robert Schumann after his first hearing. Although the third-related tonalities in both this work and his C major Quintet can be interpreted as Schenkerian third dividers, they exhibit the ability of axial modulation to instigate structural expansion.

Example 3.1
Schubert. Symphony No. 9 (D 944)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—133</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134—173</td>
<td>e—V of G</td>
<td>iα—V of V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>174—189</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>190—227</td>
<td>Eb—e—V of G</td>
<td>Vβ-iα—V of V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>228—253</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>254—355</td>
<td>development section</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>356—439</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>440—491</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>492—509</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>510—557</td>
<td>Ab—a—V of C</td>
<td>Iβ—ivα—V of I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>558—685</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of E minor and E-flat in the exposition is probably best described as dividers or passing sonorities in accordance with Schenker's theories; but it is a relevant point that here, as we will see in the Brahms concertos also, the major third mediant is preferred to prolong the tonic (here C—e) and the minor mediant prolongs the dominant (Eb—G). A similar tactic is employed in the C major Quintet. The exposition cadences on the dominant at bar 58 and stands poised to act in one of two ways, either to turn into a dominant chord and re-establish the tonic C or to continue to strengthen the dominant and assert it as a second tonal area. Instead, Schubert takes neither of these options but instead falls to E-flat major or Vβ. This sets in motion the expected sonata duality, confirmed by the introduction of new thematic material. The E flat episode emphasizes the axial substitution at the foreground level as G major repeatedly threatens to take over. The overall breadth of the section and indeed the movement as a whole is largely made possible by this axis substitution and the subsequent inter-axial dialogue between E flat and G before the true dominant G is established.


10Heinrich Schenker, Free Composition, 29.
Example 3-2
String Quintet in C (D 956)
1—49 C I
50—56 V of C V of I
57—99 Eb Vβ
100—154 G V
Development
155—266
Recapitulation
267—294 C I
295—301 F IV
302—310 g ii of F
311—321 V of F
322—381 Ab Iβ
382—465 C I

The G major Quartet also relies on the axial system to reinforce the various structural tonal areas. In this work both of the remaining dominant axis members are employed to reinforce the dominant in the exposition, then, in the recapitulation, axis relatives are used in conjunction with both the temporarily established subdominant and then finally with the tonic, the second occurrence being analogous to the events of the exposition.

Example 3-3
Quartet in G major (D 887) (first movement).
1—33 G I
34—63 G—F# I—Vα
64—109 D V
110—141 B♭—F# Vβ—Vα
142—169 D V
Development.
170—291
Recapitulation
292—332 G I
333—342 C-E IV-IVα
343—388 C—B IV—Iα
389—415 G I
416—444 G (E♭) I (Iβ)

The choice of B flat and F sharp as additional tonal centres within the context of the traditional dominant in the exposition is consistent with what we would expect of a work involving an axial system. The form is expanded through modulation but without altering the traditional function of the structural units.
Another example of Schubert's expansion of the second tonal area through axial modulation occurs in the C minor sonata D 958 (c–Eb-Cb-Eb). The B flat Sonata D 960 on the other hand, expands the first tonal area through axial modulation.

Example 3-4
Sonata in B flat major (D 960) (first movement)

1—19       B♭ I
20—35       G♭ I♭
36—47       B♭ I
48—69       f♯ i♭
70—117      F V

Development
118—215  E♭—b♭—F II♭—iv—V
Recapitulation
216—234  B♭ I
235—238  G♭ I♭
239—254  A V♭
255—266  B♭ I
267—288  b iv♭
289—357  B♭ I

With both the G major Quartet and the B flat Sonata, axial modulation and axial substitutes for the true dominant and subdominant are prominent in the recapitulations also. For Schubert, the tonal interval of the major third clearly had the capacity for what could almost be called passive modulation. This property was exploited to increase the breadth and scale of some of his later sonata-form works, without jeopardizing the set functions of the various structural sections. In other words, axial modulation allowed the expressive and constructive use of chromaticism at the deeper structural levels, without jeopardizing the ability of tonality to articulate form. From this position we can investigate a form whose classical integrity rested on its ability to create both passive and dynamic structural units—the concerto.

The concerto is an obvious genre to investigate because Mozart, whom we can entrust with the title of inventor of the modern form, left the legacy of an imposing formal problem, namely the orchestral ritornello.

The orchestral exposition of K. 271 remains in the tonic throughout without modulating: it is, in fact, exactly like the orchestral opening of an operatic aria. The dramatic modulation is left to the soloist; in so far as there are two real expositions in a concerto, one is necessarily passive and the other active, and the nineteenth century, which did not understand this, was often forced to do away with the orchestral exposition as tautological.¹¹

Mozart was clearly aware of the dual problem inherent in his concerto form as we can see by his consistent ability to execute the "passive" exposition without recourse to modulation and concurrently to avoid them becoming static or, worse still, boring. Both problems could be solved by brief passages of intense chromaticism that nevertheless fail to modulate (e.g. K 456), or by passages in the tonic minor (e.g. K 503), major key works being the norm. These solutions were also adopted by Beethoven with only the G major concerto exhibiting any substantial degree of axial modulation (G—B-b).

Rosen's generalisation of the nineteenth century takes in, as I noted earlier, the concertos of Tchaikovsky, Schumann, Grieg and Liszt, but the same cannot be said of Brahms. Brahms the classicist is very much in evidence in his concerto writing, even though he does opt for the less conventional design of Mozart's K. 271 and Beethoven's G major and E flat concertos in two of his own (Op. 83 and 102). Tovey in particular championed Brahms for conserving the classical balance between soloist and orchestra in the presenting of thematic material so it is no surprise that formal balance was a significant preoccupation also. The "double exposition" is not dropped in favour of the more integrated nineteenth-century approach favoured by his aforementioned contemporaries. Nor does he violate the fundamental difference in character and function of the two expositions. He is, however, forced to reconcile a form of classical origin with the requirements of nineteenth-century expository technique. In both his minor key concertos and the B flat Piano concerto we do in fact find modulations in the course of the first expositions, but the passive and active roles that were synonymous with the classical form are conserved. Major third passivity was crucial in that it allowed Brahms to fulfill his obligations towards the sense of balance and to achieve the demarcation of function that was a definitive element of the form he inherited.

Example 3.5
Piano Concerto no. 1 in D minor Op. 15 (first movement)

1—45 d i
46—61 b b iβ
62—90 d i
91—141 d i soloist enters
142—149 f vβ
150—175 F Vβ
176—183 D b Vα
184—225 F Vβ

12Donald Francis Tovey, Essays in Musical Analysis, (London, 1936), iii, 122.
13The D major Violin Concerto Op. 77, uses the tonic minor extensively in the first exposition, even to the point of allowing the soloist to enter in the minor mode. Axial modulation is limited to a brief hint of Iα (F sharp) between bars 59 and 63.
Development.
226—309

Recapitulation.
310—347  d  i
348—354  e  ii
355—380  f#  iα
381—443  D  I
444—484  d  i

Example 3-6
Piano Concerto no. 2 in B♭ major Op. 83. (first movement exposition)
1—10 solo and orch.  B♭  I  1st theme
11—28 cadenza  b♭-B♭  i—I
29—47 1st theme  B♭  I
48—67 2nd theme  d  iα
68—109 1st theme  B♭ (—V)  I—V (soloist re-enters)
110—145 New theme  F (V of V)  I(V of V)
146—199 2nd theme  f  v

Example 3-7
Double Concerto Op. 102. (first movement exposition)
1—4 1st theme  a  i
5—56 cadenza and 2nd theme  a/A  i/I
57—76 1st theme  a  i
77—93 3rd and 2nd themes  F  I♭
94—111  a  i
112—146 1st theme  a  i (soloists re-enter)
147—192 2nd theme  C  I♭
193—217 3rd theme  C (V)  I♭ (V)

Brahms could both expand and harmonically enrich, at a middle ground level, the first ritornello or tonic exposition by utilizing a secondary tonic axis member. Such consistency suggests that, like Schubert, Brahms undoubtedly regarded the major third as the tonal interval least likely to violate the passive function of the structural unit. By doing this, he leaves the essential action of active modulation to the second ritornello to be articulated by the soloist(s). The D minor Concerto shows evidence of the same thinking in the recapitulation, moving to Iα (F sharp minor) via the whole-tone step (E minor).

As we would expect, the structural manipulation of major thirds is not confined to Brahms's concertos, but is important to his other large-scale works. This is certainly true of the symphonies and the Piano and Clarinet Quintets, although his chamber works of more limited proportions or lighter
disposition (Serenades and Sextets) tend to be governed by the more traditional tonal relationships of dominant and relative major keys where they be in the minor. In these larger works it is the same property of major-third passivity that is being used for very much the same reasons as in the concertos. The use of them delays any dynamic tonal processes until some later point in the work. This is particularly evident in his two large works in F, the Piano Quintet and the Third Symphony, works that may shed some light on some of Mahler's practices. It will be necessary to return to these works in the next chapter.

With the music of Liszt the augmented triad gains a great deal of foreground prominence and more recent investigations have focused on its status at deeper levels. R. Larry Todd traces the history of Liszt's use of it as an enhanced dominant in his early works through to its non-functional use in his later works, furnishing several examples of the augmented triad reaching the deeper structural levels. Of Liszt's piece Lyon from (eventually) Années de Pèlerinage he remarks:

This stark, linear outline subsequently bears on the march proper. Beginning in C major, Liszt momentarily diverts the music to Ab major before pausing on the dominant; then, in-commencing the march, he turns to E major. Of course, tonal progression by major thirds is not all that novel; numerous precedents may be found in Beethoven or Schubert, and, before them, in Mozart and Haydn. But in Lyon Liszt's highlighting of C, E, and Ab major was likely conditioned by the augmented triad, C-E-Ab, vigorously unfolded in the introductory octaves.

What Todd reveals is that the augmented triad gained great significance in Liszt, not only as a colourful foreground sonority but as a structural element of many of his works. Like the Brahms works already discussed, the following analysis of the B minor Sonata bears out that Liszt perceived in the augmented triad the same potential for the establishment of a axial tonal system, and that major third passivity could be utilized in the conservation of traditional sonata form boundaries despite concomitant chromaticism. The persistent use of major third relatives is as thorough as it is in Mahler and it is likely that the later composer gained some insight into this structural principal through his predecessor.

The octave G with which the B minor Sonata opens encloses two whole-tone fragments g-f-e-b and d-c-b-b-a b. The first whole tone fragment outlines part of the tonic axis, the second outlines part of the dominant. The second statement sees the octave G enclosing a complete statement of the dominant axis (f###-d-b). This is a kind of utilitarian dominant; one that can just as easily

15R. Larry Todd, 96
resolve to any of the tonic axis members. Needless to say, this concentration of axial relationships sets the tone for the work. At this point Liszt is not defining the tonic with any certainty. Rather he is outlining a situation where the D-F#-Bb axis has a dominant function and the indeterminate G has a tonic function. The specific details of tonicity, (B minor as tonic) comes later.

Example 3-8 B minor Sonata bar 1—7

The first subject area continues to utilize the axis system. Its function here is similar to the passive and active ritornello in the Brahms concertos. Here it allows the use of sequence as an expository technique without jeopardizing the tonic status of the initial part of the composition. The true structural dissonance is reserved for the expected second tonal area articulated by a contrasting theme at bar 105.

Example 3-9 B Minor Sonata

1—8 G Iβ
9—17 b i
18—24 Sequence f-g-a V of e
25—26 Eb Iα
27—31 II-V of b i
32—44 b i
45—54 eb seq. F-Ab-A, C#-D, F#-G, B-C, E-F (Iα etc.)
55—60 Bb Vα
61—66 g iβ
67—81 Eb Iα
81—104 V of III V of Vβ
Second tonal area.

105—123  D, V of F#  Vβ, V of V
124—152  F  Vβ of Vβ
153—205  D-V of F#  (Vβ)

Development:

206—212  C  IVβ
213—220  B  I
221—238  bb  vα
239—254  D  Vβ
255—279  seq. b, V of f#?
280—296  eb  seq. flux
297—301  c# to V of c#  (v of V)
302—319  f  to V of f  (vα of V)
320—330  seq. to V of e  (Ultimately IV of F# as opposed to V♭ in e)

Slow movt.

331—348  F#  1st theme  new  V
349—362  A  2nd theme from exposition  Vβ of V
363—371  F#  3rd theme from exposition  V

Dev.

372—384  g  ivβ of V  C
385—394  e? ambiguity between V of e and bVI of eb exploited
395—414  F#  1st theme  V
415—432  Bridge
433—459  F#  2nd theme retonicisation  V

Finale

460—522  bb  Fugue  vα
523—532  Eb  (parallel to b. 25-31)  Iα
533—554  b  i
555—560  Eb  Iα
561—599  e  seq.  iv
600—615  B  second subject  I
616—710  B  closing theme—transformation of the original second subject (bar repeated more literally than at b. 600).  I
711—728  B  slow movement theme  I
729—749  B  V of e to V of B on tonic pedal to tonic
750—760  b-B  Intro. and final cadence  i-I

What can be seen from this example is Liszt's undeniable affinity for the
major-third relatives of both the tonic, and, in the central sections of the work, for the dominant. In Longyear's brief study of the work he describes the nature of the G minor opening in this manner:

The apparently capricious introduction ... is later seen as ingeniously logical: G is the pivot for the diminished seventh chord that serves as the dominant of B minor.\(^{16}\)

This is indeed true at the foreground level at bar 8, but it is not nearly so compelling as the idea that Liszt was purposely creating a conflict between two possible tonic complex members for the position of the true tonic. The pivot is much more the augmented triad of the dominant axis, so strongly spelled out in the opening six bars; a triad which can serve as an enhanced dominant for either G or B. This is, as Todd's work shows, consistent with Liszt's growing interest in the structural potential of the augmented triad. It is also consistent with the remainder of the work. The first subject area touches on each member of the tonic complex. The only other key to receive any attention in this section is B\(^{b}\) which immediately resolves to E\(^{b}\) via G minor, both of which are tonic complex members. (Note also that B\(^{b}\) is the beta relative to D just as G was the beta relative to B at the work's opening. The appearance of B flat here before the more substantial second subject in D is analogous to the use of G as the initial representative of the tonic complex, before passing on to B.)

The second subject area too exhibits the same tendencies. D major appears as the first representative of the dominant complex but by bar 112 the tonality has begun to shift towards F sharp pausing on the dominant of that key at bar 114. At bar 124 we reach F major which can be interpreted as either V\(^{\beta}\) of D or V\(^{\alpha}\) of F sharp. The tonality returns via a short transition to D major but it is clear that Liszt intended—and this is consistent with the axial implications of the opening seven bars—to present the dominant axis, rather than one single representative.

It is often held that the work "... combines the salient elements of contrast and unity of both sonata-form first movement and the multi-movement instrumental cycle ... .\(^{17}\) The above analysis confirms that Liszt's overall tonal planning adheres to traditional sonata thinking. The exposition from bar 1—205 supports the prescribed actions of the form establishing a tonic-dominant duality and the development immediately strikes out in the subdominant direction, the Beethovenian norm. As with the Schenkerian view of sonata form the development section prolongs the structural dissonance established during the course of the exposition. The section that Longyear designates as the slow movement prolongs the true dominant, F sharp major.\(^{18}\) The "finale" isolates


\(^{17}\)Rey M. Longyear, *Nineteenth-Century Romanticism in Music*, 162.
the only remaining dominant axis member yet to be given prominence (B flat) as a prologue to the essential business of recapitulation and resolution of the tonal tensions.

The methods by which Liszt achieves his compositional aims are identical to those shown in the Brahms examples given earlier. Liszt is able to give tonal coherence to the first tonal area of his sonata despite the insistence on real sequence as an expository technique and the tonal fluctuations that attend it.

The most famous example of Liszt's use of the augmented triad is the Faust Symphony. The opening bars and the introduction that follow are of particular interest. It establishes the tonic axis via a procedure similar to that of the B minor Sonata, although on a much larger scale. The introductory material presents a prolongation of the same tonic axis member (A flat or I\(\text{II}^\sharp\)), although the entire tonic axis is represented in the course of this section. The tonic axis is repeatedly defined by subdominant voice-leading (via the full triad of the subdominant axis f-a-c\(\#\), functioning independently or as a single harmonic unit, resolving to the tonic axis). This is consistent with the opening of the B minor Sonata where the augmented triad of the dominant axis defines the octave G.

**Example 3-10** Liszt, *Faust Symphony*, 1—21, Schenkerian reduction.

Of the five sonata-form works that Kaplin discusses (*Faust Symphony, Tasso, Prometheus, Les Préludes* and *Orpheus*), he notes that, among other aspects in common: "The second themes are invariably in the key a major third above the tonic, even in the minor-mode pieces." 19 He elaborates in his footnote that:

> This major-third relationship is a vital aspect of Liszt's harmonic vocabulary on foreground as well as background levels. Note, for example, the striking alternation of I and iii at the end of his song *Der du von dem Himmel bist* or the alternation of major-third-related major triads in the second theme of *Prometheus*. 20

Liszt may have employed major third tonal areas for experimental reasons.

---

20 Richard Kaplin, "Sonata Form in the Orchestral Works of Liszt", 150.
But the consistency suggests more than experimentation, it suggests that in these relationships Liszt found a useful structural tool. Quite possibly he wished to avoid the process of sonata tonicization which the dominant would provide so as to focus attention on the poetic elements of his work.

Liszt was also aware of the structural potential inherent in double-tonic sonorities. It is a consistent strategy of Liszt's to reflect the primary tonal centres of a work in the opening harmonic sonority. This is clearly the case in Les Préludes where the opening thematic fragments outline two double tonic sonorities a-c-e-g and c-e-(g)-b. It is no surprise that the keys of E and A play such a major role in the work that follows and that, as a last glimpse at the work's tonal thematicism, Les Préludes concludes with alternating E minor and C major triads reflecting the initial double-tonic complex.

**Example 3-11 Les Préludes bars 3-5 and 416.**

![Example 3-11 Les Préludes bars 3-5 and 416.](image)

Although Kaplin perceives no sonata scheme in Mazeppa, it shares, along with Liszt's other symphonic poems that he mentions, the use of the augmented triad as a prominent structural device. One of the most interesting features of this work is the substitution of dominant cadential functions between bars 84—184. Liszt decides against the true dominant-tonic resolution of V—i in F sharp minor that he has already implied, opting for a kind of enharmonic manoeuvre which produces a Vβ—i resolution in B flat minor. This transformation is then sequentially repeated with V of G becoming Vβ—i in B minor.

**Example 3-12 Mazeppa.**

**Introduction.**

1—36 V of d
37—83 d Mazeppa theme
84—121 V of f# (V of iα, or Vβ of iβ)
Schumann's Quartet opus 41 no. 1 is a prominent example of a multi-movement instrumental work that involves progressive tonality. It pre-dates Mahler's and Nielsen's symphonic attempts by about fifty years (1842). But the fascination here is not so much the status of being an historical first but the tonal centres used by Schumann in order to produce a progressive background.

Example 3-13  Quartet No. 1 Opus 41 no.1 in A minor

I

Intro.
1—29     a     i
30—33   V of F   V of Iβ

Exposition.
34—100   F   Iβ
101—150  C   Vβ

Development.
151—252

Recap.
253—374   F   Iβ

II Scherzo.
1—26     a     i
27—55   C   Vβ
56—82     a     i

Intermezzo
83—115   C   vβ

116—141     a     i
142—166   C   Vβ
167—196     a     i
The tonal outline reveals a tactic of alternation between the two tonic axis members with the introductory A minor becoming the eventual tonic. At first A minor seems only likely to attain subordinate status as it gives way to a conventional sonata movement in F major. But its character as an introduction is certainly not typical. Contrary to the Haydnese norm, it is, tonally and thematically, clearly articulated, so much so as to constitute a separate unit. In the Haydn model, the ensuing allegro would normally rob the introduction of its autonomy, assimilating its thematic content by superseding it with a more clearly identifiable version. The approach here provides the introduction with so palpable an identity that it can act as a tonal adversary. Mahler uses the same technique to create form-generating duality in his Symphonies 3, 4, 7 and 10.

In the ensuing allegro, all the prerequisite steps for tonicity seem to be fulfilled. But although the tonic is cadentially defined the cadences are not at all emphatic by sonata-exposition standards—those at bars 41 and 75 fall on unaccented beats—those at bars 58 and 65 do not involve root position tonic triads. F major, albeit tentatively established, is supported in its bid for tonicity by the standard modulation to the dominant and the consequent resolution at the corresponding point in the recapitulation. As was mentioned no attempt is made to assimilate or lessen the effect of the material from the introduction and so the two tonalities hold some parity. The second movement turns its attention to the other rival, confirming the A minor tonality with the use of the beta dominant (C) in the Intermezzo and the central sections of the Scherzo.

The Adagio sees the focus revert to F major. The point where the tonic is
restated in this ternary movement highlights the central tonal dichotomy, with Schumann employing a false reprise to give the main theme canonically in A major and A minor before resuming the F major tonic

Example 3-14 Schumann, Quartet Opus 41 no.1, ii, 41-45

This intent of bringing the two combatants into high relief is witnessed at the corresponding point in the finale—at the end of the development section (bars 180—7). Here the dominants of both keys vie for the right to enforce the supremacy of their respective tonics. At bar 196 the victory appears to fall to F and there ensues a stable period of thirteen bars of stable F major, but its reign is cut short by the return of A minor and the principal theme.

The application of the axis system throws light on the compositional process of what might otherwise be a difficult work to fathom. Its claim as a precedent-setting work is, I believe, unchallenged by this analysis although it is clear that use of two tonic axis members meant that Schumann could have chosen either tonic with little likelihood of upsetting concentric sensibilities. The structural potential of axial relationships was doubtless a primary factor in Mahler's ability to create progressive tonal works, but it is already clear from the Schumann Quartet that a composer's approach to form also has to be altered to accommodate a bi-tonal scheme.

The question of whether or not to classify this work as one which exhibits progressive tonality will be discussed later with the benefit of Mahler's works for comparison (see chapter 12). The point of this chapter has been to show examples of the axial system at work in the nineteenth century and to divine the compositional reasons for their use. In the examples of Schubert, Brahms and Liszt, axis relationships are favoured because modulations within the axis does not contradict the existing tonal function of the structural unit, which enables the composer to reconcile the concomitant need for a tonally defined structure with the tendency towards expansive form and chromatic foreground
events.

Although Schumann may have furthered the evolution of the axial system to the point where a progressive tonal scheme is possible, his work shows that a composer's formal strategy must undergo a fundamental change too. In chapter 1 we arrived at the position where tonality and form were indivisible—indeed the former articulated the latter. The ability of the Schumann's work to support a bi-tonal background depends on delaying or avoiding any unequivocal statement of tonicity. The important question is, what changes would this exert on sonata and the multi-movement instrumental work, whose primary concern, in classical works at least, had always been the establishment of the tonic? What happens to symphonic form when, instead, the primary objective is the avoidance of any clear statement on tonicity? The next chapter will deal with these questions and discuss the reasons why composers of the nineteenth century abandoned the compositional aims of the classical period.
Chapter 4
Part I: The Problem of the Finale

"As early as 1921 Paul Bekker wrote about the Sixth Symphony: "all the essentials of the symphonic action are entrusted to the finale more than ever"¹

Especially in works involving progressive tonality, the finale holds the vital role in the symphonic design—vital because the ultimate tonal goal is attained there. Rather than merely confirming the tonality that had been established in the opening movement, finales of progressive tonal works embody the definitive act of tonicization. This may entail choosing between several options provided by the preceding movements, picking up a tonal thread or expanding a new one to the point where it can assume tonic status. The fact that the decision is irreversible is often forcefully articulated in some way; by the sheer weight of orchestral numbers for example, or even the introduction of vocal forces. At a glance progressive tonality and symphonic form are inextricably linked on account of the new functions the latter is required to perform in order to accommodate the former.

In the previous chapter and the Schumann A minor Quartet analysed there, we saw a tendency to alter normal classical formal functions in order to accommodate a progressive tonal scheme. There, the slow introduction was expanded and left unassimilated by the following sonata-allegro and the tonal definition of that sonata form was muted. One lone example of progressive tonality in the realms of absolute music does not provide sufficient grounds to deny Mahler's progressive tonality as innovative. On the other hand, even if Mahler's techniques were proved to be independent of Schumann's example, it would not provide sufficient grounds to deny that the technique evolved logically out of a nineteenth-century aesthetic. If we ask, "if progressive tonality is the answer, what was the question?," then progressive tonality can become one more step in the evolution of tonality and symphonic form; an advanced solution no doubt, but one in response to the same problems that had faced composers throughout the century. This is a more feasible than attributing progressive tonality to the caprice of a single individual or maintaining its derivation from a chance discovery of Schumann's lone example. Certainly the mutual and independent symphonic responses of Nielsen and Mahler makes more sense in such an historical context.

The "question" to which progressive tonality may have been the answer is the same one that Dahlhaus called the doctrine of originality.² Such aesthetic

values would logically seek to be ratified in all parameters of a composition, not just in the field of expository technique. Clearly the nineteenth century was not in a position to embrace progressive tonality wholeheartedly but it was very much intent on placing greater emphasis on the finale—a trend that began as early as Beethoven. In the end progressive tonality can be seen not as an advance in the evolution of tonal handling *per se*, but as an advanced solution to a problem in symphonic design.

For the greater part of the nineteenth century, the finale remained the most difficult problem in symphonic design. Even Wagner, the master of large-scale structure, and surely the greatest musical intellect of the period, remarked late in life that if he were to turn to symphonic composition after the completion of *Parsifal*, the works must, because of the obstacle of the finale, be in one movement.\(^3\)

Indeed Liszt’s symphonic poems may well have taken the form they did for very much the same reasons as those which dissuaded Wagner from symphonic composition. Lewis then notes Beethoven’s awareness of the problem and begins to hint the cause of the "finale problem", namely the imbalance created by the dramatic power of sonata form;

... the dramatic force remained concentrated in the first movement. Even Beethoven’s conversion of the symphonic Minuet into the Scherzo, a direct reflection of the increased weight of the first movement and the concomitant need for heightened dramatic conflict in the rest of the symphony, did not change the fundamental shape—an unwinding from the climactic opening movement. Beethoven in part circumvented this difficulty by attempting to balance the weight of the first movement with sheer energy, in what Bekker calls the "Apoteosis-Finale;" this gives at least the illusion of an accumulation of energy from the second to the last movement.\(^4\)

If we accept the "problem of the finale", then it is with Beethoven and the enormous sonata-form works, as typified by the *Eroica*, that the responsibility for creating the problem rests. More to the point, it is also with Beethoven, in particular some of the watershed works of his late period, that the search for a solution begins.

One solution has already been noted, that of the accumulation of energy that Bekker referred to as the "apothecosis-finale", as is typified by Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony Finale and that of the Quartet in C Op. 59, no. 3; the latter illustrating the injection of contrapuntal complexity as a closely allied tactic. With respect to contrapuntal finales, the finale of Mozart’s K.551 was undoubtedly a landmark work in the symphonic tradition. Both the Beethoven Quartet mentioned above and the original version of Opus 130 are also prime


\(^4\)Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, 101.
examples, as are the Fifth symphonies of Bruckner and Mahler and the Fourth of Brahms.

Lewis takes the opinion that the most successful symphonic finales before Mahler were the Beethoven Third and Ninth and the Brahms Fourth. He notes that they are all variation forms but ones with inherent foreground duality. In the Ninth the duality is between chorus and orchestra in the Third it is a thematic duality, to which could be added the duality inherent in the pot-pourri of compositional techniques—namely fugue and variation. The passacaglia theme in the finale of Brahms Fourth is in E minor, but the harmony initially implies A minor. But in all cases the duality does not reach a background level. Our appreciation of these movements as appropriate responses comes from the fact that they accept the status quo regarding tonicity. The first movement has provided all the tonicization procedures and these movements, dramatic as they are, steer well clear of any background level conflict.

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, the basis for many romantic symphonies, seeks to balance the work by expounding a modal duality, which is unequivocally resolved in favour of the major only in the finale. As a compositional tactic, "progressive modality" is the obvious forerunner to progressive tonality and is in fact often employed concurrently, as in Mahler's symphonies 3, 5 and 7. It is a device that is common currency in the nineteenth century in, for example, the First Symphony of Brahms, the Fourth of Schumann, Tchaikovsky's Fifth and all the completed minor key symphonies of Bruckner. This is already an advance on the classical and pre-classical position; as Rosen points out, progressive modality occurs for very different reasons in Haydn and Mozart.

A finale in major to a work in minor was naturally nothing more than a *tierce de picardie* in larger terms; in eighteenth-century tonality a major chord still had less tension than a minor one, and gave a more satisfactory resolution.\(^5\)

In light of the observations in Chapter 2 as to the inherent dissonance of the minor triad (the minor third being neutral to the dominant not the tonic) the classical position can be justified on theoretical grounds. But the fact that the major triad is inherently more consonant can not down play the difference between the classical position and one which allows the full-on confrontation and dramatization of opposing modes as in the Fifth of Beethoven.

Of all these techniques of dramatizing the finale in a multi-movement work (matters of texture, thematic manipulation, rhythmic excitement, and changes in modality) none deal with matters beyond the foreground level. Ultimately, the very existence of progressive tonality suggests that the background tonal structures became involved in the process of dramatizing a work's conclusion as well. But if the rationale behind this structural planning derives from the

---

need to balance the opening sonata form movement then these techniques all seem elaborate in the extreme compared with the obvious choice of balancing the work by composing a movement of similar proportions and character to that which opened the work. Talking of the finale of Mozart's G minor Quintet K. 516, Rosen provides one answer as to why this is impossible.

The problem of the finale is naturally one of weight, of sufficient seriousness and dignity to balance the opening movement, but there would be no problem at all if it were not for the classical conception of the finale as a resolution of the entire work. There was, after all, nothing except his sensibility to prevent Mozart from writing a last movement as complex and closely knit as a first movement, like the finale of Brahms's Third Symphony, for example. Beethoven was capable of a choral work as tightly organized as the Gloria from the Mass in D, and he must have felt that the looser shape of the choral finale to the Ninth Symphony was necessary in its place. A finale demanded a simpler and less complex form than an opening movement: that is why it is generally a rondo, or a set of variations. . . . If it is a 'sonata,' then it is necessarily a squarer and simpler version of that form. . . . But in any case, the thematic material of a finale is always rhythmically squarer than that of a first movement....

We will return to the question of how Brahms was able to use a complex and closely knit sonata-form movement for the finale of the Third Symphony later. Rosen points out the purpose of such squarness is to ensure that it "resolves, grounds and settles" the dramatic tensions of the work. This may well be a reasonable compositional tactic in response to a work of limited scale; but the Mozart G minor Quintet is not. Mozart clearly felt the need to deal with the weight of a more intense and larger than usual sonata opening by the insertion of a substantial G minor introduction before a comparatively light-weight G major finale. But as we shall continue to see during the course this chapter, resolution is not entirely a matter of classical aesthetic values but a predestined structural imperative governed by the tonal handling of the first movement.

Clearly then the problem of balance demands the attention of the composer more persistently the more the first movement is expanded in size and dramatic power. As the process of musical evolution brought with it the desire for continual more monumental forms the problem was always destined to exacerbate. Kerman's critique of the finale of the F Major Quartet Op 59 no 1 is as revealing an account of this 'problem' as one can find.

That it strikes a tone wrongly scaled to the quartet as a whole, however, has been generally felt and expressed by the commentators in one way or another.

The problem is a subtle one, because the Finale fits excellently with the Adagio; its slightly strained high spirits make a fine intellectual foil to those exaggerated tears, and the psychological transition is very wonderfully managed. But whereas the Adagio, sentimental or not, will pass as sheer

relaxation after the two exhaustive early statements, the Finale leaves one wanting more or at least something different—something heavier, I am afraid. There are some intrinsically less interesting movements that succeed better at the end of Beethoven pieces. The Finale of the Sixth Symphony is one. In the quartet, Beethoven was writing at the very top of his form, but his instinct for the larger coherence faltered.\[7\] What I think Kerman is driving at is that the finale is in a no-win situation. There is no tonal justification for a weightier movement, the structural dominant at the background level having been long-since provided by the first movement. A weightier movement, one that went through the motions of tonic establishment, conflict and resolution all over again would amount to mere tautology, the tonicity of F having already been established beyond doubt. Beethoven would have been ill-advised to try to dramatize a situation to which we have already been informed of the outcome—indeed it would be almost impossible. But on the other hand, the use of the "lighter" movement that avoids background level conflict and which grounds the tensions of the work, the route that Beethoven chose here, leaves an inescapable feeling of imbalance across the work as a whole because of the enormous span and power of the opening sonata-allegro.

Paradoxically, the problem of the finale is created by the success of the first movement form. This is the position we started with at the beginning of this chapter (see footnote 3). Our discussion has taken us full circle and has, in the process, only managed to outline the techniques by which composers sought to balance their works in face of the dilemma outlined in the previous paragraph. The success of the Beethovenian sonata-allegro was hard-won ground that future generations, and Beethoven himself, were doubtless loath to vacate. Or was he?

Despite Lewis's implication that Beethoven could not vacate the established classical position, I must contend that he was aware of its limitations and actively sought a solution. The bulk of the remainder of this chapter must deal with Beethoven for it is in the course of his career that the "problem" most acutely manifests itself and is subsequently remedied; not through the manipulations of foreground events in the finales already noted, but through revolutionary approaches to the background structures of symphonic design. I use revolutionary with good cause because some of Beethoven's solutions are ruthlessly anti-classical. Two works in particular, the C sharp minor Quartet and the Hammerklavier Sonata Op. 106 are indicative of this approach.

---

Part II: Beethoven

Of all the compositions between Op. 18 and Op. 59, one in particular springs to mind in connection with the F-major Quartet: the Eroica Symphony itself. . . . the most remarkable single fact about it [the Eroica] is its span. It dwarfs every previous effort of the classic composers, and opens the door to The Damnation of Faust, the Ring and the Mahler symphonies, to say nothing of Beethoven's Ninth. 8

This is not a position that I can uphold unreservedly. The Eroica in some senses represents the zenith of the classical style; its point of furthest expansion after which no further advance is possible, rather than a point of departure that sets the standard for future epochs as Kerman suggests. Mahler's remarkable span is, as I will endeavor to show, attributable more to Beethoven's late works than the high classicism of the Eroica or Op 59, no.1. Paradoxically, Kerman later hints at this opposing stance himself.

Beethoven was looking for alternatives to sonata form; that is easy enough to see. The years of his interest in fugue are also years of de-emphasis of the symphonic ideal established in the second period, the image of the Eroica Symphony and the "Razumovsky" Quartets. As he now shied away a little from sonata form, treated it more and more freely, and deflected it ironically to lyrical ends, fugue still offered him a fresh means to attain vehemence—but vehemence without the drama inherent in the classic style. 9

The drama of which Kerman speaks is primarily a tonal one—the dramatic polarization of tonic and dominant. A full discussion of Beethoven's preoccupation with fugue is not appropriate here, but what does concern us is the revolutionary thinking that led to a fugue replacing the traditional sonata-allegro first movement in a quartet. Suffice to say, as Kerman does, that fugue eschews all the "...tired characteristics of sonata style". 10 Such revolutionary thinking is equally apparent in Beethoven's "deflection" of sonata form to lyrical ends and his decision to finally abandon the traditional mainstay of tonic-dominant polarity. When Beethoven uses a fugue for the first movement C sharp minor Quartet, instead of the usual sonata form, one is tempted to suggest that he was dealing with a compositional aim that sonata form in its usual place could no longer hope to achieve. In short, both the "deflection" of sonata form and the use of a fugue for an opening movement are different solutions to the same problem; that of the imbalance in the distribution of symphonic weight.

Experimentation with the placement of the symphonic centre of gravity seems a major compositional concern in the late Quartets generally—the E flat

and A minor Quartets, Opus 127 and 132 for example:

Both include dance movements that are extended and contrapuntally involved; both locate their centers of gravity in great adagios and proceed to relatively simple finales dissolving, at the very end, into an evanescent ether.  

Then with the C sharp minor and B flat Quartets, opus 131 and 130:

The dance movements shrink and become strikingly popular, even childlike in tone. The slow movements no longer feel so central—for there are now two slow movements in each quartet—and in consequence the finales are treated with a new complexity and emphasis. Or to put it the other way around: these quartets drive to climax in their finales, and in consequence tend to keep the earlier movements less weighty than before.  

Clearly Beethoven was searching for alternatives to the traditional four-movement form that held its centre of gravity in the first movement. But an expanded finale must still be an appropriate response to the movements that preceded it. We have already discussed this problem regarding the F major Quartet Op. 59 no. 1. If Beethoven were to succeed in displacing the work’s centre of gravity to the finale, his approach to the form of the preceding movements must function in such a way as to make the weightier movement a logical outcome.

At a number of not unexposed places in the present study, finales have certainly seemed to be causing trouble. I have gone so far as to postulate a "problem of the finale" in Beethoven—with scant warrant, some readers may have felt like complaining. The best I can offer by way of warrant is the Finale of the Quartet in C# minor, which provides a standard of what a finale can be and do. If we keep the notion of a "problem" it is Beethoven’s most nearly perfect solution; if we do not, it simply ranks as his greatest finale. Success was achieved, furthermore, under the particularly severe conditions of mutual service posited by this particular work of art—so that the Finale has to deal not only with its own conflicts but also, more richly than ever before, with those of the quartet as a whole. This double task (which Beethoven had just invented for himself) was met magnificently by the movement at hand.

Kerman came up with the notion that the fugue’s role is to plot the tonal terrain for the entire quartet. In pursuing this he concludes that v is tonicized, albeit with less emphasis than VI. This can only be at bars 34-5, but I would suggest the implication is not substantiated and the fugue slides off towards B major which upholds its claim cadentially at bar 40. Given the capacity for fugue to drift through keys rather than establish them, it is an important aspect of this fugue that it avoids members of the dominant axis. Primarily it emphasizes another tonic axis member in A major and the subdominant axis represented by D major with very strong implication of F sharp, especially at

---

the movement's close. In addition to these the fugue outlines the whole-tone neighbours of the tonic, B and E flat, with B major receiving the most emphasis. This is, in my estimation, a large-scale whole-tone descent from i to Iβ (A major) at bar 60, passing through B and E flat minor in the interim.

Example 4-1 Beethoven, C sharp Minor Quartet Op 131 (first movement).

No. 1

1—35  c#  i
36—44  B  IIβ
45—53  eb  ii
54—59  B  IIβ
60—72  A  Iβ
73—82  D  IVβ
83—110  c#  i
111—121  C#  I, (V of F# ?)

The subdominant emphasis which Kerman considers largely due to the persistence of the subdominant answer in the fugue is all well and good. But it must also be noted that the movement ends perilously close to converting C sharp into the dominant of F sharp because of the neapolitan harmony at bar 113. The tendency for the tonic to become a dominant is immediately borne out in relation to the second movement, which relates to C# as IVβ. This relationship is thrown into high relief by the repeated octaves that bridges the two movements; an action that quite audibly transforms the tonic note into a leading note. As we shall see, a similar tactic is employed in the Hammerklavier.

Example 4-2 Beethoven, C sharp Minor Quartet Op 131 (second movement).

No. 2 D major: IVβ

1—23  D  I
24—48  D-V of f#  I—Vα
49—83  V of A, A-D  V of V, V—I
84—95  D  I
96—126  D-V of b  I—V of ivα
127—168  D-G  I—IV
169—198  D  I

The second movement then sets out in the key of the D, or, in axial terms, IVβ. There is certainly a hint of sonata style with the move to the dominant, but the modulation is unsubstantiated and revealed to be on the dominant only. This partial modulation to the dominant can be seen as a practical step to remove the threat to D's tonicity posed by the arrival on the chord of C sharp major at bar 44. This clearly echoes of the end of the fugue: C sharp again
suggesting itself as a dominant here, reminding us of the true subdominant F sharp as a latent force. Nothing changes regarding the tonal orientation of the work at this point, it is still emphasizing a subdominant bias but Beethoven is making a point of dramatizing the axial substitution of D for F sharp.

Example 4-3 Beethoven, C sharp Minor Quartet Op 131 (third and fourth movements).

No. 3  B minor—V of A major (ii—V of Iβ)
1—6  b
7—10  B  V of V of Iβ
11  E  V of Iβ

No. 4  A major: (Iβ )
1—230  A  I
231—242  C  Vβ
243—253  A  I
254—263  F  Iβ
264—277  A  I

After the functional bridge that is the third movement, the fourth begins in A major, a set of tonally "flat" variations. The first half of the work is therefore set to establish the tonal sequence I—IVβ—Iβ, successfully withholding any structural dominant either within or between any of the four movements. The only tonal activity in the Andante comes at the eighth variation, providing a striking sense of dislocation in the process. The tonalities of C and F coinciding with abrupt tempo changes to allegretto, interrupts the predictable flow and tonal flatness of the variations. In terms of tonal function they are striking indeed, the first in C major is Vβ of A. This has always struck me as an excited harbinger of the more prolonged dominant axis tonalities to come in the fifth and sixth movements and the essential business of tonicization. The second occurrence of the allegretto passage is resolved to F, or in axial terms Iβ relative to A. This partly deflates the excitement—the second allegretto section providing the resolution for the first—but the anticipation of the imminent arrival of the structural dominant set up by the initial outburst of C major remains and is vindicated the moment the scherzo strikes up.

The expectation of the structural dominant is so strong now, as much on account of its absence up until this point as Beethoven's arousing our appetite for it at the end of the Andante. The scherzo, being in E major is Vβ relative to C sharp—its axial relationship with G sharp being continually reaffirmed by the fermata pauses on the dominant of G sharp. This results in an axial cadence where the implied V-I in G sharp minor becomes Vα-I in E. In this
way, Beethoven clearly articulates the change in tonal orientation of the work from the tonic-subdominant bias of the first half of the work to a dominant-tonic bias in the second. Equally clear is that there is a long way to go before the work will find resolution. The character of the scherzo paradoxically belies the extent of the tonal revolution that it instigates. The work is instantly transformed from being tonally passive to tonally dynamic. However, an emphatic resolution of the work's tensions would be best achieved by the attainment of the true dominant in conjunction with the provision of some answer to the serious mood of the opening fugue.

Time and again in works of later composers, a structural dominant implicit between movements will demand to be focussed in the internal content of the final movement in order to emphasize closure. We shall see examples of this in Brahms Third Symphony and Piano Quintet later in this chapter. This is destined to happen here also, but in the meantime Beethoven still dramatizes his refusal to act—if one can call the content of this scherzo dramatic. Dominant bias is assured and so the drama is comic, but, having attained a structural dominant we grow impatient for Beethoven to do something with it. Like the Scherzo of the Seventh Symphony, excessive repetition within the movement is the means by which the humour is effected. But while we are secure in the knowledge that complete tonicization will ensue, the present dominant exhibits no teleological drive towards resolution.

The Adagio Sixth movement is peremptory in its dismissal of the scherzo and, in reaching the dominant minor, the work has arrived at the point where the essential business of tonicization approaches consummation. When we finally embark on the finale our expectations for a movement that single-mindedly focuses on the process of tonicization is fulfilled

Example 4-4 Beethoven, C sharp Minor Quartet Op 131 (seventh movement).

Exposition
1—55  c#    i
56—77  E    Vβ

Development
78—98  f#    iv
99—123 b    iv of iv
124—135 D    IVβ
136—159 V of c#    V of i

Recapitulation
160—185 c#    i
186—210 f#    iv
211—241 D    IVβ
242—260 C#    I

Coda
261—388 c#—C#    i—I
As a solution to the "finale problem" Kerman is in no doubt; 

Beethoven has arranged things here so that he can strike frankly with his 
best weapons—themes in strong contrast and in arresting juxtaposition, 
exciting modulations, "expansive and argumentative development," trium-
phant returns, and great summary codas. Sonata form is treated without rigid-
ity and yet (what is rare in finales) with full emphasis and amplitude ...14

This statement sums up the success of the movement, and rightly apportions 
the glory to Beethoven's preparation as much as to the movement itself. The 
centre of gravity is successfully shifted to the finale because Beethoven has 
manipulated the overall structure in such a way that this "heavier" movement 
is the desired response, in stark contrast to the preparation for the Opus 59 no 
1 finale, which precluded such a response. The essence of this preparation is 
the postponement of the background tonicizing dominant, rendering the over-
all tonal contour of the work something akin to a retrograde of a traditional 
classical work.

Example 4-5

C sharp minor Quartet, Op. 131. Tonal progression

Mvt. 1 2 (3) 4 5 6 7 
i— ivβ—Iβ— Vβ— v— i (Vβ— V— i— I)

Classical Model

Mvt. 1 2 3 4 
I— V— I IV— I— I

The success of this finale is largely attributable to Beethoven's handling of the 
form and content that precedes it. The postponement of the tonicizing domi-
nant had to be the primary objective in order to achieve this transfer of sym-
phonic weight to the finale and the use of a fugue to open the work helped to 
effect this compositional aim. But it was not the only option.

The course of this discussion has ignored the chronology of Beethoven's 
works. The Quartet merely provided a good starting point in the discussion of 
Beethoven's new compositional direction, because the extraordinary nature of 
the work immediately imparted by the number of movements and the unprece-
dented opening fugue. But the Quartet was not Beethoven's first effort to alter 
the classical balance. Prior to this can comes a work that involves an apparent-
ly traditional sonata form movement as its opening statement and a fairly sub-
stantial one at that. How then does Beethoven accommodate his new com-
positional principles in a four-movement work that involves a sonata-form 
first movement?

Rosen is compelled to mention third-related tonality and its role in sonata

14Joseph Kerman, The Beethoven Quartets, 341.
structure in connection with Beethoven's *Hammerklavier*. But the rationale he offers is that Beethoven was attempting to find "... substitutes for the dominant in the classical tonic-dominant polar relation." It is implausible to me that Beethoven should seek "substitutes" for the dominant. Why would he do so? The very act of experimenting with alternatives would surely be to discover the different effects they would have on form, as opposed to whether or not they could perform the same function. The contents of my previous chapters give my views as to what these properties were. But the fact that previous composers did not choose to use the submediant as a contrasting tonal area suggests that it was not suitable for the job at hand: or conversely, that Beethoven's employment of it here was due to the requirements of a different formal logic. Rosen continues on his same line;

His expansion of the large-scale harmonic range took place within the limits of the classical language, and never infringed on the tonic-dominant polarity or the classical movement towards a greater tension away from the tonic. These secondary tonalities to his work, mediants and submediants, function within the large structure as true dominants. They create a long-range dissonance against the tonic and so provide the necessary tension for a move towards a central climax.

Rosen's opinion relies on a number of premises. Firstly that even with the advent of third-related tonality in sonata form, the compositional aim remains the same—that it seeks to put in place some long range structural dissonance the resolution of which generates the form. Secondly, as a result of this first position, there is to be expected a point of climax immediately before the resolution of the dissonance; the point presumably where the desire for resolution is at its greatest. In other words, Rosen's concept of sonata form is fixed. For him sonata-allegro is defined by conflict of the kind exemplified in the *Eroica* first movement, and he will admit no other definition. But at the same time, he does not provide any theoretical basis for his claim that third-related keys are equally able to perform the same function as the dominant nor does he make any distinction as to the relative dissonant qualities of the four third-related keys.

Continuing with an axis view of tonality we can interpret third-related keys without any ambiguity, and when this is applied to Opus 106, it yields striking evidence of the same compositional tactic that we have just discussed with regard to Opus 131. Far from seeking an alternative tonal centre that will perform the same function as the dominant, Beethoven is avoiding the structural ramifications of traditional sonata form so that the dramatic weight of tonicization can come later in the work.

---

Example 4-6
Sonata Opus 106 (Hammerklavier)

I
Exposition
1—44  B♭  I
45—123  G  IVα

Development
124—192  Eb  IV
193—200  —D  Vβ of IVβ
201—226  B  IVβ

Recapitulation
227—238  B♭  I
239—266  G♭  I♭
267—272  b  iv♭
273—405  B♭  I

II
1—46  B♭  I
47—106  bb  i
107—175  B♭  I

III
relative to  I#  (B♭)
1—46  I#  i  i♭
47—72  D  i♭  Iα
73—75  I#  i  i♭
76—84  Eb  IVα  IV
85—124  I#  i  i♭
125—155  F#  I  I♭
156—163  G  IVβ  IVα
164—165  b-B  iv-IV  iv-IVβ
166—187  I#  i  i♭

IV Largo
1  F–D♭–G♭  V–V♭–I♭
2  G♭–B  I♭–IVβ
3—8  g♭  vo of Vα
9—10  A–V of B♭  Vα–V

Allegro risoluto
11—52  B♭  I
53—83  Ab  bVII
Beethoven's tactic is not so different from that which he was to use in the first half of Opus 131, except here the tonal procedure is confined within the context of a single movement. The provision of the dominant at the deeper structural levels is not given in this movement and instead he employs tonic and subdominant axis members exclusively. The use of the subdominant axis in its entirety can almost be considered tonally thematic in the work as a whole. Clearly subdominant bias dominates the background level, and, reflecting this, foreground events such as the opening fanfare tonicizes the B flat triad through subdominant voice-leading motions. These are present throughout the movement, particularly in the fugue subject in the development section and in the coda.

Example 4-7 Op. 106 first movement subdominant voice-leading

The use of G major as a second tonal area in the exposition is unusual in itself—as was noted in chapter 2, it constitutes a subdominant axis member.
The development section continues the subdominant orientation of the movement, focusing on E flat and B. The recapitulation features axial modulation around the tonic (moving to G flat) and continued subdominant emphasis with the result being a sonata form movement that, contrary to Schenkerian definition, contains no structural dominant at the background level. This is without precedent—even the *Waldstein* Sonata (Op. 53), a ground-breaking work in the use of third-related second tonal areas, provides a substantial dominant preparation before the recapitulation and one of lesser proportions at the end of the *Introduzione* movement that links the main outer movements. Here we find only foreground structural dominants consisting of an imperfect cadence at bar 8 which is then closed at bar 17 rounding off the first tonal area with a second V—I closure at bars 31-35. The passage preceding the recapitulation contains no dominant preparation, B flat seems to be stumbled upon rather than conclusively attained. The recapitulation and coda provide no late inclusion of a structural dominant but instead dramatically reaffirms the subdominant orientation of the movement with the fortissimo outburst of the main motive in B minor (ivβ) at bar 267.

The second movement, a parodistic Scherzo, still refuses to provide the desired structural dominant, maintaining instead the tonic major and minor throughout. The subdominant orientation is recalled at the conclusion of the movement with the alternating octave B♭—B, a counterbalance, as well as a bathetic parody, of the corresponding B minor outburst at bar 267 in the first movement.

Example 4-8 *Hammerklavier*, second movement bar 160—72.
The enormous Adagio that is the third movement adheres to the same pattern as the first movement: a tonic axis member supported throughout by subdominant axis tonalities (the entire axis, B-G-Eb, in fact). The salient point here is whether or not a slow movement of this length would be possible in a work where the tonic had been already outlined at the background structural level. This is the very problem Kerman perceived with the finale to Op. 59 no.1, that would preclude Beethoven from instituting a larger movement as a finale. Such a movement would be inappropriate because it would have no tonal function to perform. With the Hammerklavier, the situation is exactly the opposite—the tension created by the as yet unfulfilled background tonicization is conceivably what sustains the Adagio’s enormous length. Was there anything to stop Beethoven composing an adagio of this length before Op. 106 aside from the possibility that it would become dull?

The one-bar introduction to the movement highlights the point of the absence thus far of a structural dominant, a point that Tovey took special note of.

The wonderful 2 introductory notes of this Adagio break the shock of the first F# minor chord, but do not weaken its meaning, for they offer no explanation or apology for it, but are themselves parts of it—viz., the 3rd and 5th. They leave it to the full chord to reveal what they mean. Until its arrival their meaning varies. After Bb, A sounds like its leading-note. After A, C# sounds like the leading-note of D. These implications are indeed too obvious for the listener to take notice of them; but his mind moves by their direction, and the F# minor chord utterly transforms everything. These 2 notes constitute one of the profoundest thoughts in all music.17

It is fair to say that such status is not often acquired by a mere two notes and that Tovey is not prone to over-exaggeration. Our attention is drawn to these notes as leading notes by our desire to hear them as such in the wake of Beethoven’s refusal to provide a structural dominant in the preceding movements. What Beethoven transforms in his resolution to the F sharp minor chord is our expectations for the remainder of the work. If Beethoven had attained a structural dominant here, and V\(\alpha\) (A major) would suffice, the pressure to complete the background tonicization of the work would not allow the work to dwell too long on a tonal dissonance before achieving closure. Certainly an adagio of this length would be intolerable. The tonally undynamic first two movements have created an environment where stasis is acceptable, and the Adagio for all its length is a "flat", non-tonicizing movement, one which fills the sonata out to its heavenly length without creating a nagging feeling that the essential business of the work is being held up.

The finale is likewise based on tonic axis members (with a flat functioning

17Donald Francis Tovey, A Companion to Beethoven’s Pianoforte Sonatas, (London, 1931), 238.
as a whole-tone intermediary between B flat and G flat) with, once again, a pronounced articulation of the entire subdominant axis (B-G-Eb) in the central part of the movement. In the final analysis the structural dominant lies, not in any of the movements proper, but in the only section thus far omitted—the Largo introduction to the finale. This establishes the true dominant F at the opening and the alpha dominant as preparation for the cadence into the movement proper and B flat major. Most importantly, the intervening material (bar 3—8) establishes G sharp minor functioning as v of Vα and thus fulfills, in axial terms, the axiomatic requirements for the dominant axis to attain background level status, which in turn ensures the completion of the Schenkerian "triangle" for the entire work.

Example 4-9 Schenkerian graph, Largo introduction

![Schenkerian graph, Largo introduction](image)

The plagal leading-note conclusion of both the first and the second movements reflected the subdominant bias at the background level. In a similar fashion the foreground events in the finale reflect the attainment of a structural dominant at the background level, that is, the fugue subject itself prominently emphasizes the leading note, rejoicing in that which had earlier been withheld. This is particularly the case with the concluding bars of the movement, which stand in stark contrast to the closures of the first and second movements both of which were shrouded in subdominant voice-leading relationships. Here there is a striking concentration of leading-note motions outlining the complete B flat major scale (bar 398-409).

Beethoven's tactics in Opus 106 add to the weight of evidence that the "finale problem" was a real issue for him in his later works. This work, along with the Ninth Symphony and the C sharp minor Quartet, exhibit tonal characteristics which clearly suggest more than mere experimentation with third-related keys. It amounts to a total re-thinking of the classical system—a clear move towards the redistribution of symphonic weight, from the first movement to some later point in the work. By leaving the imperative tonic defining
step until just prior to the finale, Beethoven was able to delay the completion of the I-V-I triangle which ordinarily would have been completed by the first movement recapitulation. It is no coincidence that in terms of length this is his most substantial sonata. To borrow Schumann's superlatives for a moment, Beethoven's "heavenly length" was only made possible by this delaying action, which in effect gives the entire work responsibility for unfolding the tonal plot, not the first movement only.

The final Beethoven work I wish to discuss could as easily have been discussed in the previous chapter along with the Schumann Quartet. There I hinted that the Quartet may claim an individual place in the evolution of progressive tonality. But the work is not without precedent and although the Beethoven forerunner differs in overall structure, the technical similarities are indeed striking. I include it here because the desire to locate the centre of gravity in the finale is at the heart of its formal innovations and because it stands at the beginning of Beethoven's late period.

Example 4-10 Cello Sonata in C major Op. 102 no. 1

I
Andante  
C  
1—27  I  III  Vβ

Allegro
28—39  vi (ivα)  i  i
40—75  v  v

Development
76—97  III-iv-V of i  Vβ-iv-V

Recapitulation
98—105  i  i
106—118  VI-V of i  Iα—V of i
119—154  i  i

II  
C

Adagio
1—9  I—V of I

Tempo d’Andante
10—16  I

Allegro vivace
17—42  I
43—73  V of V—V

Development
74—125  bVI—V of I

Recapitulation
126—182  I
183—212  bVI-IV—bII  (IVβ)
213—249  I
It becomes more a matter of course on proceeding with this study that any important nineteenth-century innovation will find a precedent in Beethoven. His Cello Sonata in C, Op. 102 no.1 is a remarkable work in terms of both its overall structure and its exploitation of a bi-tonal ambiguity. Beethoven begins with an Andante introduction of 27 bars, and, as in the Schumann A minor Quartet, the thematic material is not integrated into the succeeding Allegro. C major is established, but is not tonicized at the background level. A dominant of middleground status only is provided at bar 16. This incomplete tonicization of C leaves the way open for a more effectively tonicized A minor to supersede it in the following Allegro, a fully fledged sonata-form movement complete with a tonicizing dominant at the deepest level. But in direct parallel with the Schumann example, Beethoven denies emphatic tonic statement by frustrating the usual metrical requirements for satisfactory closure. The all-important tonic cadence at the end of the recapitulation falls on a metrically weak third beat of the bar, and the coda, far from taking steps to rectify this lack of tonic emphasis turns in the subdominant direction before cadencing with a duplicate metrical displacement at bar 153.

*Example 4-11 Cello Sonata Opus 102 no.1, I, 142-3 and 152-3.*

The second movement follows the same pattern of a slow introduction followed by a sonata-allegro. The adagio section briefly re-establishes C major before wandering through a succession of diminished sevenths. Beethoven is clearly dramatizing the tonal dichotomy that he has set up between C and A minor; with C emerging quietly victorious at the re-appearance of the Andante theme at bar ten. It would seem that Beethoven is indicating that the first sonata allegro in A minor was something of a false continuation of the C major introduction and that now he is retraceing his steps so that he might continue down the correct path. The sonata-form finale is straightforward enough although the two passages at the head of the development section and coda re-kindle a degree of tonal suspense, only to dissolve that tension in outbursts of buffoonery (bars 75—90).

A case can certainly be made that this work involves progressive tonality. Despite the C major introduction, the first key to be fully tonicized at all levels is A minor. Although Beethoven takes steps to de-emphasize the tonicity of A
minor by manipulation of surface rhythmic characteristics it is not enough to diminish its claim to tonicity entirely. Through a process of recollection and subsequent tonal re-direction, in conjunction with a more emphatic sonata form, C major assumes the position of tonic (note how emphatic the three tonic chords at the conclusion of the work are, having been given full metrical stress). As a result, the finale becomes the focal point because it is only there that tonicity is unequivocally decided.

I have shown three examples from Beethoven's late period all of which share the same concern for the redistribution of the symphonic centre of gravity, so that in each case some background tonicizing event is held over until the latter stages of the work. The outward appearances of these works differ markedly, but the common compositional aim is sufficient to indicate a fundamental change in Beethoven's thinking, one which rejects the established classical norm. For a continuation of these compositional concerns in the nineteenth-century we look again to Brahms, whom we have already discussed regarding his realisation of the potential of axis relationships for passive modulation in relation to his concertos. The opening bars of his Opus 1 Piano Sonata points to the strong influence exerted by Beethoven's Hammerklavier, and it is no surprise therefore to find structural relationships as well as thematic ones.

Part III: Brahms

In Chapter 3, I discussed Brahms's use of axial tonal relationships in his concertos. It is a tactic he employs in most of his large-scale instrumental works also. The desire to place more emphasis on the finale is no less apparent than in the late-Beethoven works mentioned above; a fact that Rosen noted as exceptional regarding the unrestrained use of sonata form in the finale of the Third Symphony. In most cases, however, Brahms locates his centre of gravity by a conflation of the methods used in the Beethoven examples. The lyrical treatment of sonata form involving the avoidance of the structural dominant as in the Hammerklavier, combined with emphatic sonata-form finales (similar to Beethoven's C sharp minor Quartet), invests the latter stages of the work with the task of completing background tonicization.

Musgrave cites the Hammerklavier along with Schubert's Wanderer Fantasy as the most likely inspiration for the Opus 1 Sonata.\(^{18}\) Thematic comparisons between the Beethoven opening and his own would doubtless have drawn a typically acidic reply from Brahms, but his background structure reveals a relationship in compositional tactics that is not so easily dismissed. Clearly he had taken up the structural concerns of late-period Beethoven and although this first experiment achieved only partial success, later attempts to

emulate the success of the *Hammerklavier* were more fruitful.

**Example 4-12** Brahms, Piano Sonata Opus 1.

I

**Exposition**

1—38 C I

39—87 a ivα

**Development**

88—99 c i

100—117 Eb Vβ

118—152 b—V of G vα—V of V

153—172 G V

**Recapitulation**

173—197 C I

198—238 c i

239—270 C I

II

c—C i—I

III
e—C—e iα—I—iα

IV

1—41 C (E) I—Iα

42—86 G V

87—106 C I

107—172 a ivα

173—292 C I

The use of the relative minor (ivα) is surely indicative of the influence of the *Hammerklavier*, although the rationale behind Beethoven's use of it seems to have escaped the young Brahms. The development concentrates almost solely on the dominant axis, which unreservedly asserts the tonic, and therefore the form-generating tension created by withholding the dominant in the exposition by substituting a subdominant key (ivα) in its place is already dissipated by the time we reach the recapitulation. In the end the movement represents a hybrid of two separate branches of sonata thinking and it is the more traditional element that has the greater structural influence. The provision of a potent structural dominant in the development section of the first movement seals C's tonicity and the remainder of the sonata can neither dispute this nor feed off any insecurity over the works tonicity and thereby focus our attention on the finale. Consequently the rest of the sonata follows traditional models. The central movements are comparatively slight (compared with the *Hammerklavier* at least) and the finale is a simple rondo that celebrates C's tonicity. But it certainly does not carry the burden of having to
confirm C's status by providing its own tonicization processes.

Brahms returns to the tonal preoccupations of the *Hammerklavier* in his Opus 8 Piano Trio. It is a remarkable work not least because of its subsequent revision some thirty five years later. It is also an oddity in that it involves progressive modality in the opposite direction; that is, it proceeds from major to minor (the reverse is usually the case, Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony being another notable exception). It too reveals the influence of the *Hammerklavier* in the use of the submediant (minor) for the second tonal area that we have already seen with his own Opus 1 and, like the *Hammerklavier* and Beethoven's Ninth, the Trio's second movement Scherzo is parodistic of the first movement. Although the issue is complicated by the two versions of the work the revisions do little to disturb the background compositional tactics established in the original version of 1854.

But in the original version Brahms duplicates the mixture of tonicizing and non-tonicizing aims of his Opus 1. Again he submits to the convention of a lengthy dominant preparation before the recapitulation. Given the opportunity to revise the work it is some interest that these revisions bring the work much closer to the compositional tactics of the *Hammerklavier*, especially in the preparation for the recapitulation. The more mature composer perhaps understood his earlier intentions a little better. All the tonal procedures prior to the recapitulation had pointed to a non-tonicizing form, and the revised version carries this intention out thoroughly, scrapping the emphatic dominant preparation so that the entire movement consistently avoids a tonicizing progression. Brahms had the experience of the Third Symphony to draw on and, as will be revealed, the Symphony and the Trio, in its revised form, exhibit a definite similarity. The success of the Trio's revision is reflected in the fact that it is now unanimously adopted as the definitive version, despite Brahms's desire that the revised version be seen as an alternative, not a replacement.

The other recompositions centre on the second tonal areas of the two outer movements where the thematic content is altered in both cases. But the relative functions in the tonal sense remain the same, the first movement employing the submediant minor (iv₅) in both versions, the finale merely substituting V β (D major) for the true dominant of the original. Likewise in the *Adagio*, the revised version substitutes G sharp minor for E major in the central episode and supplies a different theme; but once again it is an axial substitution (iv₅ for IV) that retains the subdominant relationship to the tonic B major.

The revised version avoids the dominant in the development with the exception of a brief passage in F sharp minor. But this is a passing key in a tonal sequence; and it is clearly apparent that the prolongation of the subdominant axis (E and G sharp minor specifically) is the purpose of the development. The tonic is reached elliptically by beginning the principal theme in G sharp minor at bar 185 as if this were the tonic, and then only establishing B
major by bar 190, by which time half the theme has run its course. It is a marvelous touch of structural dovetailing of the kind that Mahler himself was fond of using at such structural junctures (see IV-i, III-iii) and all in a day’s work for the experienced Brahms (note the corresponding point in the First Movement of the Fourth Symphony). But the avoidance of the structural dominant is the crucial point. Like the two late Beethoven works, the Trio can live on the tension of anticipation: and like the Beethoven works this is not relieved until the finale is reached.

Example 4.13 Brahms Trio Opus 8 (fourth movement principal theme)
And what an extraordinary finale it is. Brahms has now better prepared a situation where his Finale's inherent characteristics can be used to advantage. Our expectation at this point is that we will receive a structural dominant, which is what this movement provides almost to the point of over-kill. The first tonal area does not cadence into the tonic at any point but hovers on the dominant throughout (see example 4-13 above). Thus the tonic is only alluded to and never actually stated up to the second tonal area in D major, itself a dominant axis member. The rondo reprise at bar 108 does not permit the emphasis of the dominant to diminish in favour of the tonic even here. The developmental second episode begins in G sharp minor which instigates a cycle of fifths through C sharp minor culminating in a substantial dominant preparation from bar 183, after which the second theme is given in the tonic key. Here, for the first time in the movement, we have an emphatic statement of the tonic triad:

Example 4-14 Brahms B major Trio Op. 8

Allegro con Brio

I

Exposition.

1—35 B I

36—75 B—V of g# I—V of ivα

76—120 g# ivα

Development.

121—136 c iv

137—148 b i

149—156 f# v

157—169 c ivβ

170—175 g iβ

176—184 E IV

185—187 g# ivα

recapitulation.

188—207 B I

208—248 b i

249—290 B I

II

Scherzo

1—28 b i

29—120 G-e-b IVα-iv-i

121—164 b i

165—259 B I

260—460 b etc i
III
Adagio

1—32 \( B \) \( I \)
33—65 \( g\# \) iv\( \alpha \)
66—99 \( B \) \( I \)

1—32 \( B \)
33—57 \( E \)
58—81 \( B \) (73—79 \( b\# \))
82—157 Allegro-Tempo primo \( B \)

IV
Allegro

1—37 \( b \) \( (V) \) \( i \) \( (V) \)
38—63 \( g\# \) — \( V \) of \( D \) \( iv\alpha \) — \( V \) of \( V\beta \)
64—110 \( D \) \( V\beta \)
111—152 \( b \) \( (V) \) \( i \) \( (V) \)
153—170 \( g\# \) \( v \) of \( v \) of \( V \)
171—186 \( c\# \) \( v \) of \( V \)

187—204 \( V \) of \( B \) \( V \) of \( I \)
205—241 \( B \) \( i \)
242—322 \( b \) \( i \)

301—346 \( d \)
347—425 \( b \)
426—464 \( B \)
465—518 \( b \)

The tonal contours of the work closely resemble those of the late Beethoven works discussed earlier, especially his Opus 131 and 106. The trio, in its final form, represents the culmination, or rather a late realization, of Brahms's early attempts to emulate Beethoven's achievement in the redistribution of the symphonic weight.

Example 4-15 Piano Trio Opus 8, tonal contour.

In the F minor Piano Quintet Op. 34, we have another clear example of the same compositional tactic—placing more weight on the finale by withholding the full weight of tonicization in the first movement. The use of the flat submediant minor (C sharp) as a second tonal area makes this work unique, but in axis terms it represents the straightforward use of another tonic axis member, ultimately rendering the exposition passive and non-tonicizing. Both Tovey,\(^{19}\) and more recently and elaborately, James Webster,\(^{20}\) have stated that

\(^{19}\)Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays and Lectures on Music*, (London 1949), 243.

\(^{20}\)James Webster, "Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity (II)", *Nineteenth-Century Music*, (July, 1979), 52.
Brahms relied on Schubert's models such as the C major Quintet. But Brahms does not employ third-related tonality in his expositions in the manner of the earlier composer, whose intention was to expand form to accommodate more lyrical invention. Having achieved his aim, Schubert passes on to a tonicizing dominant, reaffirming the goals of classical form.

Example 4-16 Piano Quintet Op. 34 (first movement).

exposition
1—32 f i
33—73 c# iβ
74—90 Db Iβ
development
91—121 V of bb V of iv
122—140 bb iv
141—144 b vα of v
145—165 c v
recapitulation
166—190 f i
191—207 f# ivβ
208—223 f i
224—282 F i
coda
283—299 f i

Brahms's aim is altogether different; his axial modulation is not in addition to one to the dominant, but rather replaces it entirely. The opening theme immediately sets up an axial tonal dichotomy in the immediate foreground which will later be expanded to become the crux of his exposition.

Example 4-17 Piano Quintet Op. 34 (first movement principal theme)
As with the Opus 1 sonata, there is a lengthy dominant preparation immediately prior to the recapitulation and so, it could be argued, the criteria for background tonicization is fulfilled. There is perhaps some doubt as to how unequivocal a background tonicization this can provide when C minor as a dominant is so quickly resolved to the tonic, the same way that a rondo is inherently less dramatic than a sonata form because the dissonance is not prolonged by a development section. With either interpretation, there remains the possibility of a finale that involves a more emphatic sonata form, one that dramatizes the tonicization process with the structural dominant articulated by contrasting thematic material.

If the first movement leaves room for a potentially weightier final movement, the demand for one is intensified by the choice of tonalities for the central movements which in their course outline the entire dominant axis.

Example 4-18 Piano Quintet Op. 34 (second and third movements)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II</th>
<th>relative to F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—32</td>
<td>A♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33—60</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61—126</td>
<td>A♭</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—192</td>
<td>c–C–E♭–c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>193—261</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Da capo

Commentators are quick to point out the similarity between the Scherzo's conclusion and that of the Finale of Schubert's Quintet in C. But what was a bold conclusion in the Schubert example is here almost conventional; the stressed D flat is meant to reinforce the status of C as a dominant (implying b6–5 in F minor rather than b2–1 in C as in the Schubert ). Dominant bias in the central movements throws a considerable weight on the finale for resolution in favour of the tonic. The task of resolving a traditional tonic-dominant polarity provided by the central movements is accomplished with strict economy, while concurrently fulfilling the potential for a more emphatic sonata-form structure than the first movement. The design of the movement can best be described as a sonata form with no development and a large coda. As such it confines itself to the tonal actions demanded by what has preceded it.

Brahms has manipulated the work in order to redistribute the symphonic weight towards the finale. Kerman's comments on Beethoven's Opus 13 i are just as relevant for this work; that the finale "... has to deal not only with its own conflicts but also, more richly than ever before, with those of the quartet as a whole."\(^{21}\) The movement's unusual structure can be traced to the double task it is presented with. Firstly it must focus the tonic-dominant polarity

\(^{21}\)Joseph Kerman, *The Beethoven Quartets*, 341.
which, so far, has been spread across the entire work. Here the dominant is emphatically stated and articulated by its own thematic material, followed by a restatement and resolution of this tension. The coda, as would be expected, grounds the tension of the work by being almost exclusively in the tonic. The only exception is when the axial relationship that dominated the first movement is recalled. The reappearance of C sharp minor initiates a descending whole-tone sequence which, implicit from its point of origin, outlines the tonic axis (bar 343—372).

Example 4-19
Piano Quintet Op. 34 (fourth movement).

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>f (V)</td>
<td>i (V)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example 4-20
Ein deutches Requiem

<p>| | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F-D♭-F</td>
<td></td>
<td>b♭-G♭-b♭-B♭</td>
<td></td>
<td>d-</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-I♭-I</td>
<td></td>
<td>iv-IV♭-iv-IV</td>
<td></td>
<td>iv♭-IV♭</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>II♭</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Axial tonality dominates the outer movements and is also used to prolong the subdominant area over movements 2 and 3. Movements 4 and 5 represent a further shift in the subdominant direction, especially as the prolonged D pedal that closes movement 3 strongly implies a dominant function. The E flat and G of the central movements from the supertonic axis, are pivotal, able to be interpreted as functioning as the subdominant of the subdominant or the dominant of the dominant. The sixth movement is the climax both ideologically and tonally reaching as it does the structural dominant and the last trumpet signalling the victory over death through resurrection. The seventh movement
recapitulates the tonal and thematic aspects of the first. Tonicization is spread across the entire work rather than focussed internally within either of the outer movements. Sonata form would not be in keeping with a work of this nature, but despite this the overall tonal contour of the work adheres to the same model we have observed in the other works in this chapter.

With the symphonies we see axial relationships of varying degrees of structural importance. The First Symphony is notable for the fact that each of the four movements outline the entire tonic axis, c—E—A♭—c/C, reflecting an almost Lisztian preoccupation with the larger structural ramifications of the augmented triad. But the internal tonal content of each of these movements is in keeping with the classical norm. Both the outer movements contain background structural dominants, the first using E flat minor (v♭) as the second tonal area and having a massive dominant preparation before the recapitulation. The finale is more conventional in its use of the dominant.

The Second Symphony is noted for its pastoral character but its relaxed disposition belies its innovatory approach to form.

Example 4-21 Brahms Symphony no. 2

Intro.
1—43 D I

Exposition
44—81 D
82—117 f#/A I♭ (V?)
118—182 A V

Development
183—224 F—c—g—d—a—e— V♭—vv♭—vv♭ etc
225—245 V of b—B—C
246—249 G IV
250—261 B♭ I♭
262—269 F V♭
270—282 f♯ i♭
283—301 F—f♯— V of D V♭—i♭—V

Recapitulation
302—349 D I
350—385 b/D iv♭/I
386—486 D I

Coda
487—523 D I

II

B—F♯ | b—g—d | B II

G C—e—G—C—F♯—G II

IV♭

IV
The interesting point is the sonata principles at work in the finale. Once again Brahms has left the way open for a more straightforward sonata-form finale after the first movement's ambiguity between iα and V in the second tonal area and the veiled dominant preparation before the recapitulation which, after pivoting on A, hovers around F and F sharp minor (Ⅵ₃ and iα). The consequence of having a tonic axis member in so close proximity to the return of the true tonic is that much of the tension of tonic-dominant polarity is dissipated. The first movement tonicization process is decidedly muted on account of this and it creates a situation where a sonata form finale stripped of all ambiguity is a desirable outcome. The central movements are, as in the First Symphony of lesser proportions. Both lie on the subdominant axis (IVα and IV), and Brahms's exploitation of these inherently more relaxed tonal regions is of no surprise given the pastoral disposition of the work. But at the same time greater than usual subdominant bias in the central movements creates an even greater need for an emphatic tonic statement to end the work. The need is made all the more pressing by the fact that both central movements contain tonicizing dominants (F sharp major in both cases)—the second movement especially giving the impression of being a sonata form movement right up to its latter stages. Once again the finale has to deal with its own conflicts and those of the rest of work.

What we have observed in works such as the Opus 8 Trio, the Piano Quintet and the Second Symphony is an approach to form governed by an outer frame of sonata-form movements, where the first retains some tonally passive elements leaving the finale to undergo a more clear cut and unambiguous tonicization process. With the Third Symphony, we see the culmination of Brahms's thinking regarding passive and active sonata forms. Unlike earlier experiments, such as the Opus 1 Piano Sonata and the Opus 8 Trio in its original form, Brahms's withholding of background tonicization is consistently maintained throughout the first movement, avoiding a structural dominant in either the exposition or the latter stages of the development section giving the finale the responsibility of consummating the tonicity of F for the entire symphony.
Example 4-22 Symphony No 3 Op. 90. (first movement)

Exposition.

1—22 F I
23—30 Db iβ
31—71 A iα

Development

72—76 V of c# V of iβ
77—89 c# iβ
90—100 V of D-V of G-V of C V of V of V—V of V—V
101—111 Eb Gb bVII—IVβ
112—119 Eb eb bVII/bvii

Recapitulation

120—141 F I
142—155 D IVα
156—182 d ivα
183—224 F I

The exposition employs the tonic axis exclusively, and in so doing avoids any background tonicization of F. Unlike the Piano Quintet the development does not override the passive function of the exposition by providing a substantial dominant preparation before the recapitulation. Instead the tonic is regained in the most remarkable manner.

Example 4-23 Symphony No. 3, first movement, 116-120.
After gaining E flat at bar 112 Brahms uses a descending chain of thirds through chords of C flat, and A flat minor arriving on an F7 at bar 118. This would usually imply B flat minor but at bar 119 we lurch towards F with a combination of a phrygian bass motion and a perfect cadence. The tonicity of F is precarious to say the least and so Brahms, in order to dispel any notion of it passing to B flat, makes a second effort to attain F via two repetitions of the frei aber froyh motive. This immediately highlights D flat, evoking the tonic axis that dominated the exposition. It is certainly a circuitous route to regain the tonic F and most definitely contains no hint of a background tonicizing dominant.

As in the Piano Quintet the central movements shift the emphasis to the dominant, providing between the movements that which the internal tonal processes of the first movement avoided. But the most potent tonicizing weapon still remains the sonata form with a clear cut structural dominant articulated by contrasting thematic material. Once again the symphony has been set up to make the finale the focus of our attention as it unequivocally resolves the question of tonicity by the most potent means.

Example 4-24
Symphony No. 3 (fourth movement).
Exposition
1—51 f i
52—107 C-c V-v
Development
108—133 Vof f V of i
134—141 V of ab
142—148 V of b\textsubscript{b}.c-d-V of e
149—154 a
155—159 c
160—163 c#
164—166 B\textsuperscript{7} V\alpha of V of i
167—171 V of f V of i
Recapitulation
172—193 f i
194—237 F-f I
Coda
238—252 f—V of b i
253—266 b—V of f ii\alpha—V of v
267—309 F I

The dominant bias of the central movements continues to exert control over the first tonal area of this finale, which, like the finale of the Opus 8 Trio, sits on the dominant. But at no point do we receive an emphatic resolution to the
tonic. Just as it is in the Trio a tremendous tension of denied resolution acc­­­­­­­­­­rues throughout the finale which is only partly dissipated at bar 194 when the second subject is regained in the tonic key. But even here the tonic is still per­ceived via an unresolved dominant. An emphatic foreground dominant to ton­ic resolution comes as late as bar 233, at the end of the recapitulation and just prior to the coda.

The Third Symphony represents Brahms's last experiment with this kind of symphonic design, although, as I have already intimated, the experience gained from it was doubtless of assistance when it came to revising the B maj­or Trio some six years later. The large-scale works that follow it draw on more traditional classical models. The Fourth Symphony is conventional in its use of thoroughgoing tonicization processes within the confines of the first movement. The finale is a variation movement, and as such is tonally "flat". It makes no pretence at dramatizing the tonicization process which makes it an appropriate choice for a finale in a work where tonicity has been established beyond doubt in the early stages.

Kerman said of the Beethoven C sharp minor Quartet that he "... has arranged things here so that he can strike frankly with his best weapons".22 The success of this arrangement lies in withholding the most potent weapons in the early stages of the work. With the use of axial modulation in exploiting the subdominant region or other tonic axis members, Beethoven and Brahms allowed themselves to compose sonata forms that were tonally passive: meaning that tonicization was confined to the foreground and middleground levels only.

With the possible exception of the Schumann A minor Quartet and the Beethoven Cello Sonata Op. 102 no 1, the works discussed in this and the previous chapter have been tonally concentric. But it is easy to see progressive tonality resulting from the same desire to transfer the symphonic weight from the first movement to the last. Emphasizing the finale remained a major preoccupation for Mahler just as it had been for Beethoven and Brahms—indeed the nineteenth century as a whole. Certainly the pool of resources a composer could draw on to achieve these compositional aims had consider­ably expanded throughout the century. Even before progressive tonality is considered, the use of larger orchestras, the precedent for choral forces to be introduced in the finale, progressive modality and cyclic thematic processes were techniques available to create a sense of climax in the latter stages of a work.

As for the background tonal processes, the influence of the passive qualities of major third related keys had been considerable. Firstly it could be used as an aid to lyrical expansion of form as it was by Schubert. Secondly it could create the means for maintaining long periods of static tonal function despite

22Joseph Kerman, The Beethoven Quartets, 341.
modulation such as in Liszt's B minor Sonata. Thirdly it could be used to delay the normal tonicizing functions of symphonic form as shown in this chapter in the works of Beethoven and Brahms. But two further possibilities are available. One would allow the passive relationship between major-third relatives to set up a rivalry for background tonicity, which could then generate form. Schumann's A minor Quartet already illustrates how this possibility could be exploited. Another would be to use axial modulation to avoid adequate background tonicization of the initial key, after which a composer could allow the work to tonicize a different tonal centre altogether at some later point. Tovey made the observation that the longer you harp on a major triad without providing its dominant, the more it will itself begin to imply itself as a dominant rather than a tonic. It is not inconceivable that his situation could be transferred to the deeper structural levels, turning an inadequately tonicized key in the first movement into a structural dominant of some kind.

Even superficially Mahler's works appear as a compendium of nineteenth-century techniques and strategies for heightening the role of the finale in the symphony. The techniques of progressive modality and cyclic thematism are easily spotted, and the introduction of solo or massed voices immediately singles out Symphonies 2, 4, and 8 as examples of the continuation of the precedent set by the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven. But if such exertions are not the logical result of the background structures of the work, they will amount to mere gimmickry or shallow imitation. The responsibility still lies in the preparation laid by the earlier movements, that this might ensure that such gestures are an appropriate outcome. With a progressive tonality work, these preconditions are no less vital if the tonal shift is to be comprehended.

\[23\] Donald Francis Tovey, *Beethoven*, 14
Chapter Five
Mahler's Early Experiments

The purpose of these initial chapters has been to highlight the fundamental changes in large-scale instrumental forms in the main, central European tradition from Beethoven to Mahler. What I hope this has revealed is the common aesthetic goal which dominates the period (what Dahlhaus calls the doctrine of originality). The pervasive symptom of this with regard to form, is the desire for greater significance to be placed across the entire span of the work, and especially to assign greater weight to the finale. This was opposed to the concentration of weight in the opening sonata form movement which dominated the classical period. As with any new artistic direction the attainment of new aims required the acquisition of new techniques.

As for the problem of the finale, most of the new techniques have long been recognized—the various devices of cyclic form, the introduction of vocal or extra instrumental forces, or the dramatic resolution of a modal conflict within the confines of a concentric tonal scheme. An important point of the early chapters was to show that the surface characteristics of a finale, displays of orchestral fireworks or increased rhythmic energy, could not guarantee the desired weight at the end of the work. Composers endeavors to create finale-oriented forms through structural means, the subject of the preceding chapter, attests to this. With Beethoven we see the beginnings of the process of eliminating the tonic defining power of the classical sonata allegro so that the essential act of tonicization could fall at some later point in the work. From this process came a greater reliance on tertial modulation and the exploitation of major third equivalence: in other words, an axial approach to tonality.

Beethoven and Brahms used both tonic axis modulation and modulation through the subdominant axis to avoid the unequivocal background tonicization that results from the usual modulation to the dominant. In each case, apart from the exceptional example of the Schumann Quartet, these manoeuvres were undertaken within the confines of a concentric tonal scheme. Having seen many examples of composers creating large periods of static tonality through axial modulations, there is no great difficulty in projecting these techniques along the evolutionary path to where composers at the end of the nineteenth century would have stood at the threshold of progressive tonality.

It is easy to envisage how the functional equivalence of major third relatives could lend itself to a situation where one axis member would take over the position of tonic from the other. Schumann had already exploited this principle to achieve a progressive tonal scheme in his Opus 41 no. 1 Quartet. As I may have already hinted this threatens to divulge a subset category within our extant definition of progressive tonality handed down from Dika Newlin.¹

¹Dika Newlin, Bruckner Mahler, Schoenberg, (New York,1947), 129.
cases such as the Schumann example (and we shall see others by Mahler), we are dealing with a process of substitution rather than progression—a shift of emphasis from one axis member to another. Because no change takes place in terms of tonal relativity, modulation within the established tonic axis is less likely to place strain across the whole composition. If we are to create a new subset term here, then perhaps "axial progression" or "axial progressive tonality" could be used. The second possibility for a progressive tonal scheme could then be described as "trans-axial progressive tonality"

As the "trans-axial" description denotes, the purpose of the work is to transfer tonicity not only from one key to another, but to a member of a different tonal axis. This effectively alters the functional status of the opening tonality over the course of the work. In such a case, a work would focus on the transformation of a key that is initially perceived as a tonic but is later revealed to be a dominant, thereby enforcing the resolution to another key. A comparable phenomenon at a foreground level is commonly accepted. To stay on a chord without sufficiently tonicizing it will eventually result in that chord itself being perceived as a dominant. The essential prerequisite to this kind of tonal scheme is clearly to avoid unequivocal background tonicization of the original key so that the listener will be convinced by the change in its function at some later point in the composition. What I hoped to have shown in the preceding chapter is that a substantial precedent had been set for this kind of tonal construction as early as Beethoven. Both the Beethoven and Brahms examples were contained within a concentric tonal context, but it is no great leap to apply this technique of delayed tonicization to a progressive tonal scheme.

While Mahler experiments with both these approaches in his symphonies, his early works choose a different line of attack. The potential for progressive tonal schemes in Mahler's inherited tonal language mentioned in the previous paragraph, takes for granted the position that I argued in the first chapter, that ultimately, his mature progressive tonality works end with a sense of finality; or more succinctly, in a tonic key as opposed to a tonal dissonance.

Das klagende Lied is a fascinating work for it portends much of Mahler's future maturity. Indeed Mahler himself considered it the first work where he "came into his own", designating it as Opus 1 in a letter to Max Marschalk.² The fairy-tale world is akin in spirit to the Wunderhorn texts that come to dominate Mahler's work up until the turn of the century. Aspects of orchestration, especially the spatial effect of the off-stage orchestra, are forerunners to the Second Symphony. Boulez is quick to comment on the assured handling of choral forces by the young composer.³ The possibility that Mahler's first mature work involves progressive tonality might seem promising at first

sight, with or without *Waldmärchen*, the original Part 1. This does not turn out to be the case and I am in agreement with Donald Mitchell who, on viewing the two-part version concluded:

My impression is mainly one of lavish key contrasts serving dramatic verity.

... in the context of the whole work ... tonality progressive or concentric would not appear to be a guiding principle of organization.

Mitchell was not in possession of the original three-part version at the time of writing, but recent recordings of the original version have vindicated his conjecture that it would be unlikely to alter the tonal disposition of the work. Mahler does not methodically set up any stable tonal frame of reference. *Waldmärchen* begins on A minor before passing to C minor for the first orchestral fortissimo. The key of C is prominent in more than one passage in the movement, but there is no sense of long-range tonal dissonance or of resolution when this key or any other reappears. At best the key changes are of local significance only.

As Mitchell notes, *Der Spielmann* is the only concentric movement in the work, and Mahler at least emphasizes the structural significance of C minor at bar 454, with the return of material from the movement's prologue (see bar 37). But this too is born as much from dramatic necessity—the Minstrel halted by the discovery of the singing bone then proceeds to wander the world again just as he was at the movement's opening.

In keeping with a subject of horrific revelations, Mahler employs abrupt and unprepared modulations, usually accompanied by sharp contrasts in dynamics and orchestration. There are several examples of this in Part 3, such as when Mahler wrenches the tonality back to B flat major from C flat at bar 35 or the unprepared C major setting of "Was leuchtet und glänzt im Königsaal?" proceeding directly from C sharp minor. These shocks clearly relate to the central dramatic crux of the work: the enormous gulf between the festive event and the crime of murder that lies behind it.

Mahler may appear haphazard or concerned merely with local effects of tonal dislocation at different points of the work. But his tactics in *Der Spielmann* indicate his early awareness of the essential role of tonality in the expression of the larger poetic idea behind the work. Given the use of the shock modulation, it is significant that the other favoured device in *Waldmärchen* and *Der Spielmann* is subdominant modulation, sometimes departing from the previous tonic with no warning or preparation. What is most apparent in *Der Spielmann* is that Mahler creates a progressively darkening tonal backdrop analogous to the sinister unfolding of events in the story. The tonal outline up to "Der Spielmann setzt die Flöte an", passes through a cycle of fifths in the subdominant direction from C through to D flat. With the song of lament ("Ach Spielmann, lieber Spielmann mein!") the tonality turns to E flat minor, returning eventually via A flat to the original tonic of C minor.

---

Example 5-1

Das klagende Lied—"Der Spielmann".

1—92   c
93—125  F
126—152  f
153—175  bb
176—202  Eb
203—248  Gb-bb-eb-g#
249—273  Db
274—329  f
330—390  eb—A-D-b-c
391—434  Ab—V of c
435—506  c

Although the tonal scheme of Waldmärchen is not articulated with the same clarity over its entire structure as Der Spielmann, there are nonetheless several instances where the same tonal technique is employed, at least for localized dramatic effect. After the initial A minor opening, the orchestral prelude moves (with the occasional detour) through the same cycle as Der Spielmann; from C through F and B flat to E flat before the voice enters in G major ("Es war eine stolze Königin . . . "). Later there are more instances of unprepared subdominant modulations between the passage that acts as a refrain at the conclusion of the first three verses (descending harmonic minor scale), and the succeeding verse.

1
Es war eine stolze . . .  G
. . . dein süßer Lieb?   b
2
Im Wald eine rote . . .  E—C
. . . dein stolzer Sinn   e
3
Zwei Bruder zogen . . .  A
. . . das Fluchten sein   b

A subdominant tonal shift (in conjunction with this descending harmonic minor scale refrain), concludes Part 3 also; but once again it would seem that the local characteristics of the shift are the integral part of the work, not the individual tonalities themselves.

Early Songs.

Two of Mahler's early songs involve progressive tonality. Of the two, Erinnerung offers the more striking example. The other, Zu Strassburg auf der
Schantz' is somewhat more straight forward in its technique; one which relates to the other progressive tonality works of this period. Erinnerung moves from an initial G minor to conclude in A minor. The method by which this is achieved is as simple as it is brutal in its effect, the dominant minor ninth of the original tonic is wrenched upward, a tone higher at bar 31.

Example 5-2 Erinnerung bars 30—33.

Mahler never allows the song to recover from this tonal dislocation and, by refusing to relinquish this new dominant chord, the song is forced to cadence into A minor at bar 42, maintaining that key to the end. Donald Mitchell has already correctly interpreted the subtle shift of emphasis in the text which is amplified by the progressive tonal scheme. What is a romantic conceit at the start of the poem becomes a reality—song arouses love and love arouses song: as Mitchell points out, "... disappointed love and a sad song . . .". But this is not immediately apparent in the G minor portion of the song—the tone is more passionate than desolate and a more optimistic disposition accompanies the move to the cadence on the relative major at bar 19. A minor is announced via a long dominant preparation, the climax of which is notably the setting of the word "klagen". The A minor conclusion sinks to desolate despair, with the tonic being articulated by a descending harmonic minor scale from bar 48 to 53, clearly reminiscent of the conclusion of Das klagende Lied. Song and love that were mutually inspiring become mutual reminders of sadness.

---

5 Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler: The Early Years*, 221.
6 Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler: The Early Years*, 216.
Mitchell's view, formulated with regard to *Das klagende Lied* and echoed in his comments on this song, also strike me as sound reasoning: that the intention in Mahler's early ventures into progressive tonality was to create an unresolved dramatic tension. Mahler courts a sense of tonal dislocation that is intended to cast its influence over the rest of the work, whereas in the symphonies, the function of the latter part of the work is to dispel any sense of dislocation and therefore make the final key unequivocally the tonic.

With *Zu Strassburg auf der Schantz* we have a different approach to *Erinnerung*, but it employs a tactic already familiar from *Das klagende Lied* and one which will form the basis of the *Gesellen* cycle that stands at the threshold of Mahler's symphonic writing. Once again Mahler expresses the darkening atmosphere of the text with a subdominant shift. How this tonal shift articulates the theme of the text is straightforward; the time that it takes the young soldier to sing his woeful tale brings nearer his hour of reckoning.

*Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*

With *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* we have an interesting proposition and one that demands a different categorization for its tonal practices than for the symphonies. The fundamental difference is this—that the final tonalities do not assert themselves to a degree sufficient for them to become referential. Our point of reference in each song is the stable opening tonality. But the conclusions are all unstable. Mahler's tactic is not to establish a new tonality to replace the incumbent tonic, but rather retain the original tonic as a frame of reference while emphatically concluding outside it. In other words we are not witnessing an example of progressive tonality so much as a set of structures that do not achieve traditional tonal closure.

That may not diminish the fact that Mahler's early works treat tonality more as a tool to aid the overall expression of the poetic idea rather than a mere structural foundation. An interpretation of the cycle using the axial tonal system enlightens us as to the nature of the poetic idea. Mahler seems to be employing tonality in a "narrative" sense over the course of the entire cycle, which denotes a shift both emotional and geographical. Specifically, how he achieves this is by consistently modulating to the subdominant, to the degree where this becomes a thematic element in itself (see example 5-3 next page).

Mahler's use of a i—iv modulation over the course of the opening song sets the tone for the entire cycle and relates to the poetic idea of the continually darkening spirits of the protagonist. What is equally sure is that this tactic is not an attempt to create a thorough-going progressive tonal scheme. Some other term might need to be coined to describe it—perhaps Mitchell's "narrative tonality" would suffice. Ultimately this means that the choice of the final tonality is determined by the desire to end up somewhere other than the point

---

of origin in accordance with the poetic idea of the work, rather than it being the logical outcome of some absolute musical property. As such it is much closer to the procedures of nineteenth-century song cycles and romantic opera. Herein lies the essential difference between the apparently progressive tonal schemes of these early songs and the symphonies to come.

Example 5-3 *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*—tonal scheme.

No 1
1—43 d—g i—iv
44—63 Eb—F ivβ—Vβ
64—96 d—g i—iv

No 2
1—63 D I
64—114 B IVα
115—127 F# Iα

No 3
1—32 d i
33—67 g/G iv
68—80 eb ivβ

No 4
1—16 e i
17—36 C Iβ
37—65 F IVβ
66—67 f ivβ

The above diagram shows Mahler's dependence on subdominant modulations. The expressive intent of this in the first and third songs is to underline the protagonists darkening spirits. The final song forms a subdominant relationship with the closing tonality of song three (e being ivβ of eb) and then proceeds to effect another subdominant modulation to F for the song's conclusion. In the end, the cycle does not finish on the relative major of the initial tonic D—the two tonal centres are never brought into close enough contact to justify this view. Because F is reached via a sequence of subdominant progressions we perceive the concluding tonality as being far more remote. The sequence of tonalities from song three to the end is d—eb—e—(C)—f. In other words the relationship between the concluding tonic and the initial one is ivβ of ivβ of ivβ.

Already we have advanced on Newlin's all-encompassing term to the point where we are on the verge of identifying at least two distinct sub-species of progressive tonality. Although I would not dispute any claim that herein lies a fundamentally different compositional technique, it is equally important to note that concentric tonality remains in force and that only the traditional sense of closure has been violated. Progressive tonal schemes over the course of an
entire song cycle was common enough in the more famous nineteenth-century cycles of Schubert and Schumann, and the rationale for their use was, in all probability, the same as Mahler's—to impart some sense of emotional change or geographical distance travelled, as in Schubert's *Winterreise*. What is important here is that Mahler has applied this rationale to the individual composite units as well as the composition as a whole. But we still have to await the symphonies to find a progressive tonal scheme that is based on something more than avoiding traditional tonal closure in response to the text.
Chapter 6
Symphony No. 1

Tonally, Mahler's first surviving symphony is a unique and remarkable work. But it would be premature to attribute this quality as resulting from his innovative early experiments with song and song cycle. The nineteenth century was certainly not short on precedent for the tonal tactics employed in those earlier works. The use of a narrative progression of tonalities over the course of a song cycle was already an accepted ingredient in the foremost examples of the genre, such as Schubert's Winterreise, or Schumann's Dichterliebe. It would have been a logical step for Mahler to have extended this principle to individual songs, especially if the tonal progression was justified by some shift in geographical location or emotional state within the text. If a text is not predisposed towards returning to its emotional point of origin then a setting that avoided tonal closure would seem to be a justified response. The important point here is that the tradition of the symphony would have carried with it the prerequisite of closure, both with regard to tonality and the programme, explicit or implicit. We can see an example of the pressure to achieve satisfactory closure in Liszt, who found his Faust Symphony too unresolved concluding with the mephistophelean third movement, and so the choral Finale, covering the final scene of Faust's redemption, was appended some three years later.

As I have already had cause to argue in earlier chapters, Mahler (paradoxical though it may seem at first sight) adheres to the principle of closure in his symphonies, which is to say that their final tonalities sound like justified tonics, in a way that the final F minor of the Gesellen cycle does not. There is therefore a fundamental difference between the progressive tonal schemes that govern the entire span of his symphonies and those in the early songs.

I have mentioned Mahler's emphasis on the finale in previous chapters and been quick to add that monumentality in the latter stages of a work cannot be wilful or gratuitous, rather it must be a justified response to the tensions created in the initial stages of the work. Having illustrated this in the works of Beethoven and Brahms, one is justified in interpreting Mahler's symphonies as a technical advance in response to the same nineteenth-century compositional aim. Whereas composers prior to Mahler achieved emphasis on the finale by withholding the definitive steps towards unequivocal tonicization, Mahler manipulates non-tonicizing form to such a degree as to allow the admission of other keys as possible rivals for tonicity. Mahler has at his disposal the possibility of two different outcomes in the finale, one where tonicization of the original contender is completed in the traditional manner or conversely one where a tonal rival could emerge as emphatic victor. In his First Symphony Mahler courts the possibility of the dominant attaining tonicity through a
process of over-emphasis which culminates in a finale of unique tonal construction, one which actually begins with a dominant axis member in the role of tonic. Mahler's handling of tonality creates a number of options. The sonata-form processes of the finale could make F the tonic or an axial substitution later in the movement could give A major the victory, a move that would be justified by the prominence of this key in both the first and second movements. Ultimately Mahler resolves the conflict in favour of the original tonic, D major.

The first-movement introduction sets up the dichotomy. Beginning with the strings' eight octaves of A, we are aware that this could conceivably carry either a tonic or dominant function. A minor initially takes the upper hand, because of the two wind statements at bars 3 and 5 of the tonic A supported by the fifth note of the triad. Ambiguity returns at bar 9 when the oboe's $b^b$ threatens to turn the tonality towards D minor. The use of the phrygian mode is not unusual in Mahler, but, as is traditionally the case in tonal works, there is a tendency for the flattened second to be reinterpreted as a flattened sixth, resolving via the dominant to the tonic. Bars 13 to 15 again sees the balance shift in favour of A, as the b-flat enharmonically functions as an a-sharp, rising through b to c, establishing the first full triadic representation of A minor. From this point the trumpet and horn entries succeed in establishing D major, at least modally, though it is not yet reinforced cadentially.

Example 6-1
Symphony No 1 (first movement).
Exposition
1—58 a, V of D V of I
59—83 D I
84—162 A V
Development
163—206 A (V of I) V
207—228 D I
229—242 A V
243—274 $D^b$—$A^b$ V$\alpha$—(V of V$\alpha$)
275—278 C Vof V$\beta$
279—357 F V$\beta$
Recapitulation
358—450 D I

The Symphony appears ready to embark on the traditional mode of form-generation, one that will articulate the tonicization process as opposed to one that will dramatize its postponement. This is strongly implied the closer we get to the exposition because the introduction increasingly appears to be functioning as a large-scale dominant upbeat. Inevitably, D major arrives at bar 64
with the full weight of a V—I resolution. A brief look at the exposition confirms that a substantial structural dominant is reached there also, but at the same time there is hardly a classical precedent anywhere where the dominant is emphasized to such a degree while the tonic is scarcely mentioned. Williamson is quick to point out how Mahler's treatment of his principal theme departs from the model of the "Ging heut' morgens" theme from the Gesellen cycle.

Comparison of song and symphony shows that the former (which begins in D and moves to F# with no significant use of A) was recomposed to produce the move from tonic to dominant by over-preparation. This suggests that the apparently 'natural' first movement was achieved by concern for traditional structure . . .

Williamson goes on to note that the dominant bias that occurs here is also a feature of the Seventh Symphony first movement, and the degree of dominant bias means that there is real doubt as to the tonality in both works. The paradox in the case of the First Symphony is that "... D major is rarely actually presented in this D major movement and symphony". Dominant bias is employed to the degree where the D major of the first theme lasts a mere twelve bars after the change in key signature before it is quit in favour of the dominant A major. The dominant chord is attained without any preparation at bar 71 and is subsequently articulated as tonic by a repeat of the head motive of the "Gesellen" theme. From here the exposition proceeds inexorably in the dominant.

Williamson's view that this has arisen out of the recomposition of the "Gesellen" theme sits rather uncomfortably with his simultaneously held notion that Mahler did so to achieve some kind of structural normality, so unusual is the result. If traditional structure was a precondition of the composition one might expect adherence to the classical boundaries wherever possible, but this is not the case. Certainly it is not impossible to construct a symphonic adaptation of the "Gesellen" theme that allows a more substantial representation of the first tonal area—a literal transcription of the theme from the song followed by the version adapted to dominant modulation found in the symphony for example. This would conserve some sense of classical balance. The idea that Mahler chose his course of action deliberately, as opposed to falling upon it through inexperience, is reinforced by the dominant bias that continues throughout the movement and indeed the entire work.

With the development section we encounter the first recurrence of the introductory material, once again presenting the tonic-dominant dichotomy of the


2John Williamson, "The Structural Premises of Mahler's Introductions", 35.
opening—though this time the doubt surrounding the function of the A pedal is even greater. The attendant woodwind nature noises are contradictory, the flute (bar 165) tending towards D with the emphasis on f# and a. But the falling fourth (a–e) in the piccolo claims A as tonic and the reed instruments resolve to an A major ninth chord at bar 166, significantly interpreting the flute’s f# as a 6–5 melodic progression in A. These factors, in conjunction with the A major context from which we have just emerged, gives A the stronger claim, to such an extent that when D returns it feels as much like a subdominant modulation as a return to the tonic. Incidentally, the modulation at Figure 13 illustrates the interchangeability and common function of axis members. The motion to the pedal F is an axial substitution for A, focusing our attention on a second dominant-axis member and one that will play an important role later in the work. When the final cadence arrives, the modulation to D is achieved by a conflation of V–I and Vβ–I.

Example 6-2 I-i, 206-7

Once D is attained, the process of modulation follows soon after, moving to the dominant as it had in the exposition. Thereafter the development centres around the dominant axis with significant dominant preparation (Ab as V of Db, C as V of F). Once F is attained, it is maintained all the way to the recapitulation, culminating in a passage that will return as the final preparation for the triumphant entry of D in the Finale. Overall dominant bias in a development section is not in itself unusual (one need only recall the first movement of Brahms’s D minor Violin Sonata), but in the context of a movement where dominant bias is already so prominent, it begins to appear more likely that this is a conscious and thoroughly-applied tactic on the composer’s part to focus attention on the dominant axis at every opportunity. Mahler’s consistency certainly denies the suggestion that dominant bias was an accident arising out of the conversion of a tonally passive song-theme into a dynamic symphonic one.

On reaching the recapitulation it is not the principal "Gesellen" theme that greets us, but the relatively less important horn theme that had made its first
appearance in the development section at bar 209. This brings a definite sense of anti-climax after the dramatic struggle to break free of the development's F minor. We would expect a thoroughly classical sonata form to articulate this most significant point in the tonicization process by the coincidental return of the thematic material that originally articulated the tonic in the exposition. Mahler, by withholding the double return, is once again playing down the dramatic power of sonata form, and this points to a conscious compositional aim to undermine the tonicity of D. Certainly, I find that this anti-climactic recapitulation sticks in the memory all the way to the finale so that when the struggle to attain D over F minor is re-enacted between bars 607 to 636 it involves a real sense of completing unfinished business, of emphatically resolving that which was muted in the first movement.

On the matter of the recapitulation, Williamson raises comments made by Adorno outlining yet another structural peculiarity, that "...the reprise constitutes a mere coda". Telescoped or truncated recapitations, common features in Mahler's later works, usually have the effect of diminishing that unit's usual functional efficacy. In this case the tonic's position is further weakened by limiting the time in which it can exert its tonicity. It certainly falls short of the expected equilibrium of classical sonata form—recapitulation and coda being being slightly shorter than the exposition (and this takes into account neither the introduction of 59 bars nor the repeat of the exposition). In addition, Mahler calls for the tempo to be increased from bar 385, thus exaggerating the effect of a hasty epilogue.

It would be easy to attribute this to an inexperienced composer if it were suspected that a classically balanced form was the intended outcome. But if we assume that Mahler had successfully calculated the effect of his structure from the very beginning then we must reject the notion that the work was born out of a desire to adhere to classical norms, and conclude instead that he designed its individual structure to serve a fundamentally different purpose. As has already been suggested, the dominant far exceeds its usual tonicizing function to the point where it can potentially claim tonicity itself and therefore make D the subdominant. The lack of tonic emphasis in the expected places is, in an inverted sense, one more example of dominant bias, and although D seals its tonicity well enough by the end of the movement, it is by no means achieved with the unequivocal force of a traditional sonata form. The drama of the finale rests on whether D's tonicity will be confirmed or denied. In the interim, Mahler continues to leave the question in the balance. The important point here is that the potential exists for more than one key to attain overall tonicity, a potential that a symphony by Beethoven, by dint of its exhaustive tonicization processes, simply does not possess. The suspense over the issue of unequivocal tonicity is form-generating, and demands a response of some magnitude from the latter half of the work.

---

3John Williamson, "The Structural Premises of Mahler's Introductions", 32.
Since Mahler took great pains not to establish the tonic with full amplitude, then continuing to hold the question of tonicity in the balance by maintaining dominant bias would be a logical course of action in the central movements. Reverting to the original five-movement version of the symphony, that which contained the later-abandoned *Blumine* movement, does not alter the situation. In actual fact it would tend to reinforce the dominant bias that has already manifested itself in the first movement. The *Blumine* movement is in C major, which, in the tonal context of the symphony, would be more likely to confirm the key of A major, the key of the Scherzo which follows it, by forming a $V\beta-I$ tonal progression between the two movements. The relationship between C and D, on the other hand, is one of ambivalent whole-tonality.

**Example 6-3**

*Symphony No. 1 (second movement)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–43</td>
<td>A–E :I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44–59</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60–115</td>
<td>C#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>116–170</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trio**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>171–218</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219–228</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229–236</td>
<td>F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>237–246</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>247–284</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>285–358</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key signatures, which are usually very helpful in Mahler, seem a little misleading in the Trio section of this movement, almost as if Mahler selected the mean of the various keys. The G major suggested by the key signature is never tonicized. The central section of the Trio exploits the subdominant axis (D major) relative to F, and is articulated by a new theme. This is encompassed by a movement from the tonic axis F major at bar 175 to its dominant C, at bar 247, a move which parallels the I–V progression of the Scherzo’s opening section. In order to return to the Scherzo it is simply a matter of axial substitution. C major could easily function as $V\beta$ of A and resolve directly to the tonic. But by emphasizing the pivotal E natural prior to the expected resolution $V\beta$ is displaced by V and the Scherzo resumes after a traditional perfect cadence. Despite the subdominant excursion relative to F, the larger tonal contour of the Trio is $I\beta-V\beta$ and therefore tends to confirm the key of A major and maintain dominant bias relative to the symphony as a whole.
Example 6-4 Symphony No. 1 (third movement).

1—82   d  i
83—112  G  IV
113—136 e♭ ivβ
137—168 d  i

The tonal outline of the funeral march is straightforward and explores the subdominant region relative to the tonic D. Thematically, the G major section evokes the fourth "Gesellen" song and the insistence on subdominant modulation was doubtless influenced by the earlier song cycle and perhaps parts of *Das klagende Lied* as well (indeed, the thematic material in this G major section first appeared in the abandoned Waldmärchen movement). Here, as in both the earlier works, subdominant modulation occurs with a minimum of preparation. Aside from the immediate expressive significance created by these juxtaposed tonalities, they create an episodic structure suggestive of a mental state moving abruptly between recollection and mourning (certainly Mahler creates this sensation with the unprepared modulation to E flat minor at bar 113). In a letter to Julius Buths, Mahler ascribed similar role to the second movement of the Second Symphony—"... as the echo of long past days in the life of the man borne to his grave in the first movement..."4 Although the latter example is on a larger scale it is a fair assumption that Mahler intended his modulations to suggest similar psychological shifts here.

Mahler's symphonies repeatedly have structural divisions that override the movements, that is, they are divided into parts or Abteilungen. The Symphony in its five-movement form was originally conceived as a symphonic poem in two parts, of which the Funeral March and Finale comprised Part II.5 The subsequent removal of the Blumine movement and the abolition of the attendant programme from that time does not alter this structural aspect of the work. The connection between the Funeral March and the Finale is tonally crucial in that the comparatively stable D minor of the funeral march counterbalances the dominant bias of the preceding movements and the ensuing Finale, which reasserts dominant bias with a vengeance. If we consider these two movements as constituting Part II of the symphony then the Funeral March roughly corresponds to a first tonal area, in a large-scale I—ivβ—I tonicization process.

The Finale is indeed a most remarkable movement because of its double-barrelled tonicization process. The movement contains significant features that suggests it to be an F minor sonata-form movement and as such it is plausible that this key could lay claim to tonicity. But in accordance with the larger framework of the symphony the movement also serves to proclaim D as the

unequivocal tonic. This is achieved in part by superimposing on the F minor sonata structure recapitulatory events taken from the first movement. We also have the almost literally repeated process of attaining D major from F minor, via the passage that was first heard at the end of the first movement development section. Here it is re-enacted with far greater dramatic intensity derived from its context in a movement where F minor is already firmly tonicized.

The D major breakthrough occurs twice in the course of the movement and it is only after the second of these at bar 623 that F minor finally relinquishes its claim to tonicity. In part the need for a second assault to confirm D's tonicity is demanded by the intervening recapitulation of the F minor exposition. But while Mahler completes some of the formal requirements for the sonata form in F minor, he is forced to jettison or play down other formal aspects in order to accommodate the re-attainment of D as tonic. Primarily, it is the diminished emphasis on the process of recapitulation that reduces the tonicizing efficacy of the sonata-form element. But Mahler keeps a sufficient number of his sonata-form gestures intact to maintain the conflict over tonicity until well near the end of the movement.

Example 6-5 Symphony No. 1 (fourth movement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>bars</th>
<th>key</th>
<th>in F</th>
<th>in D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—54</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>vβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exposition</th>
<th>55—174</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>vβ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>175—253</td>
<td>Db</td>
<td>iβ</td>
<td>Vα</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>254—289</th>
<th>g</th>
<th>ii</th>
<th>iv</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>290—316</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V of vβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>317—370</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>v of vβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>371—374</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V of Vβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>375—427</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>IVα</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>428—435</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>ivα</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>Introduction from mvt.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>436—532</td>
<td>F(V)</td>
<td>I(V)</td>
<td>Vβ(V)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recapitulation</th>
<th>533—622</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>(i)</th>
<th>vβ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>633—731</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of its axis members. The result is an unbroken stretch of dominant axis tonal­
ity which at the same time avoids the necessary prerequisite steps for toniciza­
tion. This allows D major a better chance regaining tonicity later.

The development on the other hand counteracts this passivity by setting out
to complete deeper level tonicization of F. Beginning on G minor, the domi­
nant of the dominant, it quickly attains C minor, passing to C major, the
structural dominant of F, at bar 371. The master stroke of the work is where
Mahler brings us back from the brink of complete tonicization of F, and mi­
raculously salvages D major.

'Again and again, the music had fallen from brief glimpses of light into the
darkest depths of despair. Now, an enduring triumphal victory had to be won.
As I discovered after considerable vain groping, this could be achieved by
modulating from one key to the key a whole tone above (from C major to D
major, the principal key of the movement). Now, this could have been man­
ageply easily by using the intervening semitone and rising from C to C
sharp, then to D. But everyone would have known that D would be the next
step. My D chord, however, had to sound as though it had fallen from heaven,
as though it had come from another world. Then I found my transition—the
most unconventional and daring of modulations, which I hesitated to accept
for a long time and to which I finally surrendered much against my will.6

It is a remarkable reminiscence in many ways, no less because of the striking
image that it portrays of the battle of wills between the composer who desires
that his work will be acceptable and the will of the work itself which admits
no interference. But it is the essence of the poetic idea of the work and in par­
ticular this movement that Mahler is pointing to. What is more, the conclu­
sions derived from the tonal layout of the movement thus far and Mahler's po­
etic analysis are practically identical—that is to say both confirm the idea of a
miraculous salvation of D at a point in the work where all the particulars of the
tonal processes are pointing elsewhere. On the subject of Mahler's views on
the work it should be mentioned that he was well aware of the bias that spans
the whole work.

The prominence given to the dominant in the principal thematic material was
clear to him even to the point where he intimated to Bauer-Lechner that the
work could have involved a tonal progression to A.7 Cardus notes a strong
element of thematic metamorphosis,8 making a case for the "Gesellen"
theme being the basis for the Scherzo. When both themes are placed side by
side with the Bruder Martin theme, it becomes clear that all three are based on
the same model; a descending fourth followed by a stepwise ascent from the
tonic note to the fifth.

7Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Recollections of Gustav Mahler, 131.
8Neville Cardus, Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music, 40.
As I mentioned earlier, Mahler follows his miraculous attainment of D major and the subsequent triumphant chorale with a period where he recalls some aspects of the first movement introduction. Now Mahler is presented with a unique problem. Firstly he needs to consolidate the tonal modulation to D major and integrate this with the loose ends of his F minor music without creating too great a structural schism. In the short-term D major is consolidated by recalling references to the first movement. But initially, this keeps the whole question of tonicity in limbo. The fact that D does not attempt to take over the F minor music, leaves the door open for F minor's return. But some have found this section less than satisfactory.

This whole area of the Finale is of a recapitulatory character, in which Mahler, perhaps a shade too strenuously, laboured to leave no loose ends undone, and above all to tie together, both musically and dramatically, the Finale and the first movement, to spell out beyond doubt their inter-relationship, before bringing the symphony to an end.  

In addition to this Mitchell isolates why he perceives a problem in Mahler's "enthusiasm for leaving nothing out". In the case of this movement Mahler was himself aware of the problem:

In the programme, the fierce opening of the Finale was described as 'the sudden eruption of a heart wounded to the quick'. One really cannot do that sort of thing more than once without risking evoking the law of diminishing returns, and Mahler saw to it that the duplication was jettisoned before the second performance of the work was given at Hamburg towards the end of 1893.  

But Mitchell also has difficulty with the recapitulatory gesture of the slow introduction from the first movement. He puts this down as an example of a compositional habit that would stay with Mahler throughout his career, but is unsettled that this habit is not always conducive to the work's momentum.

---


10 Donald Mitchell, The Wunderhorn Years, 206
There is no doubt that for Mahler the slow introduction constituted a special attraction, permitting him to set the stage atmospherically and also, no less important, to set out his building materials. The tension begins to show, in my view, when, as is so often the case, Mahler brings back his introduction and, though one may see the programmatic intent of the recapitulation, formally one is bothered by it, sometimes on two grounds: first, such a recapitulation inevitably entails the reintroduction of a long stretch of (usually) very slow music, which—equally inevitably—interrupts the momentum and dramatic pace of the movement; and secondly, for all Mahler's skill at varying the recapitulations of his introductions, in substance this is music we have heard before, and there is the danger of impatience resulting from this practice of total recall.\(^1\)

On this subject Mitchell, with the claim of agreement on the part of Deryck Cooke, calls the recapitulation of the introduction in the Third Symphony (III-i, Figures 55-62) an exasperating experience.

Nonetheless, finding a perfectly intelligent and intelligible programmatic justification does not necessarily remove the sense of unease that these repetitions can still provoke; and it is my view that Mahler was not wholly successful in circumventing the formal problems to which they gave rise. In this one aspect of Mahler's work we encounter, as I have already suggested, a fascinating tension between the adoption of a traditional formal device, the slow introduction, which has a lot of symphonic history behind it, and the manipulation of it in a new programmatic or dramatic context. The truth is the two concepts were fundamentally irreconcilable.\(^2\)

It is important to deal with these criticisms here because the viability of the movement rests heavily on the success of this section, and also because a more accepting interpretation of these recapitulatory gestures here will serve as a yardstick in the discussion of later works. Mitchell's remarks seem a little misdirected on two counts. Firstly, as was noted by Mitchell himself, Mahler was indeed capable of jettisoning unnecessary recapitulatory gestures where he saw fit. What is more, the compression or telescoping of his recapitulations is no less a prominent feature throughout his works than the aforesaid returning introductions. Such compositional sensitivity is irreconcilable with the structural insensitivity of ill-considered repetition. Secondly, he does not take into account the vastly changed function that Mahler requires of the classical technique, and indeed herein lies the reason why these recapitulatory gestures contradict the classical norm.

The two functions, the classical one and Mahler's, are indeed irreconcilable. The classical usage dramatizes the process of setting out the primary step to tonicization, the establishment of the first tonal area. The drama lies in the

\(^1\)Donald Mitchell, *The Wunderhorn Years*, 207.

suspense generated by the delay of any concrete steps towards tonicization, achieved by avoiding firm cadential structures and by chromatic detours. The surface levels of the composition usually reflect this—the half-realized features of the main thematic material may appear through the tonal ether. But the essential dramatic element to the classical introduction is played out once the exposition proper is reached (as I have had occasion to comment in earlier chapters, a composer is ill-advised to dramatize a situation to which we have already been informed of the outcome. For Haydn to recapitulate one of his slow introductions would be a musical nonsense). The tonicization process gets into full swing, quickly vanquishing any doubt over tonicity, and the thematic material assumes a more palpable form, clarifying that which had been shrouded in mystery in the introduction. Mahler’s introductions can serve either of these purposes but that is not the full extent of their functional capability.

In the previous chapters it was noted that, in a work such as the Beethoven Cello Sonata Op. 102, no. 1, the introduction was used as a receptacle for one side of the tonal dichotomy that would strive for unequivocal tonicity throughout the remainder of the work. An introduction used in this way is likely to return, especially because of the dual function it can perform. Not only does it have the ability to effect an integrating recapitulatory gesture, it could re-expose the original tonal, thematic or programmatic dichotomy at significant structural points. As we will continue to see with Mahler, his introductions work in this way and so to judge this practice exclusively on its ability to achieve thematic or programmatic integration between movements is severely limited. The purpose of the returning introduction in Mahler’s Third Symphony, which Mitchell and Cooke took exception to, is not a structural decision that encompasses a recapitulatory gesture alone but more importantly it re-establishes the tonal dichotomy between D and F at a stage of the movement where the potential for F to gain undisputed tonicity is greater than ever before. Certainly without the tonal irritation of the D minor introduction, the succeeding recapitulation, which re-establishes F and resolves the second tonal area to that key also (notably that had originally been given in D major), F may have gained an undesired hold on the position of tonic. The sleigh-bell introduction to the Fourth Symphony functions in the same way, always threatening to turn the tonality to E minor and, in so doing, weakens the tonicity of G at each appearance. To these works we will have to return later.

On each appearance in the first movement the introduction invoked the work’s tonal dichotomy, which means that rather than exclusively functioning as a dominant upbeat it dwelt on the possibility that either D or A could become tonic. These initial appearances establish a two-fold precedent: firstly in that they present the initial doubt over tonicity, and secondly that this ambiguity is resolved in favour of D major (even though in both cases the D major goal makes very short-lived appearances). This is important in light of the
dominant bias that infuses the work, that the precedent is set that the introduction should bring D major after it.

But despite the fact that this does eventuate in the short term, our expectations are soon confounded in a way that is dramatically consistent with the rest of the movement. Just as the movement as a whole has disputed D's tonicity more strongly than at any other point in the work, so this introduction, while not actually threatening the tonicity of D, does little to confirm it. This is largely due to the way Mahler handles this section and how during it, he allows the key of F to regain some of the ground lost to D in the battle for tonicity. At this point, the question of tonicity is still in a state of limbo. Here we must pick up the various narrative threads that have contributed to this environment of uncertainty.

The ability for an introduction to act as a tonal free agent and therefore provide a form-generating dichotomy relies on its ability to remain unassimilated by the ensuing faster movement. The one thematic element left largely unassimilated is the descending fourth figure with which the work opens. Eventually it is going to dominate the final section of the work when D major is triumphant. But the first sight of it in the Finale comes at bar 290 in a C major context and again in the trumpets at bar 306 also in that key.


What is crucial is that, initially, the introduction's basic features are being assimilated into the context of an F tonality. This has so far been a sonata-form movement following some degree of convention and at this point we are in a development section which is firmly establishing F's dominant. Not only does it imply and support the possibility of a resolution to F, the arrival of this theme also hints at a programmatic resolution, stemming the flow of violent conflicts that have characterized both the F minor music and the development
section thus far.

The successful assimilation of the first movement's introduction by using its thematic material to articulate F's dominant strongly contributes to the expectation of F as the likely eventual victor. What I am trying to point out here is the degree to which the D major breakthrough is a contradiction in terms of what has preceded it. This is the background against which the recapitulated introduction makes its appearance. Although the D major breakthrough at bar 375 deals a serious blow to F's chances of carrying the day (mainly because it is here that D triumphantly takes possession of the falling fourth motive), it is by no means conclusive. In view of the comprehensive tonicization of F in the movement thus far, this can hardly constitute the final word on the matter. (The D major breakthrough in the second movement of the Fifth Symphony follows a similar course, though on a much larger scale, it is not the definitive resolution in itself but merely the harbinger of that which is to come).

When we scrutinize the introduction as it appears at bar 428, the first important difference is that the octave pedal is now on D not A—and so, if the precedent of the First movement is taken into account, the likely destination lies in the subdominant direction from D. This is confirmed by the superimposition of E flat harmonies in the cellos and horns, suggesting an imminent resolution to G minor. This brings us perilously close to the dominant of the dominant of F. A further sequential modulation to C would, to some degree, threaten D's ability to function as an autonomous tonal entity—designating it instead to be the point of departure for a large-cycle of fifths confirming F. This is precisely what happens, fully reactivating the conflict for tonicity between F and D.

The resolution of this harmony is intensely dramatic. At the corresponding point in the first appearance of the introduction in the first movement, harmonic progression comes in the form of a two-semitone ascent in the upper part resolving on to the chord of A minor. Here in the Finale the harmonic progression comes in the form of a two semitone descent in the bass resolving to C, which, considering the overall tonal context of the movement, thrusts us back to the dominant to F (see example 6-8, next page).

What follows is C acting as a dominant pedal of F lasting over a hundred bars, moreover it becomes obvious within the first eighteen bars of this C pedal that this is in fact I⁶₄ in F. Even more significant is the brief appearance of the principal "Gesellen" theme from the first movement at bar 454. Thus F is accorded a recapitulatory event almost as important as the one attained by D at bar 375. Clearly Mahler has not brought back his introduction exclusively on the grounds of narrative recollection—but also with the intent of reopening the question of tonicity after the initial D major breakthrough. This is necessary in the dramatic sense if the struggle is to gain any credibility—in as much as any programmatic or tonal adversary worthy of such heroic attentions
should not be defeated easily.

Example 6-8, I-i, 12—15 and I-iv, 433—436.

Throughout this section the overriding impression is of being in an extended bridge passage. Certainly the dominant pedal conveys as much, and this is subsequently confirmed when the F minor march music resumes, announced by the ferocious entries of the theme's head motive, *triple forte*, in the violas at bar 520. But superimposed on this bridging function is an internal recapitulatory gesture, that of the thematic material from the second tonal area, previously given in D flat. Given the D major goal of the movement it would have been logical for Mahler to avoid an emphatic resolution of the second tonal area in this movement. Mahler certainly de-emphasizes this formal aspect, though the appearance of the theme here still constitutes a resolution in sonata terms. For all that the gesture is somewhat half-hearted, it puts the F minor sonata-form processes back on track after the D major breakthrough had caused something of a derailment.

The resolution of the second tonal area comes before the re-entry of the F minor material over the dominant pedal from Figure 41. The truncation of the original theme automatically de-emphasizes it, but this factor and the theme's appearance at a point which upsets the chronological order of the exposition is not all that divorces this event from usual sonata practice. Because of the tension of the pedal which underpins it, the passage gains a rarified and somewhat tension-ridden character (aided to a large degree by the violin theme that usurps the original cello theme after only three bars). This is a dramatic transformation of the "Mahler Schmalz" that characterized the original version of
the theme in D flat\textsuperscript{13}—and the tension generated clearly anticipates the ensuing resumption of the F minor—D conflict. Certainly the resolution of any long-range tonal tension from the exposition is relegated to a lower order. After the first D major breakthrough, the movement is increasingly divorced from any preordained notion of form, as elements of sonata form, programmatic recapitulatory gestures (from the first movement) and cyclic thematicism are increasingly intertwined. These structural irregularities mirror the uncertainty over which key will gain tonicity and Mahler's handling of this section was clearly designed to keep the claims of both tonal combatants alive.

In the end this recapitulated introduction, far from being an extraneous or formally redundant passage, is one that simultaneously undertakes to perform several functions, from recollection to structural bridge passage as well as telescoped recapitulation and resolution of a tonal-thematic conflict particular to this movement. In addition the section carries the dramatic weight of a great deal of tonal re-interpretation, so that if initially we feel returned to a point of origin, the music takes us in a hitherto unexplored direction, undermining any precedent-based predictions as to the ultimate tonal outcome. Ultimately the passage can be seen in a purely practical light, as Mahler desiring to keep his two D major breakthroughs sufficiently far apart to be dramatically convincing. But even if this were the prime reason for its existence, Mahler has undeniably seized the opportunity to invest the passage with multiple functions, including interconnecting the outer movement's, resolving the tonal dissonance of D flat and re-igniting the higher-level tonal conflicts of the entire symphony simultaneously. Whichever way it is viewed it must be conceded that narrative recollection is only one of the functions that the section undertakes, and one that Mahler spends comparatively little time over.

When F minor finally re-emerges it is not given the full dramatic emphasis that one would expect from a sonata-form recapitulation and our expectations are soon aroused that F minor will function as v\beta of D major. Certainly F minor fails to attain the vehement surety of the exposition, it hardly rises above a piano dynamic, indicating that Mahler was loath to give his recapitulation full amplitude least it might confuse the more important orientation towards D. From bar 588 the music begins to replicate the climax of the first movement development section (from bar 319) which confirms the expectation that a second D major breakthrough is imminent. In the end the precedent of the first D major breakthrough and the progression from F minor to D at the start of the recapitulation in the first movement proves too strong, despite Mahler's reactivation of the F minor sonata-form component in the movement. As D major approaches, it gains the aspect of an imminent inevitability rather than a miracle bolt from the blue.

When we consider this finale (and indeed the entire symphony) setting aside

\textsuperscript{13}Neville Cardus, \textit{Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music}, (London, 1965), 50.
programmatic considerations, we are faced with a tonicization drama like no other in the standard symphonic canon. And although we are not as yet dealing with a fully-fledged progressive tonality work, we are faced with one that involves the maintenance of tonal dichotomy up until the eleventh hour—the latter stages of the final movement. From previous chapters we have seen such tactics in the hands of both Brahms and Beethoven. But in their works the ability to prolong the tonicization drama throughout the work lay solely in their withholding background tonicization. Although Mahler shared their aims of making the finale the focal point in symphonic form and used many of the earlier generation's techniques for withholding tonicization, his options for the eventual resolution were not confined by conventions. One step beyond merely withholding tonicization is actively promoting tonal rivals. The resulting tension between the tonal combatants is more extreme, and consequently the more extreme is the discharge of energy in the finale.

I make no apologies if it seems to have taken so long to establish a position on progressive tonality, the proposed topic of this thesis. Paradoxically, this position tends to play down the significance of the final outcome, which is precisely what all other definitions of the practice have been based on. To approach this paradox from another angle, the essence of Mahler's approach to symphonic form lies in his ability to maintain real doubt over the question of tonicity for the greater part of the work, and whether or not the tension is resolved in favour of the original tonic or one of its rivals is of far less relevance. As Mitchell so rightly points out, in Mahler's hands a concentric scheme, such as the First or Sixth Symphony, can yield as much drama as a progressive one, \(^{14}\) the reason for this being that Mahler's concentric and progressive works both draw on the same form-generating dynamics, the extent to which the conflict over tonicity is allowed to continue. The time that it has taken to arrive at this position is to me justified precisely by what progressive tonality is, a turn-of-the-century solution to a nineteenth-century problem of the finale. Such a solution therefore demands to be viewed in its historical context.

In drawing attention to the evolutionary line from the beginning of the nineteenth century, I hope I have consolidated the view of progressive tonality as a logical extension of the tonal practices of previous generations, and in so doing dispel any implication that it represents a system fundamentally different from the traditional concentric one, or that Mahler continually vacillated between a modernist and conservative approach to composition.

Having said that, it must also be conceded to the First Symphony that one of its unique qualities as a tonal drama is the re-attainment of D major and perhaps with it the vestiges of traditional concentric tonality. One could claim that

\(^{14}\)Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, (London, 1985), 76.
Mahler did not yet have the confidence to exercise the more adventurous option (progressing to A), though he did intimate to Bauer-Lechner that this was a potential solution. It is with the Second Symphony that a progressive tonal scheme is fully employed—even a cursory glance would hint as much since the work begins in C minor and ends in E flat. But despite outward appearances, there is a far greater adherence to classical formal processes, the first movement being probably the most Beethovenian movement Mahler ever wrote. Paradoxically it is only after an initial concentric structure is exhausted that the symphony embarks on the quest for a new tonal goal in earnest. Indeed this is the exact opposite of the First Symphony which establishes a potent rival for tonicity very early.

---

Chapter Seven
Symphony No. 2

The Second Symphony is the first full realization of a progressive tonal scheme in a Mahler symphony. But despite its tonal progression, the first movement of the Second holds firmly to the principle of teleological sonata form, meaning that the form is goal-oriented towards the tonicization of one key at each subsequent level. Although this movement leaves the axial rivalry between E major (Iα) and C minor unresolved, ultimately, the tonicity of C is very much a closed issue by the end of the movement and C remains secure in its position until the fourth movement. But programmatically, the symphony can not find a solution until this concentric structure is exhausted.

Example 7-1
Symphony No. 2 (first movement)
Exposition I

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—45</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46—62</td>
<td>E—B—e♭</td>
<td>Iα—Vα—vβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exposition II

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62—96</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97—116</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development I

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>117—128</td>
<td>C—F</td>
<td>I—IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129—178</td>
<td>E—e</td>
<td>I, i α</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179—205</td>
<td>f♯</td>
<td>v of V of E (Iα)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>206—220</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Vα of G♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221—225</td>
<td>G♭</td>
<td>V of V of Iα</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226—243</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>V of Iα</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Development II

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>244—319</td>
<td>e♭</td>
<td>vβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320—328</td>
<td>V of c</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recapitulation

EX I

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>329—361</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>362—391</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Iα</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EX. II

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>392—426</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CODA

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>427—445</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(116 bars)
(212 bars)
(117 bars)
At the end of the preceding chapter, I claimed that this first movement was the most Beethovenian movement that Mahler wrote. This is not a position that takes account merely of the tremolando opening and the outbursts of a “fate”-like motif reminiscent of the Fifth and Ninth Symphonies of Beethoven, but rather because of the thorough nature of the tonicization processes that the movement undergoes. The tonic is quickly established by the head motive and there follows a series of cadences, the first at bar 16 rounds off the first paragraph emphatically establishing C minor at a foreground level. Here follows a literal repeat of the opening paragraph with a counter-melody in the oboes and cor anglais. The woodwind contribute to the second cadential event at bar 27 but this is less emphatic, being out of step with the theme in the basses. Indeed, a sense of unease resulting from the dissociation of the two melodic strands is undiminished at bar 31, where the low strings cadence corresponds to that at bar 16 but the woodwind phrase length does not coincide with it and therefore does not confirm it. The culmination and resolution of this tension is the unison passage at bar 37 which leads to the definitive C minor cadence at bar 41. The tonic is given two bars in which to proclaim its tonicity before the briefest of bridge passages leads to the second tonal area.

The modulation is effected by enharmonic means, C flat and A flat are redefined as B natural and G sharp, and the new theme rises over a $6_4$ chord in E major. E major's grip on foreground tonicity is at best tenuous—there is no cadential reinforcement, but the importance of E major is impressed upon us by the new thematic material and the radically different texture, and so it constitutes a more significant feature than the unsubstantiating harmony would suggest. The harmony quickly gives way to E's dominant (B major) and that key is cadentially confirmed at bar 56. But immediately the B natural begins to take a pivotal role in a mirror image of the enharmonic processes that brought us to this section. In the reverse of the initial procedure, B is reinterpreted as C$\text{b}$, or more specifically, VI of E flat minor, the foreground tonicity of which is supported by the most emphatic cadence of the section at bar 62. Although it is customary to denote the second subject as being in E major, E in reality is only a latent force. The focus of our attention at this stage is as much on the establishment of two dominant axis members in B and E flat ($V\alpha$ and $v\beta$). In so doing Mahler provides himself with a springboard into the second exposition.

In effect, Mahler has chosen to present two different tonal directions, neither of which are fully realized at this point. Firstly he provides a second tonic axis member which, although it is not cadentially confirmed at this point, could conceivably represent an axis rival which could later assume tonicity. After establishing the axial rivalry between C and E, Mahler takes the first steps towards a more substantial tonicization of C by modulating to keys from the dominant axis. This brings with it the expectation that the movement will
eventually undertake the process of tonicization at the deeper structural levels.

**Example 7-2** Middle ground Schenkerian diagram from Fig. 2 to 4

This is precisely the quality of first-movement sonata forms of middle period Beethoven, where the dynamic forward propulsion comes from the process of actively seeking out tonicization at each subsequent level. This teleological approach to form (essentially classical) is not a recurring feature of Mahler's later first-movement sonata forms, which tend toward the non-teleological forms of late Beethoven—ones that avoid tonicization in order to dramatize the state of doubt over tonicity. The expectation of a fully-tonicizing sonata form catapults us into the next section in much the same way as the E flat cadence at the end of the exposition of Beethoven's Fifth catapults us into the repeat of the exposition.

Having laid open the potential for both a tonicizing form and an axial rivalry, Mahler is later able to explore both of these possibilities on a larger scale in the development section. For the moment, the feature that promises a future shift away from C minor and its funeral associations is the totally contrasting thematic material, contrasting to such a degree that programmatic interpretation is difficult to avoid. To this we shall need to return. Suffice to say at this early point, the theme at Figure 3 with its association with E major, will certainly be influential in the later stages of the movement.

It is only in the First and Sixth Symphonies that Mahler calls for a literal repeat at the end of the exposition, but he adhered to the plan of a double statement of the exposition throughout his career. Clearly this second statement when written out could be subjected to variation. But it also gave the composer the opportunity to choose another secondary tonality and therefore create a section differing in function from the first. From Figure 4 the second expository statement begins and it is not long before the resemblance is struck between Mahler's practice here and some used by other nineteenth-century composers discussed in earlier chapters. We have already seen the use of passive and active expositions in the the concertos of Brahms as well as similar procedures in some of Schubert's works. This is precisely the plan here as
this second exposition seeks a more emphatic structural dominant. Progress towards this is simple. The bass descends, significantly pausing on A flat (I\textsubscript{5}, the other tonic axis member yet to feature) at Figure 5, before reaching G at bar 80. From bar 80 to 97 the bass outlines a i-iv-\text{V-i} cadential progression in G minor. G minor is then articulated by two new themes over an ostinato bass. As a result of the static harmony and regulated rhythm of the ostinato, the exposition's drive and energy is dissipated, giving the passage a dual function, as a traditional second tonal area containing the tonicizing dominant and as a codetta.

Compared with the first movement exposition of the First Symphony there is nothing of the ambiguity over tonicity that we experience there. The Beethovenian character that I ascribed to this movement is largely due to the comprehensive process of tonicization that we encounter. After firmly establishing the tonic, the progress of the music is set on the attainment of structural dominants, from the initial foreground cadences to the tonicization of G minor at the end of the exposition. Following the principles of classical form, the development section will act to prolong this background dissonance, returning to the dominant before the tonic is comprehensively restated.

De la Grange has suggested that Mahler employs two development sections here.\textsuperscript{1} But the interest lies not so much in the idea of expanded form but in the clearly divided function of the two sections and how this relates to the exposition. As I have already noted the complex second tonal area from Figures 3 to 4 provides the blueprint for this development section. Mahler expands his two most important secondary tonal areas to form prolonged and stable tonal episodes, the first section focusing on the key of E, while the second section focuses almost entirely on E flat minor. As a result the two sections retain the contrasting functions of the two expositions: the first is controlled by a tonic axis member the second by a dominant axis member. In tonicization terms it is the difference between a structural unit that can rival the tonic and one that strives to confirm it. The thematic material contained within each emphatically articulates the difference between them. The first section deals mostly with second tonal area material, in particular the theme that was originally associated with E major, while the second exclusively develops the funeral music of the first tonal area.

A stepwise descent in the bass from G through F lands us by way of a phrygian cadence in E major. This brings forth a new theme in the cor anglais (bar 129) followed by combinations of themes from both of the second tonal areas (oboe bar 131 and harp 135). The second paragraph darkens to E minor, coinciding with the return of the dotted rhythms of the C minor music. Developments of the funeral music continue unabated until an F major version

\textsuperscript{1}Henry-Louis de La Grange, \textit{Mahler, Chronique d'une vie, I, Vers la gloire, 1860-1900}, (Paris, 1979), 1023.
of the second subject at Figure 13. In the exposition, E major gave way to its dominant. At Figure 14, C major sets in motion a bII—V—I cadential pattern which establishes B major. Overall then the first development section encompasses a large scale modulation from E to its dominant and in so doing substantiates the claim of E as a possible rival for eventual tonicity.

Example 7-3 Middleground Schenker diagram of the development section.

Example 7-3

At Figure 15, E flat minor explodes without warning out of the tranquil closure in B major, setting in motion the second development section and completing the tonal relationship with the second tonal area from Figure 3 to 4. Contained within this section are a number of passages that will have some bearing on the finale, principally the Dies Irae theme (bar 270), which dominates much of the chorale writing in the first part of the finale, and the so-called "resurrection" theme, at bar 282. It could be argued that the passage at bar 282 claims our attention because it is here that E flat major strives to gain control, pointing out the eventual tonal resolution of the work. However it is predominantly the thematic relationship with the finale that captures our attention especially as the theme will later carry the words that are the crux of the programmatic resolution (see II-v Fig. 31). Aside from the resurrection theme in isolation, the whole passage from bar 282 to 294 appears almost literally from bar 300 to 320 in the finale. For reasons I will discuss later it is more difficult to verify the tonal connection.

The matter of these interconnections demands a short detour to the question of chronology. Donald Mitchell, for example settles on a chronology that has all the finale composed after Bülow's funeral; this being based on correspondence at the time of completion. He also claims the support of the music, the setting of the opening lines of Klopstock's hymn appearing as early as Figure 5 in the fifth movement. But clearly the substance of the resurrection theme is here in the first movement. This is no late addition either, but appears in the original Todtenfeier version of movement as well—the passage in

2Egon Gartenburg, Mahler, the man and his Music, (London, 1985), 269.
question is at bar 308 of that movement. One could easily deduce from this that Mahler had at least a fair idea quite early in the work's gestation of the eventual tonal goal of his projected Symphony and of the thematic material that might attend it.

The function of E flat as an axial substitute for the dominant is hammered home from bar 316 where there is a marked concentration of whole-tonality, with the strident descending scales in dotted rhythms highlighting E flat and B natural before collapsing on to the true dominant G at bar 320. There follows the often-cited final cadence into the recapitulation, where chains of thirds suspended over the dominant bass note produce violent dissonance. The harmony contains every note of the C minor scale, indeed one would have to describe it as a dominant minor 15th at bar 327. Functional descriptions aside, the result is one of the most powerful dominant preparations before a recapitulation in the standard repertoire, certainly the most emphatic tonic return that Mahler ever engineered. This is largely indicative of the nature of the movement—one that has involved structural dominants functioning with all the goal-oriented power of classical form. Tonicization of C minor, while not the exclusive aim of the movement, has certainly been a paramount concern and Mahler leaves absolutely no doubt on this issue. Finally, the different functions of the two development sections is confirmed. The first, because of its axial relationship to the original C minor, did not confirm the tonic but instead went further towards producing a serious rival, and in contrast, this second section is undeniably active, moving towards the confirmation of C minor. The difference is articulated by the demarcation of thematic content—the exposition's E major music dominating the first part of the development section, and the C minor music dominating the second.

The recapitulation brings to the fore Mahler's control over his structural intentions, especially when it comes to the point of programmatic (and I mean this in the unwritten sense) relevance. The recapitulation of the first tonal area is necessary to complete the background tonicizing triangle, I-V-I. It constitutes a mere 32 bars compared with the 47 of the exposition. Mahler focuses his attention not so much on the first tonal area but on the second, which, contrary to normal sonata practice is not given over to the tonic key. Instead the E major of the exposition returns.

But what is particularly striking is that the subsequent modulation to E's dominant and then to E flat minor is erased and the second tonal area is both expanded and stabilized in its E major tonality. The identity of E as a key has continued to grow throughout the movement, and the fact that both the key itself and its thematic material remains unassimilated by the tonic C is highly significant. It creates something of a loose end in the otherwise all-embracing tonicization drama that confirms C as tonic. In this way Mahler keeps alive an option for a possible progressive tonal scheme, one that would involve an axial substitution of I0x (E) for I (C). The second tonal area is expanded to 30
bars compared with the 16 bars in the exposition and Mahler strengthens E major's position by turning to its subdominant at bar 364, which denies the possibility of modulation to the dominant B major (and later E flat minor) as at the corresponding point in the exposition. Development of themes from the second exposition (bar 103) and the cor anglais theme from Figure 8 in the development section sustains the longer period of E major tonality. A simple enharmonic process effects the transfer back to C minor, the shift from E major to minor involving $g\#'$—$g'$, which reinterpreted, yields $ab'$—$g'$ in C minor. This is followed by $e''$—$d\#''$ in E minor written and interpreted as $e''$—$eb''$, a major to minor shift in C. No elaborate modulation process is necessary. This shows, at a foreground level, the interchangeability of major third-related keys. The two keys are linked through their common enhanced dominant g-b-d#, which acts as a pivot.

Having regained C minor at bar 392, Mahler embarks upon the recapitulation of the second tonal area from the second exposition, indicating once again the dual functional roles of tonality within the movement. Mahler draws a distinct line of demarcation between that which is functional in tonicization terms and that which is not. This is essentially an act of confirmation. Foreground events, the traditional sonata-form resolution of the exposition's G minor music, reflect the tonal stability resulting from the completion of the Schenkerian tonicizing triangle at the beginning of the recapitulation, further consolidating C minor's hold on tonicity. A tonic pedal underpins the coda from bar 420 and the movement ends firmly in C minor.

Mahler himself was of the opinion that a work's programme was a reality whether it was written down or not.

Believe me, even Beethoven's symphonies have their inner programmes, and closer acquaintance with such a work brings understanding of the development of feeling appropriate to the ideas. It will eventually be the same with my works.—

I hope that already the various components are laid bare for the exegesis of the programmatic content, without recourse to Mahler's written one. Having said that, if Mahler's written programmes amount to more than a crutch for his audience, then any analytical interpretation should parallel his written one.

The alternating dirge and vehement anger of the C minor music gives way to the appoggiatura-laden yearning of the E major music. But neither of these programmatic combatants gains the ascendancy, rather they stand in immovable opposition to one another. It is certainly no great liberty to interpret the C minor music as brooding, if not on a specific death, then on mortality in general (the sung text at the conclusion of the work enforces such an interpretation in retrospect). Chromaticism, dislocated rhythms and unusual phrase

structures, contrasts in dynamics, all contribute to a sense of emotional turbulence. If we accept the association between death and the C minor music, then the E major music, with its yearning appoggiaturas, attempts to gain consolation by looking back over those things that compensate for the burden of mortality—youth, love, life without care or simply life itself. But aside from the expressive qualities of the foreground musical invention, there is also the possibility that the tonal plot can articulate, or rather qualify, the foreground thematic characteristics. In this case the axial relationship between C and E puts them on something like the same plane—or put another way, living and dying are facets of this world, not the hereafter. Mahler's own programmatic justifications of the second movement are similar to my interpretation of the E major music, and this too can be seen not as a narrative fancy on the part of the composer but a tonally articulated fact because A flat lies on the same plane—the tonic axis. But in the end memories of youth and happiness are a compensation, not a solution. In programmatic terms, the solution lies beyond life and death and consequently the work will eventually have to search out a tonal solution from outside the tonic axis.

I will take up this issue again in my discussion of movements 2 and 3. What is important to realise now at the end of the first movement, is that E major holds the contrasting role, and represents the only likely candidate to embody a programmatic solution, not E flat. The dominant axis of which E flat is a member is tied up in the tonicization process and is almost totally assimilated by, or is based on, the C minor music. Certainly, it is never a dramatic free agent except for those few bars in the development section where the embryo of the resurrection theme strives for recognition before it is again swamped in the general turmoil. The processes of movements 2 and 3 confirm that the first part of the symphony is committed to the exploration of the tonic axis. This search for a possible tonal alternative among the other tonic axis members (principally E major), imparts a definite sense that the Symphony is operating on a single plane. Programmatically, it is well documented how Mahler himself interpreted these movements—the second being a memory from the buried hero's life, the third movement depicting the disturbing aspect of "... life ceaselessly in motion, never resting, never comprehensible...". In response to the funereral content of the first movement the second movement attempts to counter it by evoking happier times while the third movement succumbs to a degree of pessimism regarding the ultimate meaning of everyday endeavours. It is a conflict to which Mahler will return in Das Lied von der Erde.

With the second movement Andante, Mahler feared for the continuity of his

---

symphony:

Still there ought also to be a lengthy pause for recollection after the first movement, because the second movement does not have the effect of a contrast, but simply of a discrepancy after the first.\(^7\)

While with the initial Andante theme it is easy to sense a momentary dislocation, it would perhaps be fair to say that Mahler felt the non-sequitur more acutely than many of his audience do today. Certainly, there are features that justify its position within the Symphony. Tonally it backs up its ascribed function of intermezzo. As a tonic axis member, A flat is more or less static relative to C, neither actively confirming C's tonicity nor actively denying it. It could conceivably vie for tonicity, just as E has done but the nature of the music sets it outside the main action of the Symphony—it neither resolves, or for that matter even confronts, the tensions and conflicts of the first movement. In fact the angered spirit of the first movement lies in wait to strip away the joy from any retrospective glances. The G sharp minor trio sections with their relentless triplet patterns and dissociated melodic strands refers back to similar textures in the first movement, especially at bar 26 of that movement. These intrude to the extent that one feels the fragility of the backward glance in terms of its potential to offer any lasting consolation.

Programmatically the G sharp minor sections cast too dark a shadow over the rest of the Andante. Tonally, the choice of the tonic minor confines our attention to the tonic axis, but at the same time it continues to negate the possibility that a lasting solution will be found in the realms of the C-Ab-E axis. In spite of the initial stylistic dislocation, the Andante performs this vital task of exhausting the tonic axis as a possible source of a programmatic solution.

Example 7-4

Symphony No. 2 (second movement)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—38</td>
<td>A\text{\textsuperscript{b}}</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39—85</td>
<td>g#</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86—132</td>
<td>A\text{\textsuperscript{b}}</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133—209</td>
<td>g#</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210—299</td>
<td>A\text{\textsuperscript{b}}</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the third movement the true tonic C minor is reinstated and so immediately a link is forged with the first movement and the possibility of a tonal closure is very strong, especially as this movement takes up the remaining tonal loose end from the first movement and resolves it. Despite Mahler's own uncertainty over where to subdivide the work in performance, whether between movements 1 and 2, or between Urlicht and the Finale, this return to C minor undeniably brings with it the sense of a half close, and so divides the Symphony tonally into two parts. Further support for this view is gained on the investigation of the tonal features of the final two movements.

\(^7\)Gustav Mahler, Selected Letters . . . , 269.
Example 7-5
Symphony No. 2 (third movement)

1—102  c  i
103—148  F  IV
149—189  c  i
190—211  C  I
212—256  D
257—327  E  Iα

328—406  C-c  I-i
407—440  F  IV
441—544  C  I

545—581  c  i

'The second and third movements, Andante and Scherzo, are episodes from the life of the fallen hero. The Andante tells of love. The experience behind the Scherzo I can describe only in terms of the following image: if, at a distance, you watch a dance through a window, without being able to hear the music, then the turning and twisting movement of the couples seems senseless, because you are not catching the rhythm that is the key to it all. You must imagine that to one who has lost his identity and his happiness, the world looks like this—distorted and crazy, as if reflected in a concave mirror. The Scherzo ends with the appalling shriek of this tortured soul.8

It is not difficult to see how Mahler would have arrived at this interpretation. The Scherzo is based on the Wunderhorn song "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt". What he would have wished to retain from the "Fischpredigt" model is a sense of pointlessness. The swirling sixteenth-note figures evoking the swimming fishes (both as they come to attend the sermon and as they depart unchanged), now appear more in the guise of an aimless waltz. Features such as the passages of bland whole-tonality and consecutive fifths doubtless captured the fishes' lack of sophistication in the song. But in the context of the Scherzo, which, from the outset, carries a heavy tonal symbolism because of its alliance with the negative pole of the first movement, it is less likely that these features could yield such a humorous exegesis. Mahler alters surface features in accordance with the embittered stance of the movement, with a tendency towards the more extreme. The brutal timpani prelude marks something of an incongruity—such high drama announcing calculated banality! The E flat clarinet makes more fantastic that which was droll in the song. Later, the E major sections set the bitterness of the C minor music in high relief, purely by way of extreme tonal contrast. The "Fischpredigt" was one-dimensional in

8Natalie Bauer-Lechner, 43-44.
comparison.

On the question of tonality the Scherzo does nothing to offer a solution to the C minor that has dominated the symphony so far. We shall see in fact that it actively extinguishes the one viable contender for tonicity that has so far been presented. This is of course the unresolved E major from the first movement. In sonata practice the resolution of the second tonal area is a foreground manifestation of the resolution that has occurred at the background level. In a fully tonicizing form, structural dominants are provided at each level and subsequently resolved—in Schenkerian terms all that remains is the "composing out" of the fundamental line. Balancing the overall structure and some surface level poetic concerns are likely to have their impact on the size of the recapitulation and coda and determine any short tonal detours, but effectively most of the business of tonicization is settled at the point of the recapitulation and that which remains is accepted as inevitable.

From the first movement we remember that E major was left as a loose end, unassimilated by the tonic C in the usual way of sonata practice. As such it represents a possible rival, a situation that is clearly reflected in the opposition of its thematic material. In this Scherzo, E major is the most important secondary tonality; the F major sections, being enveloped by sections in the tonic and attaining only limited thematic independence in themselves, never attain the status of a programmatic rival that might engineer a long-range tonal reorientation of the work.

The E major section at Figure 39 arrives as the last step in a whole-tone sequential chain via C and D. Both D and E are articulated by brass fanfares, but E major turns to new thematic material at Figure 40. The descending 8-7-6-5 melodic contour found here will return in the finale, but for the moment it evokes memories of the E major theme from the first movement which also involves this contour. The relationship is made all the more emphatic at bar 280 (and again at bar 296 and, in augmentation, at 316), where the 9-8 appoggiatura forges an unmistakable connection with the same figure at bar 50 in the first movement. As in the first movement, the E major sections stand in the same relation to the rest of the movement, in that they mark the cessation of music that is predominantly mono-rhythmic (dotted rhythms in the first movement, sixteenth notes here), replacing them with pedal points and yearning appoggiaturas (see example 7-6 next page).

The tonicization of C in the first movement has left only axial tonal rivalry as a source of conflict, which can be seen in the choice of A flat for the Andante and the continuing influence of E major. The sonata procedure of articulating tonicity by assimilating the second tonal area into the main body of the tonic, which was left suspended in the first movement, is now resolved in the appropriate way from Figure 49. C major is announced by the same fanfare but instead of the sequential whole-tone ascent the passage culminates in the
"appalling shriek", the B flat minor chord over a C pedal (which also features in the finale).

Example 7-6 II-iii Fig. 40-41 and II-i Fig. 3 and 23.

This "appalling shriek" marks the climax of the movement and the ensuing music is marked by a concentration of significant events. The resolution of this dissonance brings forth the timpani prelude from the beginning of the movement, implying a return to the point of origin. Then the first violins regain the trumpet's 8-7-6-5 theme, though the repeat is by no means literal. The C major version at bar 501 articulates the tonic triad by metrically accenting its constituent members at bars 501, 505, then 509-10-11 and 512. This is in stark contrast to the accented appoggiaturas that dominated the original.

Example 7-7 II-iii 501-512.

E major is finally assimilated by the incumbent tonic, cancelled out as it

---

9Natalie Bauer-Lehner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, 44. A later reference on the same page says of the Finale that, "It begins with the death-shriek of the Scherzo."
were, and Mahler, more than just re-playing the theme in the tonic, makes that theme itself articulate the tonic chord in a way it had not done previously. This emphatically comments on the state of play, where C minor is unrivaled in its position of tonic. It would be fair to say that this constitutes a sonata-like resolution, one which is not relevant to this movement alone but one that has been held over from the first movement. The overall effect is of a concentrated resolution of both tonal and thematic loose ends which are assimilated into the context of C, bringing a sense of exhaustion, of having reached a dead end. Programmatically, this resolution nullifies the independence of the E major music and its associated ideas. If we accept that the E major music carries an association with the more positive aspects of life viewed in retrospect, then it is here that they are revealed in their true perspective—as a compensation for mortality rather than a solution.

When we come to survey the tonal progress of the Symphony so far, it is immediately apparent that Mahler has restricted himself to two functions. The first of these is the emphatic tonicization of C minor, achieved through the provision of structural dominants in the first movement. The second is very much tied up with the programmatic connotations of the movement, in that it involves the search for a way out, a solution to the C minor dirge and anger that accompanies the contemplation of death in the first movement. The search for this programmatic solution has involved the exploration of the other tonic axis members, A flat and, principally, E major. By the end of the Scherzo, this line of exploration is exhausted, but the Scherzo does indicate another direction in which a solution could be sought. Although the harmonic implications of the "death-shriek" are ignored for the moment, the harmony has the potential to turn the tonic chord into an enhanced dominant (V♭9 74), opening the door to new solutions in the subdominant region. That solution will later be provided by the chain of events leading from the reappearance of this harmony in the Finale.

Example 7-8

Symphony No 2. Tonal structure movements 1—3.

1st movt. 2nd movt.
C—E— (B—e♭), C—G, E—B— e♭ , C—E, C—C || Ab (g#)
I Iα (Vα—Vβ), I V, Iα— Vα— Vβ , I—Iα I—I || Iβ (iβ)
I— Vβ I—V Iα— Vβ—I— || Iβ

3rd movt.
|| C-F-C—E—C-F-C ||
|| I-IV-I—Iα—I-IV-I ||
I— Iα—I ||

Into this context of tonal and programmatic dead end sounds the alto solo that
begins the fourth movement, *Urlicht*. It is a magical moment in the work, largely, as one would expect, because of the entry of the human voice for the first time.

Example 7-9 Symphony No. 2 fourth movement "Urlicht"

| 1—35  | D♭ | I |
| 36—43 | b♭ | ivα |
| 44—54 | A  | I♭ |
| 55—68 | D♭ | I |

The text carries with it great programmatic significance. If death is the starting point of this work then it must be said that the rationalization of death has been attempted through retrospection. Now the text provides the first intimations of the afterlife and so the work opens the option of looking beyond death. Ultimately the heart of the programmatic interpretation of this work and the absolute values of the tonal drama are indistinguishable. The impact of the arrival of the human voice and all the programmatic significance that the text implies is underlined by the tonal shift to D flat, in axial terms IV♭ relative to C. Having found no programmatic solution in the area of the tonic axis (and with the dominant axis firmly in a tonicizing role) Mahler seeks a solution in the region of the hitherto unexplored subdominant. Significantly, the first tonal motion away from the tonic is a shift further in the subdominant direction to B flat minor, or ivα relative to D flat.

The Finale opens with the "death-shriek" from the Scherzo (after a rushing ascent in the low strings clearly reminiscent of the opening of the first movement). The reminiscence from the Scherzo is made all the more significant in light of the tonal direction implied by *Urlicht*. As I noted earlier this harmony can easily be interpreted as V♭⁹⁷₄ in F, and in fact the key signature indicates F minor. Contrary to the implication of this harmony C major takes over at bar 26 just as it had in the Scherzo, in fact the trumpet theme at bar 30 appeared first in the Scherzo (bar 496), and the strings 8-7-6-5 melodic progressions from bar 31 here clearly recall the trumpet's E major theme from the previous movement. But the implication of movement in the subdominant direction wins over from Figure 3, setting the course for the entire movement.

At Figure 7, B flat minor returns, paralleling the move to that tonality in *Urlicht*. Already we are at the dominant minor of E flat, but this tonal step is never consolidated and F minor-D flat are felt to be close at hand, returning at bar 132. C major is regained for the last time at bar 162 inaugurating a large-scale expansion of the first section's tonal plan C—F—♭b♭.

Mahler's tactics are rapidly becoming apparent. After the emphatic tonicization of C and subsequent exploration of the tonic axis in movements 1 to 3 and having found no programmatic-poetic resolution there, he turns in the opposite direction, that is in the subdominant direction from C. From bar 162 C
major is sustained for 32 bars before the central F minor section depicting the opening graves and the resurrection march. Here the vacillation between the two main tonal combatants, C and F, is concluded with F running out the victor. From this point, C plays no further part in the work.

Example 7-10

Symphony No. 2 (fifth movement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>relative to c</th>
<th>relative to Eb</th>
<th>Axial function relative to Eb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—25</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26—42</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43—96</td>
<td>f,F</td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>ii,II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97—161</td>
<td>b♭</td>
<td>bVII (iv of iv)</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162—193</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>194—219</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220—288</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>289—401</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>402—417</td>
<td>G♭</td>
<td>bV</td>
<td>bIII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>418—471</td>
<td>D♭,c♯ etc</td>
<td>bVII</td>
<td>V of V♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>472—559</td>
<td>G♭</td>
<td>bIII</td>
<td>V♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560—639</td>
<td>b♭</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>640—671</td>
<td>A♭</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>672—764</td>
<td>E♭</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A V♭—I cadence confirms F major at 220 beginning the processional march of the dead. This passage contains a good deal of modulation causing some writers to label this as a development section. After excursions into A flat and D, we are suspended on a dominant of F sharp at 285, which, for the moment is unresolved. By axial substitution there results a V♭—i cadence on to B flat minor, turning to the tonic F minor shortly after. The implication of F sharp and B flat minor is again a crucial indicator of what is to come, as it represents another step in the subdominant direction from our point of origin C. Locally they represent iv♭ and iv of F.

Despite further intrusions of subdominant directed harmonies (Figure 21), F minor continues to hold sway right up to bar 402, where in one sense we arrive at the point of origin, the "death-shriek" of the B flat minor chord over a C pedal, only here transposed a semitone higher. This sonority has been used to indicate probable movement in the subdominant direction from its first appearance in the third movement. Here it would suggest itself to be V♭974 of F sharp. As at the opening of the movement the dominant function is not allowed to resolve and, just as a period of C major ensued before F minor was

---

reached, so here the promise of F sharp or G flat is not immediately realized. Clearly Mahler is gaining dramatic mileage out of the precedent set at the beginning of the movement—the trumpet fanfares strive to establish F sharp but the overriding impression comes from the flute and piccolo bird song which suspends the passage on the dominant C sharp. The earlier precedent and indeed the fanfares' implication of F sharp demand an emphatic resolution to that key, which is provided in the most dramatic way by the entrance of the chorus.

Much of the G flat major music other than the chorale itself was previously given in F at bar 68 and in C at bar 162, again carrying the precedent of further modulation in the subdominant direction. Notably the music is infused with direct quotes (identified as such by the ascending scale culminating in a 9-8 melodic progression) from the E major music from the first movement, here at bar 502 and prominently at bar 541. The context in which it now appears is an affirmation: no longer does it represent a yearning to be free of the wounding C minor: it is free of it and exults in its triumph. But as I stated earlier, this music is governed by a precedent, one for further modulation in the subdominant direction, a move that would take us to C flat or one of its axis neighbours G or E flat.

G flat gives way to an axis neighbour in B flat minor and the alto vocalizes a theme already familiar from earlier instrumental versions (bar 97 in B flat minor). Like other passages previously discussed, this music has always been part of a chain of events, not an apotheosis. To suggest further modulation would project E flat as the probable outcome, though initially the music appears to overshoot the mark with a key signature of A flat. The connection with Urlicht is established initially by the solo voice, and more notably by thematic reference from bar 659. Philosophically this connection is unmistakable; faith in the resurrection declared in Urlicht is now experienced as an actuality. The projected E flat arrives in earnest at bar 672 with contrapuntal concentration of the 9-8 theme starting in the basses, gaining confidence with the stretto at bar 682. As a last confirmation of the axis system there is a brief passive modulation to G major and back again before the final emphatic perfect cadences in E flat at bars 712 and 732.

In the end a considerable distance has been traversed in the course of this finale, which is in keeping with the vast emotional and even physical distance implied by its programme. But this analysis shows that, any notion of progressive tonality on the basis of the beginning and ending keys is potentially very misleading. For a start, such a standpoint could lead us to interpret the closely related relative major of C minor taking over tonicity as no great expansion of the tonal universe based on the exploitation of a very commonplace musical relationship. This is simply not the case. It is clearly a much more narrative process that Mahler takes us through to the ultimate salvation of the
concluding pages, a journey that is expressed tonally through the use of a
grand cycle of fifths (C—F/Db—Bb/Gb—Eb). In the end, the outcome may
be an obvious choice, but the listening experience is not that of changing
horses midstream from C minor to the nearest alternative in E flat, but of a
taxing emotional and physical journey. Somewhere in the course of the work
our perception of tonicity changes. C minor relinquishes tonicity somewhere
in the chain of events of the Finale. If we listen backwards, by which I mean
consider E flat as tonic long before it has been heard as such, then we can la­
bel the position of C in this chain of events as the dominant of the dominant of
the dominant of E flat. Conversely E flat, which had functioned as a dominant
axis member relative to C in the first movement, begins to be perceived,
towards the end of the finale, as the eventual tonic.

It would be foolish to deny that a listener capability of retaining some sense
of the original C minor point of relativity and sense the close relationship of
the outer frame. But if the eventual solution is an obvious one, it is surely
gained by a most circuitous route and the sensation of having been taken on a
tonal journey remains the quintessential expressive characteristic of the finale.
By the same token, it is also misleading to exaggerate the fortune-telling capa­
city of the resurrection theme heard in the key of E flat in the development
section of the first movement, as that theme does not actually occur in E flat in
the finale but rather in F instrumentally and in G flat at the opening chorale. If
such a connection exists then we the audience make it by association. It is the
residue of the E major music that makes up the substance for much of the con­
cluding E flat major music. This is nothing if not consistent, as it is the E
major music that consistently opposes C minor and programmatically desires
to be free of it—not the music associated with E flat. The desire to transcend
death is a common thread in both the outer movements, as the thematic con­
nections suggest, but it is some distance away from C minor that this desire is
fulfilled.

The use of an axis system is imperative to elucidate Mahler's compositional
methods. Individual axial relationships, especially in the finale, are not unfa­
miliar from previously examined works. They allow Mahler to explore more
tonal areas while keeping a tight reign on the functional implications—for ex­
ample, detours to D flat and especially G flat in the Finale ensure that the goal
of E flat is not reached too quickly. There is a monumentality inherent in the
programmatic subject that obviously needs time to unfold. Mahler chose his
tonal centres because they could prolong his movement without intimating the
eventual goal too quickly. But like the First Symphony there is little or no pre­
cedent for the construction of this work. Considered together these two works
do little to advance a unified position on "progressive tonality". Whereas the
First exploits a certain ambiguity over the true function of the dominant, to the
point where one might almost consider it bi-tonal, the Second sets up a tonic
quite solidly and then "progresses" from that established point of reference.
With the Third Symphony we encounter a work which, like the First Symphony, most textbooks would consider as tonally concentric. As with the First, I would contend that the matter is far from being that simple. Even more than its two predecessors, this work involves structural principles that we have already explored in the works of earlier composers, most notably the late works of Beethoven.
Chapter 8
Symphony No. 3

The Third Symphony is one of Mahler's most unique compositions and one that went through an unusual compositional process. The gestation of this work, originally involving a seven movement plan with *Das himmlische Leben* as the finale is well documented by de La Grange, Mitchell, P. R. Franklin, and indeed Mahler himself in his letters and by way of Bauer-Lechner's recollections. There is no space to review all the various changes in programmatic titles, movement ordering and complement here—rather I will focus on the nature of the definitive six-movement form of the work.

It is not always a simple affair to ascribe a key to some of Mahler's works. Such is the problem that regarding the Fifth Symphony Herta Blaukopf felt forced to take this position:

> Since Mahler considered it virtually impossible to assign a single key to the "whole symphony", it is advisable to give none. 4

Despite this indecision it is usual to ascribe the key of C sharp minor to that work. With the Third Symphony there was also a certain amount of indecision. Nicolas Slonimsky notes that the work was ". . . subtitled in the original manuscript *Ein Sommermorgentraum*, and designated "F dur" (rather than the D minor, stated in most analytical notes) . . .". 5 This particular draft of the programme comes from August 1896, and as such represents the last in the long line of revisions. The title *Sommermorgentraum* appears on the hand-written programmatic note and also in the letter outlining the programme to Max Marschalk of August 6 1896. Natalie Bauer-Lechner recounts the completion of the work in July of 1896, so Mahler had the complete score in front of him when he designated the work in F. Therefore, the D minor

---

designation represents a change of mind at some later date. Neither the title page of the first printed edition nor the programme of the first performance at Krefeld give any clue to the key either. But Mahler himself in a letter to Oskar Fried (undated, postmark 4.1.06) refers to his D minor Symphony. But whether Mahler changed his mind or was persuaded is a matter for conjecture. Perhaps it was for concern over the work’s reception—the length of the first movement was certain to provide ample ammunition for the critics, as Mahler was well aware. The progressive tonal scheme that results, on paper at least, from designating the work to be in F, may well have seemed an unnecessary provocation, especially as the D minor introduction could be considered extensive enough to justify a conventional concentric tonal scheme.

Mahler preferred to designate the key of the work by the key of the first movement, rather than the key in which the entire work ends. It is this rationale that designates the Seventh as being in E minor, despite the clearly articulated B minor introduction. But by the same token it would seem natural to designate the Third as in F major. The D minor with which it begins stands in the same subordinate relation to F major as B minor does to E minor in the Seventh. Which designation, if any, is nearest the truth?

This is not, to my mind, an exercise in hair-splitting. Indeed, it is of some importance when discussing progressive tonality, for, on paper at least, this work does not qualify when it is designated to be in D minor. In my view, this ignores the substance of the music, the essence being a tonal dichotomy in which F major is the short-term victor. This is not simply a matter of F major manifesting itself for longer periods, but rather it is due to the more thorough tonicization processes that F undergoes in the first movement. Once established, its position remains unchallenged through the succeeding two movements. The fourth movement is pivotal but by no means unequivocal in reviving D as potential tonic, the fifth movement resumes F and it is only in the finale (once again, one might add) that tonicity is unequivocally decided. Whatever his reasons, Mahler’s final decision designated the key of D minor for his Third Symphony, but what I hope will become clear is that the music better supports his original designation of F major.

Example 8-1 Symphony No. 3 (first movement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intro.</th>
<th>in D</th>
<th>in F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—131</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>ivα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132—163</td>
<td>Db, Vα</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>164—228</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>ivα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229—236</td>
<td>Db, Vα</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>237—253</td>
<td>C (a)</td>
<td>Vβ of v (v)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The opening fanfare for eight horns bears a remarkable similarity to the principal theme in the finale of Brahms's First Symphony. The most important difference is that Mahler's version of the "Brahms" theme carries a significant tonal dichotomy in itself. The initial upbeat will be a prominent feature throughout the work, but here its significance is that it establishes D as tonic. The fanfare leads on to the dominant A articulated by the grumbling brass from bar 11, moving via the bass drum bridge to D minor at Figure 2 thereby completing a middleground I-V-I tonicization process. There is however a considerable tension in the opening fanfare, one that immediately invokes the axial system. The opening two bars articulate B flat just as much as D minor and the end of the first phrase could as easily be in F major.

Example 8-2 III-i, 1—4.
Certainly D minor emerges victorious soon after—the point I'm making is that the fanfare theme itself does not unequivocally articulate the present tonic D minor. This is an important ambiguity, one that Mahler can resolve with dramatic effect later. We have already seen this technique in the second Symphony, (especially in the Scherzo where the 8-7-6-5 theme in E major was metrically displaced in order to articulate the triad of C, which in turn articulated the defeated status of E in the battle for tonicity). It is a recurring technique in Mahler's compositions which he employs to allow foreground events to articulate the outcome of the background battle for tonicity. This amounts to more than a simple repeat of a previous theme in a new key. Mahler resolves the ambiguity through a displacement in pitch or metre which allows that theme, not just to be embodied in the new tonic, but to actually articulate the tonic triad itself. This technique will be brought into action in the F major part of the movement.

At bar 78 a new theme is given in the trumpet, noticeably it coincides with an unusual harmonic development—the C# of the trumpet fanfare is not allowed to resolve as a leading note to D but rather functions as D flat falling to C. This is the first indication of the future tonal development in which D flat will be most prominent as a preparation for the dominant of F. Here it can only set in motion a modulatory sequence that culminates in a bII—i cadence into B flat minor at Figure 8. This is left unsubstantiated but it is a realization of the potential for axial modulation inherent in the opening horn fanfare. Any third-related dichotomy that is emerging at this stage centres on D and B flat, not D and F. The return to D illustrates the close axis relationship, with the trumpet's leading note c#—d defining both #2—3 in B flat and #7—8 in D minor (Fig. 9-10).

A further intimation of D flat comes at bar 136, significant too in that it carries a new theme. Again D flat is allowed only limited presence and the solo violin takes up the theme in D major at bar 140. But it is surprisingly cut off by the clarinet fanfare in D flat once again. Donald Mitchell points out that this a derivative of the Das himmlische Leben theme, originally the finale of the work. Here it serves to signal the intended move to F. In one of the draft scores Mahler identified this passage as Der Herold, clearly intended to awaken Pan from his winter slumber, (Figure 11 entitled Pan schläft). The grace-note figures point forward to the F major march music, where they will become more prominent. These isolated appearances of D flat promise a fuller working out at some later point, for here they are neither completed nor assimilated into some other tonal context. This is one of the dislocations or nonsequiturs that the movement is famous for—often the target of the work's detractors. But both Mahler's programmatic and musical intentions are clear. He

11Donald Mitchell, The Wunderhorn Years, 313.
12Donald Mitchell, The Wunderhorn Years, 194.
intended to portray a gradual awakening of Pan and of the tonic rivalry of F major. D flat is responsible for stirring the movement into life away from the inanimate D minor to which we return temporarily at Figure 13, once again laden with inertia.

Figure 13 returns us more or less to Figure 2 this time with the trombone solo over the familiar rumblings in the bass. The music at Figure 17 compresses much of the first transition to D flat, from Figures 7 to 11. Tritone movement in the bass creates ambiguity and once again the C sharp at the top of the trumpet's theme refuses to function as a leading note, functioning instead as D flat falling to C, just as it had at bar 78. By repeating patterns and creating precedents Mahler creates a powerful expectancy of tonal change. D flat duly arrives at bar 229, this time with its accompanying theme in the bass. However the modulation back up to D major does not come and a second rendering of the theme in the oboes continues in D flat. The "Das himmlische Leben" fanfare in the clarinets comes a semitone lower as it had previously. However, as we have not shifted from D flat, this takes us to C major and the dominant of F.

The double bar line is drawn at Figure 23 signifying the beginning of the F major exposition proper. The intervening material functions as a bridge between the D minor introduction and the F major march, and like as the programme suggests, it represents a gradual unfolding or awakening. C major gives way to A minor which is the most clearly articulated key in this section (bars 249-51, 258, 266), setting up an axial pairing of F and A (ιυ) very early. F major appears briefly at bar 254 in a version of the opening horn fanfare. But here in this transitional stage the theme has a similar inherent tonal ambiguity to that at the opening of the movement. This arises because of where it is pitched in relation to the tonic triad. The opening horn theme involved a d—Bb dichotomy, here the conflict is between F and A reflecting the axial rivalry that has infused these initial stages. It is not until Figure 23 that F major breaks through to take over tonality, significantly with the horns taking centre stage, with the tonally more articulate version of the opening theme.

Example 8-3 III-i 273-6 (compare with Example 8-2)

Here the opening fanfare articulates the tonic triad exclusively—all traces of tonal ambiguity that have been an integral part of the theme since the opening bars are no longer there. Mahler achieves this in a very simple manner, the interval of the opening upbeat is expanded from a fourth to a sixth. That the horns give this new version of the theme is clearly intended to articulate the structure as a whole, reminding us of the orchestration of the original. The
tonally indeterminate eight-horn unison of the opening is now replaced by three-part harmony. F major is confirmed cadentially more thoroughly than any key so far, especially at bar 279, at which point we receive the theme which was previously associated with D flat major. Here it is in a more complete and definitive form in the key of F.

In the end the D minor Introduction is just that. Its introductory status is governed by the fact that its various dislocations promise a future resolution, and it therefore teleologically seeks the F major exposition. In the manner of Haydn's sonata-form introductions, the principal thematic elements are to some degree embryonic and only receive their complete and definitive forms in the exposition proper. The initial "Brahms" theme carries with it the potential for resolution to a tonally more stable form and it is the F major exposition which consummates this implied future. As mentioned above the D flat major theme undergoes the same process. Such events ensure that the exposition supercedes the introduction which, by corollary, makes the introduction subsidiary. In the tonal sense D flat is the crucial pivot, the tonal area that holds the expectation of an imminent change in emphasis, because it carries the partial realization of the F major march theme.

Functioning in this pivotal role, D flat eventually functions as bVI in F passing to the dominant in the usual cadential fashion. It should be kept in mind that the relationship here between D and Db, a subdominant axis to tonic axis relationship (ivα—Iβ), will be reversed in the finale. There the relationship c#—D is one of dominant axis to tonic axis (vα—I), actively tonicizing D major.

The exposition cadentially reinforces the primacy of F at bars 279, 289, 297 and 315. The period between bar 298 and 314 returns to the bridge passage material (Fig. 20—23), emphasizing as before A minor (ια). The double bar line at Figure 26 marks the beginning of the transition to the second tonal area, though initially a new theme counterpoints the F major horn theme in another confirmation of F as tonic. The transfer is completed to D major at Figure 27, and analogous to the F major area, is supported by its upper major third axis member (F sharp minor at bar 341). The final, definitive statement of D comes at Figure 28, combining thematic elements of much of the material so far, most notably that which is becoming the work's basic motive, the melodic contour of 5-8-7-6-5.

The choice of D major for the second tonal area is highly significant, arousing comparison with works previously discussed in this thesis. We have seen the use of the submediant in sonata-form works of both Beethoven and Brahms. As in the Hammerklavier Sonata and the B major Trio (by the two composer's respectively), the use of a subdominant axis member (IVα or ivα) produces this non-tonicizing sonata form. If we can consider the F major exposition as a separate entity from the D minor introduction (as it was at
more than one point in the work’s gestation) we can still surmise the rationale behind Mahler’s choice for the second tonal area. Undoubtedly it was the same as those earlier composers. In a work that will involve the progression to the key of D, the composer must avoid background tonicization of F here, as it will make the eventual transfer difficult.

But a peculiar situation arises from the use of D as a second tonal area that cannot be dismissed purely as the result of the desire to postpone background tonicization. The large expanse of the D minor introduction, having already laid some claim to tonicity, surely makes a connection with this second period of D tonality, thereby strengthening the earlier claim. Certainly the key of D has occupied more playing time up to this point than F. To my mind, these factors are not sufficient for D to gain tonic status, the concentration of cadential events establishing F and the fact that, thematically, the F major section fulfills the implied aims of the introduction, allows F to maintain tonal centrality. However, the situation remains precariously balanced.

Quite deliberately Mahler has set up a tonal dichotomy similar to previously examined nineteenth-century works, especially the Opus 41, no. 1 Quartet of Schumann and the Beethoven Opus 102, no 1 Cello Sonata. The common factor is the independent role of the introduction in all of these works. In each of these cases, and, as I have already had cause to note with the First Symphony, the introduction is used as a receptacle for one element of the tonal dichotomy that the ensuing movement will not assimilate into its own thematic processes. Although the vast canvas of the introduction entails much material that is assimilated or more fully realized during the F major exposition, there is a considerable amount that remains autonomous. These thematic loose ends will only be taken up in later movements.

There are a number of similarities between this work and the two works of Beethoven and Schumann cited above. The techniques by which these composers set up a bi-tonal as opposed to a mono-tonal structure, are identical. In all three cases we can see that the ensuing sonata form is weakened in some way. In both the earlier composers’ works this was achieved by reducing the cadential efficacy by metrical displacement, thus making tonicization less emphatic than would otherwise be expected. In this movement the aim is identical, although sonata form here is rendered less effective through the use of the subdominant axis as a second tonal area.

In the First Symphony we saw the principle whereby the introduction continued to act as a tonal irritant, and, contrary to classical practice, took a major role in the rest of the movement. Here the introduction appears at the beginning of the development section just as it did in the First Symphony. The autonomy of the thematic content is reinforced and the brass fanfares and solos remain the property of D minor. Meanwhile, B flat minor, as an axis relative to D, supports the main tonic at Figure 33 as it had done earlier. The intrusion
of the introduction combined with the already muted tonicization processes in
the exposition continues to keep the question of tonicity delicately balanced.

The development is comprised of several sections, of which this return to
the introduction is the first. Between Figures 36 and 39 the music attempts to
regain its momentum and search out new tonal directions after the inertia of
the D minor Introduction. Fragments of fanfares contradictory in tonality to
the pedal bass (B major against an F pedal) strive for a more solid footing,
which finally comes in the form of a stable period of G flat at Figure 39. G
flat is cadentially confirmed again at Figure 41 and is maintained all the way to
Figure 43 and the march in B flat minor. This first part of the development
section sets out the entire axis around D, (D-Gb-Bb). It is functionally static in
that it provides no decisive solution to the ambiguity surrounding tonicity.
Neither D nor F is provided with a substantial structural dominant and so nei­
ther D nor any of its axis relatives arrive with any conclusive force.

The B flat minor march strikes out with more purpose and aim. It quickly
moves to the subdominant (E flat minor) where it remains until Figure 48. Here C major is superimposed on a trilled B natural pedal, which is the first
hint of a structural dominant for F. Mahler temporarily regains B flat minor at
bar 578, but his signalled intention to return to F grows stronger. Here, we
have the return of a theme previously associated with F major and given by
the oboes at bar 580 (the instrument with which it was originally associated in
the exposition) before C major sweeps in at Figure 49 with the opening horn
theme now in the trombones. Both the tonality and thematic content imply an
imminent return to F. This is heightened two bars before Figure 51 where the
"Das himmlische Leben" fanfare returns, again in its associated instrumental
colouring of clarinets (doubled by trumpets), in the key in which it first ap­
peared, D flat. The precedent set in the early stages of the movement being
that, despite the return of the D minor introduction replete with trombone solo,
this will eventually pass to F major. This is exactly the course of events from
this point until the end of the movement.

The return of the D minor introduction has already been mentioned during
the course of discussions on the First Symphony. This recapitulatory gesture
has drawn criticism from many quarters. Mahler may well have desired to
give his rugged D minor rumblings and unique trombone solo a second and
final hearing. But that is not an entirely acceptable explanation. I have already
had cause to mention Mahler's tendency to compress his recapitulations and
his willingness to edit that which is deemed unnecessary. The reasons behind
the return of the D minor music here may have its basis in the conception of
the entire work and not this movement alone. The closing pages of the devel­
opment raise the expectation that F major is imminent and that it will resume
tonic status. Mahler probably felt that an emphatic arrival at F major at the be­
ginning of the recapitulation would tip the scales too heavily in favour of F as
tonic. This is consistent with Mahler's handling of his introductory material
throughout his career. His Fourth, Seventh and Tenth Symphonies see the recurrence of this same tactic. Just as the introductions are used to set up a tonal dichotomy at the beginning of the work, they are also useful in restating this dichotomy at important structural junctures, such as the beginning of the development or recapitulation, or both, as is the case in this movement.

Cooke is very much mistaken in saying that Mahler allows himself to repeat almost the entire exposition (Cooke considering the D minor section as part of the exposition). Mahler's concision is nowhere more evident than in his handling of this recapitulation. His introduction lasts less than a hundred bars compared with the nearly 240 bars that preceded the point where the dominant of F was reached. Mahler presents an amalgam of the two D minor episodes contained within the original Introduction, the trombone marking the transfer to the second episode at bar 683. Consequently he succeeds in conveying a very real sense of a full recapitulation in well under half the time. Added to the functions of thematic recapitulation and the restatement of the original tonal dichotomy, Mahler includes a first glimpse of one of his characteristic turn figures that will be prominent in the final Adagio.


The march recommences and, as in the original, F major gradually emerges as tonic after significant emphasis on A minor (iα). This alternation between axis members continues until the tonicizing version of the "Brahms" theme at bar 800. The theme originally from Figure 20, that also dominated much of the C major music in the development, now counterpoints the F major march music at Figure 70. This represents a delayed confirmation of the teleological inclination of C in the development towards the eventual tonicization of F. Despite the intervening D minor introduction Mahler assimilates the theme into an F major context.

The climax of the section is the sonata-form process that clinches, at least temporarily, the tonicity for F major. The second tonal area in the exposition was in D major and as such raised again the profile of that key in the battle for tonicity. Here Mahler gives it in F major and in so doing clearly articulates F's supremacy. Just as in the Second Symphony recapitulation, Mahler manipulates the traditional aspect of sonata resolution to advance a tonal rival, while

---

concurrently leaving other tonal loose ends unresolved. In the previous work, he confirmed C minor by resolving the exposition's G minor music, but also chose not to resolve the E major theme to the tonic, (going as far as to consolidate its position). Here the transposition of the exposition's D major theme to F goes some way to closing off that particular tonal rivalry. In the end, tonization of F is by no means unequivocal and D major's claims will eventually be revived in the fourth movement in association with thematic material from the introduction that F major has not assimilated.

In conclusion, Mahler steers well clear of providing a deeper structural level dominant that might lead directly to an emphatic resolution, such as a classical sonata form development and recapitulation would provide. The exposition itself does not provide a second tonal area that actively determines tonicity but rather employs a non-tonicizing submediant. In the final analysis, the fact that the introduction is only partly assimilated combined with the fact that the sonata form that follows provides only limited tonization of F, allows Mahler to maintain two possible rivals for tonicity over the huge span of the first movement and beyond. But for the moment at least, F holds the upper hand.

As with the first movement of the Second Symphony, the programmatic interpretation supplied by the composer and the psychological effect of the tonal drama amount to the same interpretation explained in different languages. It becomes clear during the opening stages of the movement that we are involved in an evolutionary process. Both the tonal processes and the thematic events imply a goal beyond the initial D minor. Undoubtedly, an overview of the whole symphony and its programmatic intent is needed for a more detailed interpretation. If D minor represents inert nature gradually awakening and striving to evolve, it also represents within that inert state the potential for evolution to much higher forms. This evolutionary ladder is scaled throughout the work as the various programmatic drafts show. Therefore it is no surprise that, with the fourth movement reaching the subject of mankind, we return to the tonality of D accompanied by references to the various thematic threads from the D minor Introduction.

The second movement, which originally carried the title *Was mir dir Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen*, is, like the second movement of the Second Symphony, almost an intermezzo. Taken in isolation the movement tends towards subdominant modulation in keeping with the relaxed nature of the programmatic subject. Overall the key of A major, being a major third relative of the First movement's F, does nothing to contradict F's tonicity. In no way does its subdominant modulations imply an attempt to regain D as tonic, there is no contradictory thematic material that would articulate this or any direct references to D minor material from the first movement. The movement gives a strong impression of homogeneity and so there is hardly any perceived threat to tonicity with any of the modulations.
Example 8-5 Symphony no. 3 (second movement)

A major is firmly established after the period of dominant axis emphasis from bar 206. The transfer from Vα to V at Figure 14 also marks the reprise of the main theme, which recalls an almost identical tonal peculiarity in the third movement of Brahms Second Symphony (where the principal theme returns in F sharp instead of G). This allows a second climax at Figure 16 when A major returns. As in the Brahms there is no great sense of tension to be derived from these peculiarities. They do not create an imperative drive towards attaining the tonic and one feels that, inevitably, the resolution will come. In the wider context of the movement this dominant axis emphasis counterbalances the earlier subdominant modulations, while concurrently consolidating A major's tonicity locally. It also reinforces the tonic status of the F-A-(Db) axis, remembering that the F—a axial relationship was already well formed in the first movement.

The third movement, based largely on the song *Ablösung im Sommer*, is not tonally complex. The various sections focus almost exclusively on C and F, major and minor. Both internally and in the wider context of the symphony, C confirms the tonicity of F by acting as a dominant.

Example 8-6

Symphony No. 3 (third movement) C minor or v to F

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-33</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-120</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121—228</td>
<td>c-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229—255</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256—346</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>347—417</td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>418—484</td>
<td>c-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>485—556</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>557—590</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The movement spends a disproportionate amount of time in the key of F—on the written score nearly half the entire bars of the movement. But the slower tempo means that the "Posthorn" episodes are of significantly longer duration. In the wider context of the symphony, it is difficult to determine whether we are listening to a movement that outlines a i—IV—i progression in C minor or a v—I—v progression in F. Certainly, the likelihood of F achieving unequivocal tonicity is enhanced by Mahler's choice of tonality here. But in the latter stages of the movement, surface events go some way to redressing the balance, implying that D is still a viable alternative.

The passage that demands some investigation is that between the last F major segment and the concluding C minor coda, the passage from Figure 30 to 32. Coming from an F major context, the G flats that appear amongst the bare fifth chords of F major could potentially read as dominant minor ninths and steer the music in the subdominant direction. Unexpectedly at Figure 31 an E flat minor chord bursts in. Although there is no F carried over from the previous chord, there is a remarkable parallel with the corresponding point in the Second Symphony Scherzo where there appeared a B flat minor triad over a tonic C pedal. There it was noted that this turned the tonic C into a dominant (V\(b^9\)) which prepared the tonal shift in the subdominant direction in the fourth and fifth movements. The net effect here is the same, an E flat minor triad juxtaposed with F, (though not superimposed as in the previous work). F is the strongest contender for tonicity at this point in the work and with the movement about to conclude in C minor we might expect that F would soon assume its role as tonic. This highly disruptive harmonic event implies, just as it did in the Second Symphony, that the eventual outcome might be in the subdominant direction from the present tonic. This would take us to B flat or alternately by axial substitution to G flat or back to D.

The E flat minor harmony gives way to D flat and a IV\(\beta\)—I cadence into C results. Mahler points forward to the next movement in the ensuing coda as the wind and brass parody the chords from bar 11 of the first movement that will also be used to set the words O Mensch in the next movement (see example 8-7 next page). Its appearance here reminds us of the thematic loose ends that, so far, F major and its associated keys have not managed to assimilate. It is a clear signal that D is again ready to assume prominence. Adding this to the tonal implications of the earlier E flat minor dislocation pushes the question of tonicity to a critical point. To resolve directly back to an F major movement here would probably suffice to invest that key with overall tonic stature. But Mahler's reactivation of the dormant thematic conflicts from the D minor introduction to the first movement and the implied dominant function that F major attained late in the Scherzo strongly suggests that this will not eventuate. Our reservation prove well-founded when the succeeding movement picks up these same unassimilated thematic materials and places them firmly in the context of D.
Within the first 18 bars of the fourth movement both the prophetic events from the closing stages of the Scherzo are borne out. The \textit{O Mensch} theme returns in its original form and by bar 18 we have cadenced into D major, a key in the subdominant direction (IV\(\alpha\)) from the original tonic F. The articulation of the new tonal stance of the work is indeed forceful—the entry of the human voice assures this. As the overall tonal picture of the Symphony now emerges, it can be seen to resemble that of the preceding Symphony. In both works events at the end of the Scherzo herald the change in tonicity, which is then dramatically articulated by the entry of the human voice in the fourth movement. The tonal outline of the Second was decidedly concentric up until the corresponding point, the first three movements outlining a I—II\(\beta\)—I scheme. Here in the Third the tonal outline of the first three movements is I—\(\text{I} \alpha\)—v and so a case can be made for a concentric structure with F as tonic. In both cases the tonal direction sought in their respective fourth movements lies in the subdominant direction from the original tonic. The principal difference between the two works is that, in the case of the Third, the initial stages of the work clearly articulates the tonal rival, enabling it to take over tonicity more easily.

Tonally, the fourth movement is one of the most static that Mahler ever wrote. But while this provides sustained periods of D major tonality it does not reinforce its tonicity cadentially. D will only receive this confirmation in
the Finale. While harmonically there is little activity to assert the tonicity of D at a deeper structural levels, there are two important foreground factors that reinforce D's position. The *O Mensch* theme itself provides the first, prolonging a dominant upbeat which carries with it a precedent from the first movement that it will quickly resolve to D minor.

**Example 8-8**

Symphony No. 3 (fourth movement)

1—17  a    v of I
18—82  D  I
83—93  a    v of I
94—107  D  I
108—118  F  Vβ
119—147  D  I

The short excursion into F major is more significant. In articulates the subordinate status of F in relation to D by making the former actively involved in the process of tonicizing the latter. It is significant that the progression back to the tonic D fulfills the implied progression from the end of the Scherzo. In that movement, the juxtaposed F-E flat minor implied a dominant function (V♭9♭7♭4) which was temporarily ignored in favour of a cadence of eb—Db—C, or vβ—IVβ—I, confirming C. Here in the fourth movement the dominant function of F is fulfilled, and D is tonicized by the same Vβ—IVβ—I cadential procedure as confirmed C in the Scherzo.

**Example 8-9** III-iv 115—119 and III-iii 547—557.
As already mentioned, this movement picks up the thematic loose ends from the Introduction to the first movement. Both the undulating figure at the opening and the characteristic prolongation of the dominant via both the lower thirds $f^\#$ and $F$ in the O Mensch theme derive from the opening pages of the work. The horn theme at bar 29 and that of the violins at bar 57 are both derived from bars 83—91 in the first movement. This theme gains more prominence as the movement progresses and is eventually vocalized in its original form at bar 119 and in augmentation at bar 125. As a result, we are reacquainted with one of the first movement's loose ends, left hanging because of the inability of the first movement's truncated recapitulation to assimilate these thematic elements into an F major context. These thematic features, in conjunction with the introduction of the human voice, allows D to accumulate considerable programmatic significance, to the point where we seriously entertain the transfer of tonicity from F to D.

Outwardly the fifth movement exhibits the strongest relationship with the abandoned finale Das himmlische Leben. Thematic references abound, and here they are more literal, as opposed to the disguised references in the first movement. With regards to tonality the movement involves a considerable episode in D minor ($iv\alpha$). So in isolation, the movement provides no deeper structural level tonicization of F, but rather highlights a subdominant axis member. As far as the wider tonicity of F is concerned, this is not a very positive action. In an environment where overall tonicity is still in the balance, the F—d juxtaposition is more likely to confirm F as $V^\beta$ of D than support its own claims for tonicity.

Example 8-10 Symphony No. 3 (fifth movement)

| 1—38 | F | I |
| 39—81 | d | $iv\alpha$ |
| 82—99 | Bb-d | IV-$iv\alpha$ |
| 100—120 | F | I |

Mahler's overall tactic in the original seven-movement conception of the work would have been to set up a tonal pattern that would be reiterated in the Das himmlische Leben finale. Here the key of F regains its position of tonic at the end of the movement. Das himmlische Leben (presumably transposed a tone lower than in the Fourth Symphony), would overturn this unsubstantiated victory of F, and end in D major.\(^{14}\)

\(^{14}\) Philip Barford, Mahler Symphonies and Songs, (London, 1970), 32. Barford suggests that the seven-movement form involved a progressive tonal scheme, stating that Mahler intended to insert Das himmlische Leben as the finale without transposing it from its original G-E tonality. He does not support his claim however, and since such a proposition would disregard Mahler's commitment to tonally justified conclusions, I take his claims to be false.
That D will end up winning the battle for tonicity begins to be supported by the weight of philosophical associations it has accrued. The idea of life awakening of out of inert matter in the first movement introduction carries with it the potential for higher forms of life—an evolutionary process spelled out by the succeeding movements. The D minor tonality of the fourth movement in conjunction with some of the introductory themes connects humanity with the primordial life force of the first movement's introduction. But Man is not merely another life form, but one with the burdens of fear, doubt and the consciousness of his own transience—in short all the philosophical pit-falls that attend the human condition. The world of the two movements in the key of D is one where pain, not so much physical as mental or spiritual, is very much a reality. As we shall see the F major of the fifth movement represents a backward step from the world of human suffering.

F major and the naive faith of the *Wunderhorn* text counters the Nietzsche text with a picture of innocence.

The fifth-movement theme—as indeed the fifth movement as a whole—connotes folk-like innocence. The tempo, the brevity of the phrases, the straightforward, unproblematic phrase groupings, the little stamping accents . . . and the exclusive use of the diatonic scale all contribute to a scene of hearty unreflective blamelessness. The text talks about serious things—sin, weeping, mercy—but the music scurries along as though it had no capacity for experiencing their seriousness.\(^\text{15}\)

Greene very much implies the subject of the fifth movement is not so much the three angels in heaven but the children singing the song about them. Mahler is evoking a blissful state of innocence.

Bekker, following the lead Mahler's letters give, describes the second movement as a flower piece in which the flower's joy in being themselves is not affected by the rain and wind they undergo. They are subject to what humans would experience as pain, but do not, because they cannot, experience it that way. The angels in the fifth movement can talk about pain, but they seem to know it only from the outside, as it were, and can experience pain no more than can the flowers . . . \(^\text{16}\)

For humanity, pain is a reality—and presumably for a God compassionate to mankind it is a reality also. The deliverance from pain is implicit in the motto that Mahler intended to be placed at the head of the final movement.

\textit{Vater, sieh an die Wunden mein!}
\textit{Kein Wesen lass verloren sein!}\(^\text{17}\)

[Father, see these wounds of mine!
Let no creature be lost to thee!]


\(^{17}\)Gustav Mahler, *Gustav Mahler: Selected Letters*, 188.
The unfocused life force of the first movement, the flowers and animals of the succeeding movements, all exude this same innocence and blamelessness. Children most readily reflect this in the human form, and the Angels reflect the child-like disposition in the context of heaven. One can see Mahler's programmatic scheme whereby God, expressed through love, transcends the pain of the human condition to the position where the bliss, hitherto reserved for those who can not experience pain, is finally placed within the grasp of man. The evolution of D as tonic is consistent with the progress towards this programmatic apex.

With the original finale, *Das himmlische Leben*, we would have had the embodiment of the two programmatic strands with their associated tonalities of F and D within the one movement. But it would have created a confusing correlation between the principal tonalities and the ideas associated with them. F major and its axis relative A have stood for lower order manifestations of life and child-like innocence. For all of these entities, spiritual anguish does not intrude. The six-movement form of the symphony at least maintains clear philosophical distinctions and relates them with little ambiguity to the two principal tonal areas. Aside from the finality implied by the sixth movement's size, *Das himmlische Leben* was probably abandoned in the end because the fifth movement had already evoked child-like innocence so strongly, rendering the proposed seventh movement redundant.

The finale, although devoid of any significant references to the *Das himmlische Leben* theme, nevertheless achieves a sense of cyclic closure through references to other material from the D minor music of the first movement. The basic shape of the "Brahms" theme (5-8-7-8-6) is clearly audible in the opening theme.

Example 8-11 III-i, 1—4 and Fig. 28 and III-vi 1—4.

Also prominent is the turn figure that featured in the final trombone solo (from Figure 61 in the first movement). I commented on this earlier and can now elaborate on its significance. The final thematic event in D minor in the first movement denied F's tonal supremacy by bringing forth an altogether different type of melodic invention which constituted yet another loose end.
Here in the finale this same material becomes the focus of our attention and it vindicates, in retrospect, D's latent claims for tonicity from much earlier in the symphony.

Another reference comes at bar 180 in the finale with the horn figure that featured most prominently at the beginning of the development section in the first movement. This particular reminiscence returns us most vividly to a specific moment in the first movement, and in so doing recalls the original tonal orientation of the symphony. Here it comes at an important structural point, just before the final statement of D major, the onset of the final, unequivocal cancellation of the tonicity of F. Further references follow—the first comes at bar 219 and refers to the passage immediately prior to that cited above from Figure 29 in the first movement. But more importantly this same passage occurs between Figures 74 and 75, just before the final statement of F major in the first movement. Mahler recalls this critical juncture which focuses our attention on the fact that the tonal continuation now points to D and not F.

The outcome of this last reference is a most notable passage for it represents the last appearance of a significant F major event. The solo flute line at bar 245 is a diatonic melody in F major. The underlying harmony supports this tonality in its initial bars but from bar 246 it is underscored by a pedal A in the clarinet. There is momentary sense of polytonality at bar 247.

Example 8-12 III-vi, Fig. 25—6.

Taken as a whole, the brief passage represents a conflation of dominant axis harmonies, specifically Vǐ, provided by the flute melody, and V, provided by the dominant pedal. It is significant that this last appearance of F, rather than gaining any thematic independence, is enmeshed in a dominant function that will ultimately confirm the tonicity of D. Once again, Mahler is articulating at a foreground level the fundamental reversal in background status of the two keys.

The movement adheres to a basic rondo shape. The first episode sets forth a tonic axis relative in F sharp minor before providing deeper structural level dominants. C sharp minor is the most prominent key but F major also appears before the true dominant chord is reached at bar 74. The second episode proceeds in a cycle of fifths in the dominant direction with most emphasis on C
sharp minor (vα), and later E flat minor and major. The choice of vα over either of the other dominant axis members may be due to the prominence of D flat in the D minor introduction to the first movement. There D flat eventually functioned as bVI in a traditional bVI-V-I tonicization of F. Once again a foreground feature articulates the change in background status, C sharp minor functioning here as vα contributing to the tonicization of D.

Example 8-13 Symphony No. 3 (sixth movement)

Key D major: I

| 1—40 | D | I |
| 41–50 | f# | iα |
| 51–60 | c# | vα |
| 61—91 | F-V of D | Vβ-V |
| 92—131 | D | I |
| 132—148 | c# | vα |
| 149—156 | a♭ | v of vα |
| 157—167 | e♭ | ivβ |
| 168—173 | B | IVα |
| 174—179 | E♭ (V) | IVβ |
| 180—328 | D | I |

To sum up the tonal process of the Third Symphony, F assumes tonicity first, although the processes by which it is established are by no means exhaustive. As a result there remains considerable doubt, exacerbated by the continual tonal interference from the other main contender, D.

Example 8-14 Symphony no. 3, tonal overview.

In F (vi)-I la v VI I VI
In D (i)-Vβ V v of Vβ I Vβ I

Initially the tonality of the work is interpreted relative to F major, as in the top line of the example given above. The fourth movement is the crucial point where we begin to interpret the tonality of the work relative to D. Once D has emerged as tonic then the earlier parts of the symphony come to be understood, retrospectively, as a large scale dominant.

Over the course of these discussions of Mahler's first three symphonies a pattern has begun to emerge. In both this symphony and its predecessor the key that initially gains substantiated tonic status later functions as a dominant, or conversely the tonal "progression" is in a subdominant direction from the
initial tonic. In the Second Symphony it was not one single shift but a chain of events leading from C through F-Db, Gb-Bb and finally to Eb. Even the First Symphony, a work that would normally be considered concentric, exhibits this same tendency, with the dominant bias of the first two movements culminating in the $v\beta-I$ progressive tonal scheme of the finale. As I have already intimated, the Fourth Symphony will follow this pattern as well, which is hardly surprising as *Das himmlische Leben* as a separate entity encapsulates this same $V\beta-I$ tonal shift.

With the Fourth Symphony the method by which tonicity is kept in doubt is somewhat different. Once again the use of the unassimilated introduction as a tonal irritant is an integral part of the process, but in this case the key of the introduction, B minor, is not the eventual tonal victor. The juxtaposition of B and G, being axis neighbours, means that modulation from one to the other is passive and yields no significant tonicization of either key. As a result of an ineffectual sonata-form tonicization of G in the first movement, Mahler is able to effect the transfer to E major, interpreting the b—G axis in retrospect as members of the dominant axis.
Chapter 9
Symphony No 4

The Third and Fourth symphonies have long been noted for the degree to which they are interrelated. The contents of the previous chapter can only reinforce this, especially as the tonal progression of the Third Symphony reveals itself to be governed by the same tonal construction as the Fourth, in particular, a large-scale V\(\flat\)\(_5\)–I progression. The use of a similar progressive tonal scheme may have come from the influence of *Das himmlische Leben* on both works. Placing this issue aside, the tonal scheme remains totally consistent with Mahler's symphonic thinking up until this point.

*Das himmlische Leben* was not the only movement to share its history with both works. Henry-Louis de la Grange notes that three songs were originally involved instead of one.

No. 1: *Die Welt als ewige Jetzeit* (The World as Eternal Present), G major.
No. 2: *Das irdische Leben* (Earthly Life), E flat minor.
No. 3: *Caritas* (Adagio), B major.
No. 4: *Morgenglocken* (Morning Bells), F major.
No. 5: *Die Welt ohne Schwere* (The World Without Seriousness), D major (Scherzo).
No. 6: *Das himmlische Leben* (Heavenly Life).\(^1\)

From this, de La Grange logically assumes that the plan was drawn up before the completion of the Third Symphony. The inclusion of *Morgenglocken* suggests that Mahler was still unsure in which work this movement would eventually find a place.\(^2\) It is interesting to note the axial relationships that appear even at this early stage. The inclusion of *Das irdische Leben* and the projected *Caritas* would have straddled the work with tonic axis references (G–eb–B). De La Grange is unsure as to whether the present G major Adagio is a realization of the *Caritas* Adagio in B major, on the grounds that it was rare for Mahler to change the key of a projected movement. But if the two movements are related, then the change of key amounts to an axial substitution only, which would suggest only a partial rethinking of the movement's tonal role—a matter of colour rather than function. If the earlier movement was indeed a prototype for the present Adagio, then perhaps the decision was made to accommodate the reinforcement of the G–e dichotomy before the dénouement of *Das himmlische Leben*.

If a change mind over the key of the Adagio could be proved, it still may not be the only instance. Bauer-Lechner touches on another when discussing

---

the *scordatura* violin of the Scherzo.

"He is altering the violin solo of the Scherzo by having the instrument tuned a tone higher, and rewriting the part in D minor instead of E minor." 3

Provided that Bauer-Lechner is not mistaken, Mahler originally intended the movement to be in the eventual tonic of E. Peter Franklin is quick to footnote this and conclude that if Mahler had originally intended E minor for this movement, he ". . . might have come to feel that the romantic 'point' of a scherzo in E minor and a finale in E major was a little too obvious." Perhaps Mahler did not wish to give the game away too early, but it is of some interest that the substitution maintains the original tonal function of the movement. With the axial substitution (to C minor), the final tonal goal remains concealed. But the important thing is that the choice of either key loosens G's claim on tonicity, and it is this that is the primary goal at this stage of the work not the specific identification of the eventual tonal victor. The choice of C minor reinforces the dominant function of the first movement tonic axis, b-G.

So in spite of these revisions of specific tonal centres and the radical paring down of the number of movements, it would still seem that the broad outline of the tonicization drama was formulated very early and that Mahler did not deviate from it. Any possible transposition in the Adagio or Scherzo, such as Bauer-Lechner implies, suggests no functional change and therefore no new compositional aim. The new keys, being axial relatives, perform an equivalent function and so maintain the crux of the original plan.

*Das himmlische Leben* has the unique distinction of being a pre-existing finale, and as such, it clearly had a determining role—both structurally and programatically. Bauer-Lechner records Mahler's own view on this:

Concerning the mood of the first three movements, he added: 'They breathe the serenity of a higher world, one unfamiliar to us, which has something awe-inspiring and frightening about it. In the last movement (*"Das himmlische Leben") the child—who, though in a chrysalis-state, nevertheless already belongs to this higher world—explains what it all means."

The most striking idea is that the finale explains or clarifies all that which has preceded it. Naturally, the converse of this is that all is not what it seems in the initial stages of the work. There is a sense of ambiguity and disquiet, thinly veiled by the surface features of simplicity—the sleigh-bells and diatonic G major opening, and indeed the apparent adherence to classical formal models. Bauer-Lechner recalls the first performance in exactly these terms:

In the first movement, the audience was initially surprised by the apparently excessive simplicity of the themes (as they had expected something outrageous' from Mahler). But then, in the development section, they were filled

3Natalie Bauer-Lechner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, 162
Mitchell, after investigating Mahler's complex thematic telescoping before the recapitulation, sums up the dichotomy:

Undoubtedly the complexity of this passage was part of the aesthetic game that Mahler was playing in his Fourth Symphony: an outwardly simple-minded, even backward-looking symphony (an early manifestation of neo-classicism?), that creates a peculiar world of its own by contradicting, in developments of a demanding complexity and sophistication, the anticipations of simplicity and guilelessness that the very opening of the work seems to arouse (though only momentarily). Of course this was also part of the programmatic concept, which implied a gradual reduction in complexity throughout the work as preparation for the simplicity of the Finale, the true innocence of a child's vision of paradise. Hence it was logical that the most concentrated and intricate musical thinking should be assigned to the first movement. It was undoubtedly this aspect of the Fourth that left its first audiences bewildered, confused and hostile.

The soul of Mahler's wit is not in only this playful handling of thematic telescoping—nor was it, I suspect, entirely due to the sheer complexity of thematic development that such a hostile reaction was received at some of the early performances. Mitchell is right in identifying the contradiction between the initial simplicity and guilelessness and the movement's developmental complexities, but the contradiction lies at the heart of the movement's tonal processes also. Schematically, the movement certainly looks like a sonata form, which would seem to endorse the Mozartian grace and Haydnesque simplicity of some of the thematic material. But in terms of tonicization processes, the movement owes little to teleological classical models and is therefore anything but neo-classical.

The symphony is introduced by sleigh-bells in the key of B minor (soon revealed to be B phrygian by bar 3). This creates a tonal dichotomy of sorts. The symphony starts off on the wrong foot, but it is fairly innocuous, as there is no dramatic opposition in the thematic material, and the two keys, being major-third related, are passive axis relatives. The incessant eighth-note pattern of the sleigh-bell introduction finds its way into much of the accompaniment of the G major theme and so the axis relationship of the two keys b—G is reinforced. On the basis of their shared thematic material, there is little opposition between them. This is an important relationship to establish early as the two keys will continue to function as an axis pairing throughout the work. Although it is B minor that functions directly as the dominant of E minor at various points, the axis association with G implies an underlying V|I progression at the deeper structural level as well.

6Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Recollections of Gustav Mahler, 183.
Example 9-1
Symphony No. 4 (first movement)

Exposition. relative to G relative to E
1—3 b iα v
4—37 G I Vβ
38—71 D V IIβ
72—76 b iα v
77—101 G I Vβ

Dev.
102—108 b iα v
109—124 e ivα i
125—154 A II IV
155—166 eb iβ vα
167—208 f iiβ ivβ
209—224 C IV Iβ
225—238 e ivα i

Recap.
239—262 G I Vβ
263—297 G I Vβ

Coda
298—310 e ivα i
311—349 G I Vβ

The most important issue in this movement is the question of G's tonicity. As I have remarked on earlier occasions it is a consistent tactic of Mahler's to avoid any unequivocal statement of tonicity in the early stages of a work involving a progressive tonal scheme. Edward W. Murphy makes his most convincing case for the use of sonata-rondo forms in Mahler's works with this movement, and he is supported by Neville Cardus also. Our traditional formal descriptions are not always that useful for elucidating Mahler's sonata forms, but this movement is an exception. The rondo is, in terms of tonicization, a less potent form than the usual sonata form—the history of its preferred use as a finale rather than for first movements in classical works attests to its more relaxed disposition. In Schenkerian terms, sonata form is clearly defined, involving "... a forward thrust to 2/4 (where an interruption in the sense of a structural division occurs...[in a way that ] is not present in in the rondo."

---

prolonged over the period of the development section. With the rondo, there is a tendency for the dominant to be relegated to middleground status because it immediately resolves back to tonic, with the result that it can be interpreted as an extension of the tonic area rather than an independent tonal force.

Here then is the first step through which Mahler is able to avoid full tonicization of G. The rondo's muted tonicization processes leaves considerable room for doubt over tonicity, especially if other factors come into play by way of reinforcement. As might be expected, foreground events articulate the lack of commitment to tonicization in the background. The most notable is the preparation for the second tonal area. The dominant of the dominant is hardly prepared at all leading up to Figure 3. At bar 37 we cadence on to a chord of D, at which point the music is poised on the dominant of G. But from here, the music merely persists with the dominant as the new key. Mahler illustrates how wilful this shift to the dominant is when it comes to the recapitulation. There is no recomposition or transposition required in order to give the second theme in the tonic (bar 263). Mahler keeps his original build-up, which then functions as a dominant preparation for G major.

The second tonal area falls into two parts with the second part at Figure 4 solidifying the middleground tonicity of D after the initial insecurity surrounding its entry. At bar 72 the B minor introduction returns, functioning as a bridge back to the G major exposition. A new theme in the cellos at Figure 7, using the tonic pedal to reinforce its closing role, brings to an end an exposition that has encompassed a I—V—I progression. Despite choosing a rondo form which less effectively asserts G's tonicity, G major is certainly the main contender. But the fact that D is not prolonged through a sonata-form development section limits its potential for deeper structural level tonicization, a point that retrospectively vindicates the initial impression of instability that accompanied the entrance of the dominant key. In tonicization terms, D major has been reduced in potency to become an episodic extension of the initial tonic rather than a combined middle and background tonicizing dominant typical of sonata form.

With the dominant being allowed to resolve immediately it makes the tonal direction of the development crucial to the question of overall tonicity. G major could be confirmed if another strong structural dominant is reached, but on the other hand, the failure to provide such a dominant could place G's tonicity in jeopardy. The first sign that the development section might take the latter course is the return of the sleigh-bell introduction. Not that this is disruptive in itself, but here it begins to assert its tonal independence and, in so doing, realizes a different tonal function that has remained latent up until this point. Here the theme's tonal identity is strengthened due to the tonicizing leading note in the solo violin part, implying B minor more strongly than B phrygian.

As we proceed, this B minor functions as the dominant of E: not as a modal colour subsidiary to the tonic G major.

Very quickly the development section establishes the key of E, which will ultimately be the work's tonal destination. But it is not merely a case of beginning the development in the relative minor of G. The development section here is the most unusual Mahler has written so far in his career, in as much as it avoids any goal-oriented drive towards a preparatory dominant and subsequent resolution to the tonic. In other words the development ends up as a disconnected structural unit, one which begins and ends in E minor no less. Mitchell has already commented on the humour of the recapitulation—the incongruity at the heart of the joke being that such an important structural event should be so understated. In terms of the local tonal context, the return of G major is entirely gratuitous. So the muted articulation of the structural outlines that Mahler achieves with his thematic dovetailing actually points out a more serious situation—namely the growing crisis over the tonicity of G.

Such a claim may seem far-fetched at first sight, but it is nevertheless a fact that the development fails to establish a goal-oriented structural dominant that seeks to tonicize G. This comes after the tonicizing ability of the dominant in the exposition had been seriously downgraded—firstly by the initial weakness with which it was established and secondly by dissolving its tension by resolving in the fashion of a rondo. In the diagram below (example 9-2), the tonal outline of the development is given relative to both E and G. Relative to E the development section indicates a strong subdominant bias establishing a large scale i—IV—i progression. Relative to G the section is seen to plunge further in the subdominant direction, thus failing to confirm G as tonic.

**Example 9-2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>key</th>
<th>102</th>
<th>109</th>
<th>125</th>
<th>155</th>
<th>167</th>
<th>209</th>
<th>225</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>relative to E</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>eb</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relative to G</td>
<td>(v)</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>IVβ</td>
<td>ivβ</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we adopt a reading of the score with G as tonic the movement as a whole exhibits an unusually strong subdominant bias—a large I-ivα-I progression over the course of the exposition, development and recapitulation. This is certainly not the usual sonata design but one that follows our familiar precedent of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata and those Brahms works that work on the same principle, such as the Opus 8 Trio (see chapter 4). In those works, the eventual provision of the hitherto absent structural dominant ensured a concentric tonal scheme. But if subdominant emphasis is maintained and no structural dominant is provided for the original tonic, then it creates the
possibility for a progressive tonal scheme—in this instance, a I-IV-V progression in G could be re-interpreted as Vβ-i-Vβ in E. The latter stages of the work will effect this transition whereby E becomes the tonic. In the mean time G holds tonicity, but there is an underlying disquiet derived from the lack of a background dominant functioning in the usual goal-oriented manner of a sonata form.

The autonomous or tonally disconnected nature of the development section is significant in itself, but it becomes a more critical issue when the thematic processes are taken into account. The unison four-flute theme at bar 126 is often cited for its relationship to Das himmlische Leben. In light of the growing crisis over the tonicity of G this "new" theme, one that G major has only a passing connection with (a skeletal version of the theme appears at Figure 2 in the clarinets), amounts to a disruptive loose end. At this point the A major tonality of this theme clearly relates it more to E than to G. In the context of the first movement it is an unassimilated theme embedded in a tonally autonomous development section and as such, it creates the expectation that the successful rival for tonicity (most likely E or G) will have to claim it as its own. It is therefore a crucial indicator of tonicity when the theme returns in the blazing E major climax of the Adagio, the event that finally seals the issue of tonicity in favour of E.

From this point the development section becomes more involved with material from the exposition, but the crisis over the tonicity of G is articulated by the nature of the transformations. The events here are every bit as spectral as the Scherzo. The principal G major theme's easy-going ascending scale in dotted rhythms is inverted and played in the minor, culminating in a somewhat ugly transformation of the four-flute theme in the low strings (bars 148-50). The sleigh-bell theme that previously danced effortlessly in even quavers now lurches like one grotesquely deformed (Fig. 13). When the principal G major theme returns it is cast in F minor and it has exchanged its innocent gaiety for a pain-afflicted passion (bar 188).

The point I am making is the degree to which all the expressive values of the exposition are stood on their head in a way that is not as typical of Mahler as one might think. Development sections offer ample opportunity for such thematic transformations if Mahler wished to pursue them for their own sake, but he does not choose to do so in his works preceding this one. However, it should be remembered that the crux of the work, the idea at its core, is that all is not what it seems in the initial stages and that the finale will eventually provide the key. Mahler's thorough inversion of all his expressive values merely extends to the parameter of thematic content that which is already entrenched in the tonal plot. Nothing there is what it seems either—the lack of any convincing tonicization procedure instilling an unusual degree of uncertainty over tonicity.
The climax of the development section is far from conventional. In each of the preceding symphonies the climax has been the attainment of the dominant (vB in the case of the First Symphony). Here the climax comes with the subdominant key of C major which carries with it a triumphant version of the "Das himmlische Leben" theme and a general air of fanfare that corresponds to the E major breakthrough and the fanfare version of the same theme in the latter stages of the Adagio. It is surely significant that Mahler refers to a later event that will articulate the transfer of tonicity from G to E, especially as it falls at a point in the first movement where the appropriate steps towards the tonicization of G have failed to materialize. C major, being the true subdominant, puts beyond doubt the subdominant bias of the development section and therefore continues to support the state of crisis over the tonicity of G.

Still more events contradict the tonicity of G before the recapitulation. The period of C major tonality breaks down at Figure 17 with a shift to the neapolitan chord of D flat. This holds the real potential of plunging the music still further in the subdominant direction, most probably to F minor. Although this never eventuates the music holds to D♭/C# mainly through the insistence of the solo trumpet and the sleigh-bell motive in the flutes (bar 225-229), and this in turn instigates a cycle of fifths through F sharp minor (bar 230), B minor (bar 235) and finally resolving to E minor at bar 237. Mahler returns us to G major almost apologetically dropping in halfway through the statement of the first theme. As Mitchell notes the recapitulation of the theme is complete, but obscured by the fact that it is telescoped with the end of the development, the sleigh-bells introduction beginning at bar 225, followed by the first portion of the main theme, in augmentation, at bar 234. But the cycle of fifths that preceded it is goal-oriented towards E minor, not G.

The recapitulation resolves the second tonal area to the tonic in the usual manner of sonata form, although, as was remarked earlier, no recomposition of the preparation is required. However at Figure 19 Mahler takes the time to recapitulate the climactic passage from the development section, previously given in C major at Figure 16. This is still fresh in the memory and so it leads me to suspect that Mahler wished to counteract the subdominant bias of the development section by recasting the same passage in the tonic. There seems no reason to recall this passage for purely thematic reasons or to engineer some point of structural balance. However it attains little of the weight of the original C major passage which was the culmination of the preceding development—here the passage is transitional with the recomposed second subject being the main objective (bar 263).

Even though G major claims back some territory from the realms of the subdominant, there follows another subdominant intrusion. The section in question is the bridge between the second subject area and the reprise of the second G major section, from bar 298. The sleigh-bells return as they did in

---

the exposition but once again they function as the dominant of E minor, just as they did at the beginning of the development. Despite the confirmation of G's tonicity provided by the resolution of the second tonal area, the resurgence of E minor stresses the fact that tonal rivalry has by no means abated. Mahler reaffirms that the B minor introduction still holds the potential to resolve as the dominant of E minor, and in so doing reactivates the subdominant bias of the development section at a point in the composition where the tonic needs to consolidate its position.

Subdominant bias continues with the second movement not only because of the key is C major but also because of particular foreground events that reaffirm the axial relationship of G and B and articulates their dominant function. By the end of the movement the likelihood that tonicity will lie along the C—E axis is greatly increased.

The introduction at the beginning of the Scherzo accumulates a great deal of significance, both here and in its subsequent appearances. Initially it provides a dominant upbeat to the C minor scordatura violin theme. First, the horn theme of the opening bars suggests B flat or G minor, confirming the latter by the introduction of F sharp in the oboes. This short introductory figure moves in repeated sixteenth notes and therefore rhythmically relates directly to the sleigh-bell theme from the first movement. It is such relationships that progressively reinforces the dominant function of the G—b axis. Just as the B minor introduction to the first movement later functioned as the dominant to E minor, so now we have the other axis member G functioning as the dominant of C minor. In the first movement G held a dominant function more via its axial association with the B minor introduction. That which was implied is now confirmed with the axial relationship exposed right at the surface. The flute enters with an ostinato reminiscent of Schubert's Gretchen am Spinnrade which outlines a double-tonic sonority\textsuperscript{12}—meaning it can be read as outlining either a G major chord (with a lower neighbour note to the tonic note) or B minor (with an upper neighbour note to the fifth of the chord).

\textbf{Example 9-3 IV-ii, 5—8.}

\footnotesize

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example9-3.png}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{12}Christopher Orlo Lewis, Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony, (Ann Arbor, 1984), 6-7. refer to chapter 1
The metrical stress falls on the F sharp at the beginning of the bar which would imply B minor and the a real possibility that it will resolve to E minor. But the continued D-Eb oscillations in the horn imply that it is in fact the dominant of C minor. Of course the harmonic sum total is the augmented triad G-B-Eb which is reiterated by the three-note upbeat of the solo violin. This can function as the dominant for either C or E (or A flat for that matter) and therefore represents a surface manifestation of the G—b axis relationship that has, up until now, been the domain of the deeper structural levels. Subsequent appearances of this introductory material reaffirms this axis relationship and their shared functional capabilities.

Example 9-4 Symphony No. 4 (second movement).

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>254</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>b, g, G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>298</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>c/C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tonally the Scherzo itself is straight forward—an A-B-A scheme utilizing the tonic major and minor. For the Trio at Figure 3, Mahler moves to F major and the choice of subdominant recalls the use of the subdominant axis in the development section of the first movement (both relative to E internally and relative to G placing the development section in the wider context of the entire movement). Although this fails to provide a deeper level tonicizing dominant, it does enhance the tonicity of the E—C axis by avoiding any key in the episodes that could revive the tonicity of G. The introductory passage reappears at bar 110 to precipitate the return to C minor.

This whole second section more or less repeats the pattern of the first, but is enhanced by developments and enlargements. At both the beginning of the work and at the transition back to C minor from the first F major trio at bar 110, the solo horn leaned heavily on D as the dominant of the dominant. Very quickly G as the dominant of C takes over. This second half of the movement expands this pattern. The return to C minor after the second Trio replicates the first, but D major is attained as a tonality in its own right at Figure 11. F to D is a Vβ—I progression and therefore mirrors the overall progressive tonal scheme of the work, and perhaps it is because of this that there a concentration of references to Das himmlische Leben at this point. These can be seen in the strings from bar 238 to 245 and in the clarinet theme beginning at Figure

13Neville Cardus, Gustav Mahler: His Mind and his Music, 132-133.
11. Just as important is the way that this section sets up a cycle of dominants culminating in the restatement of C minor. This will become apparent as we continue through this section.

The D major section continues to develop material from the F major trio section and sets out at bar 274 to duplicate the passage of transition by which D itself was first established. This would take us to the key of B, a projected modulation that is in fact partially realized. The solo horn announces the return of the introductory material. But more than ever the introductory material evokes the dominant axis, specifically the closely related B minor and G. The flute’s ostinato passage points to B minor more strongly than before, because there is already a strong expectation of that key and because the double basses conclude on A sharp just prior to the flute’s entry. The violin solo swings in as usual and brings with it the association of G minor. However, Mahler continues the interplay between these two axis relatives, and there is a cadence on to B minor at bar 294. This is countered by another G minor cadence at 298. It is a perfect example of axis tonality at work at a foreground level. There is no great conflict involved in these rapid modulations because of the axis relationship, and this allows the dominant function to remain throughout the passage. This is confirmed by the resolution to C at Figure 13. The introduction to the movement saw a foreground manifestation of the G—B axis functioning as a dominant to C minor. Here we have a more elaborate version of the initial passage but one that wholeheartedly endorses the original functional analysis. More and more such foreground events demand that we reappraise all previous b—G axis events, such as those in the first movement. Weight of evidence continues to give them dominant status which, combined with the ineffectual tonicization of G in the first movement, provides a growing awareness that tonicity will reside within the E—C axis.

At the deeper structural level, C has been established via a cycle of dominants. F as Vß of D, followed by D as V of G (or Vß of B), and finally the resolving V—I step to C. This is a crucial point for it was precisely this kind of teleological tonal sequence that was absent from the development section in the first movement. In the context of the Symphony so far, C has been established with more purpose than G.

There is a strong parodistic relationship between the Scherzo and the first movement, in the manner of Beethoven’s Ninth or *Hammerklavier* Sonata (Mahler uses this technique more openly in the Sixth Symphony). There is certainly a relationship between their respective introductions, the use of rondo form, and in the overall subdominant bias that predominates. But on the issue of dominant preparation the differences are more striking. The final axial event in the movement provides a brief foreground excursion into A flat (Iß), from bar 332. Once again the solo violin presents the pivotal augmented triad (bars 338 and 346) which is the enhanced dominant for either A flat, C or E
and therefore expresses the axial link between them.

With the Adagio we return to the original tonic of G major. The movement's form is difficult to define using traditional categories.

It [the Adagio] behaves as a set of variations, but on two contrasting themes, in the manner of the slow movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. . . .

But the term "variation on two themes" already proves inaccurate, because the second theme is not genuinely "varied," but only amplified when it is restated. 14

Even a cursory appraisal of the movement will reveal the sectional opposition and the predominance of the keys of G and E, and clearly Mahler's aim was to juxtapose the work's main tonal combatants: an aim that continues over into the song finale also, giving the impression of one unified tonal sweep.

The first theme gives way to E minor at Figure 2. Significantly no real transition passage is required, rather the third of the G major chord (B natural) acts as a pivot. This is not in itself an unusual modulatory device but its use here again highlights the dominant function of the G—b axis. The second theme, characterized by one of Mahler's three-note upbeat figures is given first in E minor then, via a short excursion into F, in D minor, in turn precipitating the return to G major.

Example 9-5 Symphony No. 4 (third movement).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>relative to G</th>
<th>relative to E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—61</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62—79</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ivα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80—106</td>
<td>(F)</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107—170</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171—191</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>192—209</td>
<td>c#</td>
<td>iiα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210—221</td>
<td>f#</td>
<td>να</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>222—262</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>263—282</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>IVα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283—314</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315—337</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>IVα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>338—353</td>
<td>G(V)</td>
<td>I(V)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second appearance of the second theme group (bar 192) centres on C sharp and F sharp minor. This forms a chain of dominants which culminates, initially, in the return of G major, but can be considered to extend further, with G acting as an axial substitute for B major, outlining a cycle of fifths

14Henry-Louis de La Grange, Mahler, Chronique d'une vie, I, Vers la gloire, 1860-1900, 1061, (translation mine).
with E major as the eventual goal. The alternation between the main tonal combatants G and E is a constant feature for the remainder of the movement and the ensuing finale. But the tonicity of E which the overall tonal thrust of the symphony so far has implied, now begins to gain the upper hand, and this is reinforced by foreground events.

The most important articulation of E's tonicity comes with the full orchestra climax of this movement. The last appearance of the Adagio theme in G major begins at bar 288. From bar 296 the subdominant increasingly saturates the harmony—a foreground preview of the coming event. Throughout the symphony so far the background tonal procedures have pointed towards the tonicity of E (or it's axis relative C) rather than G, but any conclusive foreground articulation of E's tonicity has been absent. This is now provided to great dramatic effect.

As in earlier modulations, the third of the G major chord acts as a pivot, though now the music does not so much resolve to E but is triumphantly catapulted into it. The pivotal B natural leaps exultantly to G sharp, bringing forth an arpeggiated roar of pure E major at Figure 12. The climax of this statement of the unadorned E major chord is a passage saturated with references to the "Das himmlische Leben" theme evoking memories of the C major climax in at the end of the development of the first movement. The double-mallet timpani theme hammers home the 6-5 melodic progression that is an integral motive within the larger theme. The clearest reference however, comes from the brass at bar 320, which clearly evokes the trumpet fanfare from bar 212 in the first movement, which, in turn, traces its origins back to the four-flute theme at bar 126. The trumpet fanfare here evokes both the earlier instances of the theme. The thrice-reiterated B natural recalls the opening of the four-flute version while the latter part (bar 323) is a direct quote from bars 212-13 of the first movement. This is yet another example of thematic telescoping. The theme's continuation (movement I bar 255-6) is heard simultaneously in the horns. It is typical of Mahler's climaxes that they contain such concentrations of significant motivic details. (see example 9-6 next page)

Clearly, these thematic cross-references reinforce at a foreground level the tonal implications of the first movement and indeed the work so far. In particular, this climax vindicates the development section of the first movement which had exhibited an unusual degree of tonal and thematic detachment, principally due to the four-flute reference to Das himmlische Leben and because the section as a whole functioned as a closed, autonomous tonal unit with the E—C axis as its tonal centre. This displaced any teleological drive towards G major, the usual function of the sonata-form development, which left tonicity in limbo. The emphatic E major climax makes us review the earlier events, liberating the work from any uncertainty over the question of tonicity. The large-scale I—ivα—I progression (relative to G) that the first
movement comprised, is now revealed in retrospect to have been a disguised Vβ—i—Vβ progression in E.

Example 9-6 IV-iii, 320—3 and IV-i, 126—131 and 212—15.

The final act of the Adagio is to regain G major, which is achieved via a brief excursion into C major. G major, although re-established from bar 338 is suffused with added sixth inflections, creating a double tonic sonority of E-G-B-D signifying the latent presence of the eventual tonic E. The movement fades on the dominant chord of G providing a springboard into the ensuing finale, giving the impression that the two movements constitute a continuous
tonal sequence.

With the opening of the finale, we reach the long-awaited point of resolution, as we hear for the first time the "Das himmlische Leben" theme in its entirety. In so doing Mahler sheds all the mystery surrounding the earlier versions of the theme. At no time in the first three movements did the "Das himmlische Leben" theme relate directly to the main thematic ideas in those movements. Nor was it successfully assimilated by the governing tonality, especially in the two G major movements. In every respect it has existed in a state of perpetual disconnection from its surroundings—a dramatic loose end that must now be tied up before the symphony can be completed. But Mahler, temporarily at least, displaces the tonal ingredient that will provide a full resolution. We have the theme in its rightful place, in a movement where it is the focal point rather than a loose end, but it initially proceeds in G major, not E.

Example 9-7 Symphony No. 4 (fourth movement).

(relative to E)

1—39  G—V of e  Vβ—V
40—75  e  i
76—94  v of e-G  v—Vβ
95—100  e  i
101—114  d  vβ of v
115—121  v of e  v
122—184  E  I

The battle for tonicity between G and E with the attendant ambiguity over the tonal function of the B minor sleigh-bell introduction (which reappears in a slightly more energetic guise here) carries on the sense of tonal duality from the Adagio, but it also has the aspect of a condensed recapitulation of the first movement. The rivalry between G and E was already apparent there. During the course of this movement the sleigh-bell theme explicitly evokes the first movement.

By bar 28, G major already begins to give way to E minor and the concluding chorale passage leaves us on the subdominant of that key. At Figure 3 the now invigorated sleigh-bell theme returns, plunging us into E minor at Figure 4. Notably this is very similar to the opening of the development section of the first movement, especially as the ascending melodic minor scale in the cellos recalls those of the solo violin at bar 103 and low strings at bar 112 of the first movement. Mahler is not merely recalling themes, he is evoking the most significant E minor event of the first movement, and in so doing increases momentum towards tonicization of that key.

The section culminates in the now familiar chorale, this time in unharmonized octaves landing firmly in E minor at bar 74. In this way, the central section gains a definite sense of tonal closure just as the development section in
the first movement had. Certainly there is no goal-oriented progress back to G major. On the contrary, the sleigh-bell introduction returns at Figure 7 with its role as a tonal indicator significantly enhanced. Never before has it revealed its functional status as the dominant of E so openly. The presence of D sharps in the upper wind at bar 77 do just that and consequently it is something of a shock when the music collapses back into G major at bar 80. This is essentially an interrupted cadence at a background level that delays the eventual resolution to E.

G major soon passes on to its axis relative B minor at Figure 8, leading predictably to E minor at bar 95. But from bar 101 there is a mysterious shift towards D minor, mysterious because its tonal function is not immediately apparent. At a time when we expect the imminent tonicization of E this would appear more likely to steer us back to G. D minor is confirmed by a plagal cadence after the chorale passage at bar 113. But at Figure 11 we are hurled into the sleigh-bell introduction for the last time, retrospectively interpreting the D minor episode as $v^\beta$ of $v$ of E.

E major as tonic has been felt as an inevitability for a considerable period—especially from the time of the third movement's climax. But the precondition for resolution, the foreground articulation of E's claim on tonicity, would be the combined return of the "Das himmlische Leben" theme and E major, which up until now has been frustrated. The sleigh-bell's return at Figure 11 gives no real indication as to whether it will culminate in a statement of E's tonicity. The final descent into E major plays on this uncertainty, and in the process presents, condensed into one bar, a foreground miniature of the work's larger tonal dichotomy.

The cor anglais and cello transition of bar 121 makes obvious use of the whole-tone scale, a detail that would immediately alert us that Mahler wished to signify an axis relationship. It was significant that the frustration of the sleigh-bell's dominant function at bar 79 entailed a whole-tone descent from chords of B minor through A minor to the resumed tonic of G major. This, in effect, interrupted or rather thwarted the anticipated resolution $v$—I to E. At bar 121, the music begins as if to repeat the same whole-tone descent from B to G, frustrating the $v$—I progression as before. But the whole-tone line continues, extending through G and F before a semitone progression breaks the whole-tone progression. E major arrives via a $bII$—I cadence. With this whole-tone scale, Mahler is presenting the dominant $b$—G axis for the last time. But here there is no longer any ambiguity as to the function of the two keys. Mahler links them by placing them in the context of the whole-tone scale to which they both belong—united in bringing about a tonicizing dominant to tonic relationship (practically a simultaneously presentation of $v$—I and $V^\beta$—I), resolving to the tonic E.

That the work involves an elucidatory process has long been an established
position. This has its basis in the suggestion made by Mahler himself that the Finale "explains" the meaning behind the preceding movements, a vision of heavenly life which the preceding movements confront but cannot fully grasp. Donald Mitchell notes how the work involves a progression of formal types confirming something of the elucidatory progression that Mahler intended.

We ascend, as it were, towards the vivid images of heavenly life that are vouchsafed us in the finale by means of a gradually decreasing complexity of forms and textures . . . so that by the time we have reached the long-drawn-out cadence with which the slow movement (in double variation form) ends, we are prepared musically and spiritually for the innocence—musical and spiritual—of the song that follows. Thus the interior, poetic programme of the work—a journey from formidable sophistication to a condition of simplicity—is spelled out for us by the evolution of the first three movements, through purely musical devices.\(^{15}\)

This chapter has attempted to show that the tonal procedures as well as the formal ones contribute to this elucidatory process. The ambiguity arises because the key that initially assumes tonicity, G, is not given sufficient deeper level tonicization to maintain its position. If we take a broad tonal outline of the work and interpret in terms of both G and E, the situation is immediately clarified.

**Example 9-8 Symphony No. 4 tonal contour**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movt.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rel. to G:</td>
<td>I (V-I)-ivα-I</td>
<td></td>
<td>IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relative to G the whole work shows an unusual degree of subdominant bias, relative to E we see a stronger Vβ—I progression, with axial substitutions along the way, reiterated throughout the work. The elucidatory process in the tonal sense is simply a case of the gradual contradiction of the apparent tonic status of G. Our system of relativity takes G as its focal point, because, schematically at least, all the significant events of the first movement point to that interpretation. But the preconditions for tonicity are never met, and subsequent events force us to reinterpret the function of G. We substitute E for G in our system of tonal relativity during the latter stages of the work, without any qualms or feelings of dislocation, and we are able to do this because, ultimately, the tonal drama makes more sense when we abandon our original position. Once we have accepted E as the tonic we have, ready made as it were, a background tonicizing dominant in the form of the b—G axis that has dominated so much of the work.

\(^{15}\)Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 602. (originally published as part of the programme notes for a 1975 performance of the work at the Aldeburgh Festival.)
Chapter 10
Symphony No. 5

The Fifth symphony has long been noted as a significant turning point in Mahler's creative output. Here he quits the world of Des knaben Wunderhorn, and, although there is an occasional allusion to the Kindertotenlieder or the Rückert Lieder, songs no longer intrude to the degree of taking up whole symphonic movements. This not only effects the overall symphonic form and content but naturally precludes the human voice also. In this and subsequent symphonies Mahler adopted a more hard-edged, naked contrapuntal texture.\(^1\) He himself remarked upon the difficulty of his new style and the demands it placed on him, especially in the area of orchestration.

I have finished my Fifth—it had to be almost completely re-orchestrated.

I simply can't understand why I still had to make such mistakes, like the merest beginner.

(It is clear that all the experience I had gained in writing the first four symphonies completely let me down in this one—for a completely new style demanded a new technique.)\(^2\)

At first glance the progressive tonal scheme in the Fifth is in keeping with the revolutionary stance of the other aspects of counterpoint and orchestration. The relationship between the starting and ending tonalities in symphonies 1 to 4 involved third-relation, which is a common and close relationship in traditional harmonic terms. The relationship between C sharp minor and D major is, at least to traditional thinking, more remote.

Mahler's stylistic advances, tonal or otherwise, are unquestionable but it would be a mistake to assume that they have no grounding in the past. The new severe counterpoint was foreshadowed in the Fourth Symphony,\(^3\) and there are other structural parallels as well between the two works, ones that are not readily apparent at first glance because of the vast difference between their surface characteristics. Surprising as it may seem, the tonal procedures of the opening Trauermusik in the Fifth, can be seen as a simplified version of those found in the first movement of the Fourth.

All of the preceding symphonies have had a tonal progression in common. To greater or lesser degrees there has been a V\(\flat\)–I progression affecting either an individual part of the work, as in the Finale of the First Symphony, or indeed the entire work, as in the Third and Fourth. The Fifth Symphony does not abandon this principle of a magnified dominant upbeat; in fact it represents a consolidation of it. Instead of the V\(\flat\)–I progression that has dominated the

\(^1\)Deryck Cooke, *Gustav Mahler: an Introduction to his Music*, 81.


\(^3\)Deryck Cooke, *Gustav Mahler: an Introduction to his Music*, 81.
background structures of his earlier works, Mahler has merely opted for \( \text{V}\alpha \) as his starting point instead. But in the Fifth, more than any previous work, Mahler defines the eventual tonic of D major by evoking the entire dominant axis.

It would therefore be a mistake to conclude that the work involves a \( \text{V}\alpha-I \) progressive scheme exclusively. C sharp only tonicizes D indirectly, it is the other axis members A and F that interact directly with the two D major movements. As David B. Greene remarks the Symphony is famous for its "... incongruities, non-sequiturs, dislocations and disruptions..." in all parameters of the composition.\(^4\) An example of this can be seen in the Scherzo, where the returning tonic and principal theme appear as a result of a non-sequitur rather than a teleological tonal process. Here, as elsewhere in the work, the processes that normally define primary tonal areas are muted, disguised or simply non-existent. Rather, it is a gradual process whereby the C\#—F—A axis inherits a dominant function and the D—F\#—Bb axis emerges with tonic status as a result, even before the key of D major has become the focus of our attention.

As in previous works, Mahler's ability to adopt a progressive tonal scheme lies in the withholding of unequivocal tonic status from the initial key, in this case C sharp minor. Once again Mahler's handling of form makes sure that the prerequisites for background tonicization are never adequately realized. The dominant that is attained at bar 119 is extremely weak and has no tonicizing ability beyond a middleground level, for reasons to be explained. The rest of the movement employs a non-tonicizing axis relative and a subdominant axis member.

**Example 10-1**

**Symphony No. 5 (first movement).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>bars</th>
<th>key</th>
<th>local tonality</th>
<th>overall tonality (relative to D)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—118</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>119—132</td>
<td>Ab</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V of ( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133—154</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>155—232</td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>vi (iv( \alpha ))</td>
<td>I( \beta )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>233—293</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>294—316</td>
<td>Db</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>317—322</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>323—400</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>vi (i( \beta ))</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401—415</td>
<td>C#</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>( \text{V}\alpha )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The movement's opening paragraph presents two tonic axis members, thus focusing our attention at a foreground level on the axis principles that will

\(^4\)David B. Greene, *Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality*, (New York, 1984), 38
govern the work. The initial trumpet fanfare begins on an unharmonized c#',
which suggests C sharp will be the tonic. This is subsequently verified by an
ascent through a C sharp minor triad at bar 6. But the fanfare then moves by
step, descending from the c#", and in so doing, outlines an A major triad.
The culmination of this is the fortissimo entry of almost the entire orchestra at
bar 13 on an A major chord. Mahler establishes axial relationships almost im­
mediately and the i—Iβ relationship forged here will be prominent later on,
both in this movement and in Part I of the symphony generally.

The initial establishment of A is short-lived and the music progresses on to
the dominant of C sharp minor at bar 19. This provides a substantial middle­
ground tonicization of C sharp minor outlining a i-VI-v-i progression over the
period of the first 35 bars. With the funeral march proper at Figure 2, C sharp
minor as tonic makes its clearest statement. A second harmonized version of
the fanfare follows at Figure 3 reaffirming C sharp minor but negating the
c#—A axis relationship that existed previously. Mahler initially dramatized the
possibility of either key assuming tonicity. This is now dramatically rendered
redundant, C sharp having gained the ascendancy. The fanfare concludes on
the dominant minor after which the funeral march proceeds as it did before.

Despite considerable periods on the dominant there has not yet been any
substantial effort to achieve tonicization at the background level. This would
appear to occur at bar 119 with the key signature changing to signify A flat
major and a new theme which arrives at Figure 5. But a close inspection re­
veals that it is a move to the dominant similar to that in the first movement of
the Fourth. A flat is not achieved via any teleological process or emphatic
dominant preparation. The music begins to hint at E major from bar 113, and
Mahler merely takes the prominent leading note to the third of the E major
chord (F double sharp), and reinterprets it as G natural, the leading note to A
flat. A flat arrives by sleight of hand, which foregoes any emphatic cadential
establishment—the result being that it sounds tonally unstable and likely to
return to the tonic C sharp at any moment. There are other factors that con­
tribute to this instability. The theme at Figure 5 attains only minimal indepen­
dence from the funeral march model. Especially in terms of phrase structure,
the A flat theme duplicates the pattern established by the main C sharp minor
theme from Figure 2, specifically a 2+2+4 scheme where the four bar phrase
represents an intensification of the preceding couplets. This process of inten­
sification is also identical, with the four bar phrases in both cases involving re­
iterated notes and grace-note decoration (see example 10-2, next page).

The pattern appears unchanged at each appearance of the funeral theme
(Figures 2 and 4, bar 104 and Figure 5). The shared rhythmic characteristics,
the ever-present dotted crotchet-quaver upbeat figure, also denies any notion
of contrast or thematic independence. This is not a tonicizing dominant articu­
lated by thematic contrast in the mould of traditional sonata practice, but an al­
together less potent tonal excursion on to the dominant—one where the return
of the tonic C sharp is always anticipated. Inasmuch as this excursion to the dominant bears no resemblance to normal sonata-form practice, neither does it gain sufficient thematic independence to comprise an episode in the traditional sense of a rondo form.

Example 10-2 V-i, 120-128 compared with 35-42.

It may well have been a matter of notational convenience that the violins re-enter with a key signature suggesting C sharp minor at Figure 6, but it confirms the latent presence of the tonic already noted. By bar 140, A flat chords as dominant sevenths prepare the imminent resolution to C sharp minor, which duly arrives at bar 145. With it fades the prospect of a prolonged tonicizing dominant and the episode just completed is relegated to a middleground event. In tonicization terms, this exposition neutralizes any initiatives towards a deeper level tonicization, with the result that it sounds decidedly preludial. As a result, we expect that the future will hold tonal events of greater significance and that the question of tonicity will be clarified later.

In the previous chapter I put forward the idea that the tonicity of G in the Fourth Symphony descended into a state of crisis because it did not achieve background tonicization. There are already strong similarities here, with the weakly articulated dominant, ineffectual in its ability to tonicize C sharp, being relegated to the middleground as a subordinate step in a I—V—I structure. In the Fourth, the development section (like the exposition) eschewed tonicization by presenting a self-contained structural unit with subdominant axis members (e and C) forming the structural framework. Here in the Fifth, we are plunged into a central episode in B flat minor or ivvo relative to C sharp. This second undeniable structural similarity with the preceding symphony has the same effect—it continues to support the growing crisis over the tonicity of
C sharp minor. Just as in the Fourth Symphony, there exists a real possibility that with the subdominant bias of the development section we are experiencing a V—I—V progression rather than a I—IV—I progression.

The passage immediately before the central episode, from bar 145 to Figure 7, clearly articulates this crisis. The final event of the exposition is to impart a dominant function on C sharp. From bar 145, the key of C sharp minor takes over music that had previously only been given on the dominant minor as a dominant upbeat. The transitional passages in question first occurred between bars 27 and 34 and was characterized by the 3-part trombone figure. There, the presence of A major chords defined the dominant function, bII—i of G sharp minor being reinterpreted as bVI-v in C sharp. The duplication of these details at bar 145 gives a strong implication that F sharp minor will ensue. In short, Mahler has taken the first step towards assigning a dominant function to C sharp. It is a foreground manifestation that subsequent events will ramify at the deeper structural levels.

At this early stage Mahler is not identifying the relative functions of specific keys—the specific tonic or dominant—but rather the relative function of the entire axis. Here he is intimating that C sharp has a dominant function that will resolve to F sharp. The fact that it resolves to B flat minor is of little relevance—the purpose of establishing the dominant function of C sharp means that the axis F#—Bb—D already holds a substantial claim to tonicity. The specific details can be worked out later as to which axis member will become the primary representative. For the moment we have a v3/i progression establishing B flat minor and it is perhaps significant that the eventual tonic D major will be confirmed by a V3—I progression in Part III of the work, that is between the Adagietto and the Finale.

Given the funereal context, a programmatic exegesis for the B flat minor section is not difficult. It "... bursts out in a terrible scream for release from grief".5 Such a release can only be obtained via justification or consolation in the face of death which the funeral march so graphically portrays. The response of the B flat minor music hardly implies that it is a solution, which in turn ensures the continuation of the search over the ensuing movements.

Example 10-3 V-i, 154—6 and V-ii, 18—20 and 464.

---

The second movement makes this point clear as it takes many of the melodic figures of this episode, primarily the opening figure—a leap of an eleventh, which then resolves down a semitone. This provides a model for the leaping minor ninth figure that pervades much of the second movement and which will eventually evolve into the "Shout of Joy" that signals the attainment of D major. The aspiring triplet theme at bar 203 in the violins also plays an important role in the next movement.

As might be expected at this early stage the quest for release from grief is unsuccessful. The B flat minor episode achieves neither closure nor any logical progression to some point of resolution. The bass claws its way up to C sharp from F, after the dominant of B flat minor had been prepared leading up to bar 229. The tonic key gradually comes into focus, with Mahler executing another masterful stroke of structural dovetailing. The fanfare begins as early as bar 233 while the dominant of B flat minor is still in control. By the time C sharp arrives the fanfare has half run its course. There is certainly no goal-oriented sequence such as a dominant preparation that seeks to re-establish the tonic. C sharp receives no ratification of its tonicity, which increases the suspicion that tonicity may in fact lie elsewhere, just as the resolution of the B flat minor anguish must lie elsewhere.

Still less is the fanfare a resolution to the trio or an answer to its cry for release from pain. It is as though the pain and tensions of the trio were temporarily suppressed while attention is refocused on heroism.  

Mahler has set the stage for a quest, firstly for a more emphatic statement of tonicity and secondly, a programmatic resolution. The second movement will endeavour to resolve these tensions.

Mahler now embarks on a recapitulation of the funeral march, which is now fragmented and halting. It involves a mild form of sonata resolution of the second tonal area, the funeral march episode on the dominant major from the exposition is here given in the tonic major. The similarity with the corresponding point in the Fourth Symphony's first movement recapitulation is worth noting. Because the preparation for the dominant was weak in the exposition, the resolution to the tonic involves almost no recomposition of the preparatory transition that effected the modulation from tonic to dominant. In the Fourth, the transition passages are identical in all their essentials. Here, Mahler replicates the original transition with the exception of maintaining the punctuating dominant G sharp in the low wind and tuba.

The recapitulated second theme in D flat major proceeds initially as in the exposition. But rather than resolving loose ends, as a recapitulation would normally be expected to do, Mahler creates new tensions through the introduction of previously unheard motives—particularly the turn figure that appears at bar 308. Once again Mahler exposes material that seems likely to be the subject of further development. In creating such thematic loose ends,

---

Mahler makes it impossible for the Funeral March to gain any satisfactory sense of closure—paradoxically, at a point when the immediate tonal dissonance relative to the C sharp minor tonic (the episode on the dominant) has been resolved. In other words, what sense of closure is gained by the middleground tonal procedures is contradicted by the thematic and programmatic tensions. What measure of security C sharp minor attains is contradicted by music that implies a search for resolution beyond C sharp minor, and therefore, necessarily, beyond the boundaries of this movement.

The A minor episode that begins at Figure 15 creates the most obtrusive loose end, to the degree that it amounts to a drastic telescoping of movements 1 and 2. More than just a case of shared motive material, this passage directly anticipates the sections beginning at Figures 5 and 12 in the second movement. A minor is also the overall key of the following movement, and so this section directly anticipates the next step towards tonal and programmatic resolution.

David B. Greene interprets the A minor theme, and subsequent versions of it in the second movement, to be pacifying in nature.

In the context of this symphony, these elements seem to connote a quest for liberating peace; they extend the attempt, begun in the trio sections of the first movement, to understand or transcend or resign oneself to the fact of death that is so grimly presented in the first-movement march sections.8 Although the theme appears briefly in the B flat minor trio (bar 203), it is given fuller emphasis here in the A minor episode. But the quest ends in failure, collapsing into "... a shriek that is even more dreadful than the outburst in the first trio."8 The triplet figure which Greene interprets as having a peace-questing role becomes more agitated until it has merged into a reminiscence of the B flat minor trio at bar 353, leading to the dissonant orchestral tutti at Figure 18. In this way Mahler expresses both a desire to progress beyond grief and an inability to find a way of doing this.

Greene's programmatic interpretation seems valid, but at the same time, the tonality of A minor also contributes to that failure of this "pacifying" theme. The opening fanfare established this axial relationship of C sharp and A and, as axis relatives, these keys exist in a state of neutrality towards one another. Effectively, neither has the ability to effect tonicization of the other. By moving to A minor, Mahler prolongs the existing crisis over C sharp's tonicity that has arisen because of the lack of deeper structural level tonicization. The crisis had already been exacerbated by the B flat minor trio, which brought with it the possibility of C sharp functioning as a dominant (vβ of bβ). As long as the possibility remains that C sharp will eventually function as a dominant, then the key of A will also carry that possibility by axial association.

7David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 41.
8David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 46.
Once again the relationship with the Fourth symphony must be stressed. In that work the axis relationship between G and B was increasingly exposed. The probable dominant function of the sleigh-bell theme worked in conjunction with the lack of any substantial tonicization of G to increase the likelihood that tonicity would lie within the C-E-A\textsuperscript{b} axis. Here in the Fifth the process is more emphatic as each of the axis relatives of C sharp become the focus in individual sections and eventually in individual movements. What emerges over the entire span of the symphony is the dominant function of the C#-A-F axis, which eventually resolves to D major.

There have been a number of different views from various commentators as to the programmatic meaning of the second movement. Barford draws the conclusion that it works towards "... exhausting the mood of tragedy","9 Tischler considers that the movement signifies "... tragic fighting and wounds. ...",10 Dika Newlin "... struggle and defiance. ..."11 Cooke makes the observation that each of the contrasting sections "... occurs three times, ever more varied in treatment and shorter in span: then appears the jaunty march and the shout of triumph ...",12 which implies the existence of a kind of structural stretto building towards the chorale. Each of these observations have a common basis in the idea that the movement is goal-directed involving a great deal of struggle. Certainly the thematic elements beg to be interpreted as a process of working through recollected emotions. The music reflects upon its own past (the Funeral March), searching through passages from the first movement as if in some effort to gain meaning from them, only to collapse into music of anger and bitterness.

David B. Greene works from the assumption that the movement searches out and converges on the chorale. Using the system of rhythmic analysis pioneered by Cooper and Meyer, Greene substantiates his claims by illustrating that the phrase structures fall into double-anacrusis patterns. There is no space for a similar rhythmic analysis here, but it is sufficient to point out that the music is continually striving for a thematic counterpart to its anacrustic beginnings. This rhythmic aspect confirms the questing characteristics of some of the thematic processes. The question to be dealt with now is how Mahler maintains this questing element over such a long period and why these tonal procedures are discharged into the D major chorale.

The movement begins in A minor, which at once confirms the anticipatory nature of the A minor episode in the first movement. The tonic is confirmed by a metrically displaced perfect cadence at bar 9, then by a more emphatic

9Philip Barford, *Mahler Symphonies and Songs*, 37
11Dika Newlin, *Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg*, 178.
one at Figure 2 (V♯⁵—i). Like the B flat minor trio in the first movement this opening A minor statement does not achieve closure—rather it disintegrates with a mediant pedal (C) being reinterpreted as a dominant pedal for F minor, which is duly installed as the second tonal area at Figure 5.

**Example 10-4 Symphony No. 5 (second movement)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>local</th>
<th>overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—73</td>
<td>a i v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74—140</td>
<td>f i♭ v♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141—188</td>
<td>a i v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189—265</td>
<td>e♭ iiα iv♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>266—287</td>
<td>B II IVα</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>288—315</td>
<td>A♭ Vα Vα of v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>316—351</td>
<td>a i v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>352—399</td>
<td>e v vα of v♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400—427</td>
<td>f i♭ v♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>428—463</td>
<td>e♭ iiα iv♭</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>464—519</td>
<td>D IV I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520—556</td>
<td>d iv i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>557—576</td>
<td>a i v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choice of F minor is highly significant. Firstly it presents the other axis relative to C sharp which has not been active up until now. Indeed this tonal shift replicates the move from C sharp to A minor in the first movement—a relationship that is immediately spelled out as the music recalls the thematic material from the A minor trio from the first movement. Secondly, the move to F minor confirms the trend whereby the lower major-third relative is used as a second tonal area and is then subsequently tonicized in the next movement. Although the D major Scherzo follows this movement, there is eventually a sense of completion, of observing a precedent, when the *Adagietto* sets out in F major.

**Example 10-5 Beta axis relationships**

i  c#—a

ii  a—f

iv  F

We shall see later how Mahler sets up similar conditions with regard to the eventual tonic D, using this same precedent to relate the imminent resolution to the work's overall tonic within the *Adagietto*.

Barford describes the second movement as a "fantasia" upon the preceding funeral march,¹³ and it is in this F minor passage that many of the motives

---

from the first movement are worked out. The rising minor ninth figure which appeared in the opening A minor section, now saturates the texture. The turn figure that began to appear from bar 308 in the first movement is given greater emphasis. This culminates in the rising triplet theme at Figure 7, a theme that first appeared in the B flat minor episode at bar 203. Thus the recollection of first movement themes comes in the reverse chronological order, and it is a trend that continues as the theme in the dominant major from the first movement is recalled later in this movement.

Like the opening A minor section this F minor episode does not achieve closure. As one who has turned down a cul-de-sac, the transition from F to A minor merely reverses that from A to F minor—via a prolonged pedal C which attains a pivotal role as dominant pedal of F or mediant pedal of A. So, in the end, the first tonal excursion bears no fruit with regard to a programmatic or tonal resolution. In a situation where tonicity has been inadequately defined, F minor represents nothing but an axial extension of C sharp and A, and a third choice is of little use when the music's tonal processes have not the ability to tonicize any of them.

Figure 9 brings us back to our point of origin. A minor is naturally implied by this return although never actually stated—it is signalled by the diminished seventh on the tonic note just as at the movement's opening. The music hovers inconclusively between E flat and C minor until a pedal B flat asserts E flat minor. This preparation is very similar to that which set up the first F minor episode and so there is an expectation of a return to that thematic group. The cello recitative from bar 189 confirms E flat, and later confirms our structural assumptions with the return of the peace-questing themes.

The music has broken away from the inert C♯-A-F axis but at the same time it has come no nearer to effecting any adequate tonicization of any of those prime candidates for tonicity. E flat belongs to the supertonic axis (B-E♭-G) relative to A, and as such cannot effect tonicization. The supertonic axis lies on the same whole-tone scale as the tonic and maintains a neutral relationship to it. The meaning of this becomes clear if we interpret the tonal scheme relative to the imminent shout of joy and the work's overall tonic of D major (shown in the second column in example 10-3). The movement so far has concentrated on v and v♭ relative to D—the move to E flat minor is to a member of the subdominant axis relative to D, producing a tonal progression that amounts to an interrupted cadence v (v♭)—iv♭.

The E flat minor section proceeds in much the same way as did the F minor episode. Concentrations of the "shout of joy" motive, using increasingly widening intervals, raises expectations of a breakthrough between bars 262 and 265. But the impetus is lost when the music collapses into yet another reminiscence—this time the dominant major theme from the first movement, which we last heard when it was resolved to the tonic D flat (C sharp) at bar 293 of
that movement. B major is another supertonic axis member, significantly the key a major third below the previous key of E flat minor, continuing the precedent for pairing keys of structural importance with their beta relatives. It has, as one would expect, the same effect as the earlier pairings—of prolonging the existing tonal function. This in effect means that the music, despite modulation, has moved no nearer to effectively tonicizing any of the prospective keys offered so far.

Concentrations of the shout of joy motive assemble from Figure 16 raising again the expectation of a new development. This time we are greeted with a jaunty march theme in A flat major, which marks a dramatic turn in events. The tonal processes so far have been decidedly undynamic owing to the major third and whole-tone relations between the various keys. The shift from B to A flat produces a $V^\flat-I$ progression, the first significant dominant—tonic relationship between two keys in the movement so far. Of course A flat is not the tonic and it is yet to be revealed whether we are to embark on a cycle of dominants or whether the ultimate tonal goal is much nearer at hand. But undeniably, there is a degree of excitement engendered at this point, and it is due both to the fresh direction offered by the theme and the new direction that the movement's tonality is taking.

The jaunty A flat major march is not entirely new, however, but built from motivic fragments from the fanfare material of the first movement. Our attention is drawn back to the last time this material was heard, immediately after the B flat minor episode in the first movement. Not only does the new theme share elements with the trumpet fanfare, but also with the fortissimo oboe fanfare which unexpectedly bursts out at bar 243 in the first movement.

Example 10-6 $V-I$, 238—45 compared with $V-ii$, 288—94.

Mahler's use of the oboes in giving his new march theme helps make the connection. So despite the new tonal impetus, thematically speaking, the music
has collapsed into yet another reminiscence.

From bar 312, the "shout of joy" motive comes to the fore once again. This time appearing in stretto, it resolves to A major providing yet another dynamic tonal shift, a V\( \alpha \rightharpoondown \rightharpoondown \)I progression to A. The resolution can almost be mistaken for the ultimate D major climax that is still yet to come. For the moment, the triumph of A major is less than emphatic, and this is reinforced as the A minor music of the movement's opening returns. A major has come about via a sequence of dominants (B-Ab-A or V of V-V\( \alpha \rightharpoondown \rightharpoondown \)I), and as such constitutes the most forceful tonicizing sequence thus far encountered. It brings with it the expectation of a possible breakthrough after which the recapitulation is something of an anti-climax.

It begins to appear as if A minor might end up being adequately tonicized after all with an emphatic move to the dominant minor E. But yet again the music works through previous material from earlier peace-questing sections. There is also a significant allusion at bar 392, to the beginning of the B flat minor episode from the first movement. This in turn, leads to another version of the peace-questing theme in F minor at Figure 23. Taken together, the E and F minor sections follow the chronology of events in the B flat minor episode also (see from bars 155 and 203) cementing the relationship with the first movement episode. So although the A–F axis gains some tonal credibility from the E minor episode, the material within it denotes a continuation of the process of working back through past experiences, but does not present a way forward.

This is the last passage that recalls events from the first movement. It is interesting to note when all the reminiscences are listed, that there exists a trend towards reviewing the first movement in the reverse chronological order.

Example 10-7 Chronology of first-movement reminiscences

| Mvt. 2 | Fig. 5 | f | 323* |
| Mvt. 1 | Fig. 7 | f | 341* |
|        | Fig. 15 | B | 293 |
|        | Fig. 16 | Ab | 238-245 |
|        | Fig. 22+4 | e | 155* |
|        | Fig. 23 | f | 203* |

* functioning together as a recollection of a complete section.

The return of F minor still offers no thematic solution and the potential for tonicizing A minor by moving to E minor still needs to be verified by some significant thematic unfolding. The longer this is avoided, the more powerful is the impression that a programmatic solution must be sought elsewhere. When the F minor section collapses into E flat minor at bar 428, in what is
arguably the most vivid articulation of despair in the work so far, the pattern of tonalities that began the movement (a-f-a-e\textsuperscript{b}) has been virtually duplicated. Even though we receive a tonicizing dominant in E minor in the interim, the E flat minor episode reiterates the lack of progress in the movement so far, drawing attention to the fact that the E minor and F minor sections failed to bring any new thematic initiatives.

The E flat minor section rather than being superseded, merely seems to lose its way by Figure 26. In a remarkable passage Mahler presents a situation where it appears that all possibilities for a solution are exhausted. Fanfare motives, the shout of joy figure and the angry theme from the opening A minor section (marked \textit{Wild}) all attempt to re-establish themselves without success. In a passage of particularly dissociated counterpoint where each fragment begins at a double or triple-forte dynamic only to diminish before ceasing altogether, a solution, programmatic or tonal, seems as far away as ever.

It is at this point that the shout of joy motif triumphantly drags D major out from the confusion. It is a miraculous breakthrough similar to the attainment of D major in the finale of the First Symphony—in both cases the music that precedes the breakthrough offers no hint whatsoever of a D major outcome. But in the First Symphony the breakthrough entailed recovering the original tonic after its eviction at the hands of F minor. Here we are confronted with D major for the first time. Up until now, any sense of D's tonicity could only have been in the form of a latent by-product of the implied dominant function of the C#-F-A axis. Unlike the First Symphony we are faced with more than the shock of surface dislocation alone—D major carries an enormous weight of elucidation and reorientation of the previous tonal events.

\textbf{Example 10-8}

\textit{Symphony No 5, Part 1 Tonal outline.}

\begin{align*}
\text{i- iv} & \alpha - \text{i} \quad \text{i}\beta & \text{ii} & \text{i} \quad \text{ii- (ii)-IV}\beta \\
\text{in C# } & \text{i iv}\alpha \text{ i } \text{i}\beta \text{ i } \text{II}\beta \text{ v } \text{I}\beta \text{ v}\beta \text{ ii } \text{IV}\beta \\
\text{keys c#-b } & \text{c#-a-c# II-a-f-a-e} \text{b-B-A} \text{b-A} \text{a-e-f} \text{eb-D} \\
\text{in D } & \text{v}\alpha \text{ i}\beta \text{ v } \text{v}\alpha \text{ v } \text{v}\beta \text{ v } \text{iv}\beta \text{ iv}\alpha \text{ ii}\alpha \text{ Vv } \text{ii } \text{v}\beta \text{ iv}\beta \text{ I} \\
\text{v}\alpha - \text{i}\beta - \text{v}\alpha & \text{v } \text{iv}\beta & \text{v } \text{ (iv}\beta)-\text{I}
\end{align*}

In every respect the substance of the D major chorale is an effective response leaving us in no doubt that this was the goal of the questing music which has preceded it. Clearly the effect of the breakthrough is largely dependent on the contrasting style of invention—a diatonic D major chorale following, hard on the heels of chromatic, dissociated counterpoint in the minor mode. Just as important is the fact that this is the first new solution. At each tonal turning point in the second movement the music has ruminated over old ground from the first movement. Just as the thematic initiatives failed to find new directions, so were the tonal directions fruitless in providing a successful
tonicization of any of the proposed tonics, C#, A or F. The chorale meets the criteria for resolution on all points. It simultaneously provides both a thematic and programmatic solution and steps in to claim the vacant tonic position, which, in effect, claims all that has preceded it as its tonicizing dominant.

A minor concludes the movement despite the fact that its position as tonic has been seriously undermined. The path to programmatic resolution and the clarification of the functional ambiguities surrounding the initial tonal areas have found a solution in the D major chorale, and the goal of the remainder of the symphony must be to consolidate the position of D major as tonic.

Of the Scherzo Natalie Bauer-Lechner recalls the special quality of mature confidence that Mahler found in this movement. 'Every note is charged with life, and the whole thing whirs around in a giddy dance.' He also compared it with a comet's tail. There is nothing romantic or mystical about it; it is simply the expression of incredible energy (unerhörter Kraft). It is a human being in the full light of day, in the prime of his life.'14

Such an unreservedly positive attitude might seem an over-simplification in light of the sheer size and diversity of the movement. Although phrase groupings, motivic unity, motivic development, rhythmic constancy and tonality enable various passages, some of them fairly long, to cohere, none of these techniques has an overarching power that would forge the movement into a single, comprehensive whole. The first and second sections are one another's obverse; they are bound together by the complementarity of opposition. 15

All this implies that the movement is fissured, full of contrast and opposition but that none of these aspects are threatening in a programmatic sense. It is as if Mahler's protagonist, "in the prime of his life", has gained confidence and power from his struggle to make sense out of the events in Part 1, to the degree where any negative aspects of the Scherzo are non-threatening. Having finally dissolved the tonal ambiguities via the elucidatory D major chorale, he can now embark on his D major symphony unhindered.

The Scherzo consolidates D major's tonicity. The first tonic section touches on other keys in the process, but the tonic is never felt to be far away. The keys emphasized are B minor (bar 40-59), B flat (60-66) and F sharp minor (94-106). Apart from B minor (ivœ) the others represent tonic axis members, maintaining the tonic function in this section. F major appears briefly from bar 108, and functions as VB to D at the foreground level.

The use of axis relatives continues with the trio section at Figure 6. The use of B flat major follows a precedent that had been established from the first

14Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Recollections of Gustav Mahler, 173.
15David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 102.
movement—that the incumbent tonic is supported by Iβ. It is a short excursion and D major returns at Figure 7, closing off this first section at Figure 8. Mahler has created a long expanse of stable and unrivaled tonic-axis music.

Example 10-9  Symphony No. 5 (third movement)

| 1-135  | D  | I |
| 136-173 | Bb | Iβ |
| 174-217 | D  | I |
| 218-250 | f  | vβ |
| 251-269 | g  | iv |

________ TRIO

| 270-307 | g  | iv |
| 308-336 | d  | i |
| 337-388 | Ab-c dom axis? |
| 389-428 | a  | v |

| 429-489 | f  | vβ |
| 490-595 | D  | I |
| 596-613 | f  | vβ |
| 614-632 | a  | v |
| 633-661 | e-E | ii ?? |
| 662-699 | D  | I |

700-763  D-d  I-i  TRIO

764-819  D  I  CODA

The central section begins with a fugato passage, with the tonic as its starting point it modulates through F sharp minor to C sharp minor, or from iα—vα. The initial goal is the establishment of a dominant, specifically F minor (vβ) which arrives as an axial substitution for C sharp at bar 218. The dominant of F is then sought via A flat minor, but C minor is surpassed and the central episode featuring the solo horn calls takes place in the key of G from Figures 10 to 11. In the bars leading up to Figure 11, the music gravitates towards D minor—not so much as tonic but as V of V of V of F. The music has thus traced a cycle of fifths with F as its point of origin, and the farthest point of expansion brings forth the darkest and most bizarre material of the movement, a pizzicato waltz for string quartet and bassoon. After this the music retraces its steps through D to A flat and C minor—the latter two being axis dominants which imply the return of F minor. F’s axis relative A minor appears first at Figure 13, reworking the G minor horn-call music. F minor is regained at bar 429, completing the circle.
The rhythmic energy of the main body of the scherzo gradually infects the music, and the innocent B flat major trio theme is whipped into a demonic frenzy. This increase in energy brings with it the expectation of a return to the tonic, but at Figure 15 as we return to the original tempo, the resolution is to B flat minor. At bar 486, we are poised on the dominant of Bb (V of iβ), which then resolves as a Vβ—I progression to D major and the solo horn theme resumes as it had begun the movement, unperturbed by the frenzy that has preceded it.

The overall contour of this middle section establishes a structural dominant as its frame, and as such the movement comes as close to the tonicization process as a development section of a sonata form movement would normally be expected to undertake. Other sonata-form aspects include the transposition and recomposition of the B flat major trio section into the tonic at Figure 26. This in itself does not insure the ascendancy of the tonic—paying lip-service to the recomposition of the second tonal area was a feature of the first movement also. But it is the central section’s use of Vβ as an outer frame that gives this movement the ability to tonicize D in a way that the two movements in Part 1 lacked.

The Adagietto is the shortest and simplest movement in design, but it carries an immense weight of tonal significance. The precedent was set in Part 1 for the initial tonic to be paired with its beta relative, with the latter being tonicized in the ensuing movement. Thus the C sharp minor movement with the subsidiary pairing of A, spawned the ensuing A minor movement, which in turn set up another i—iβ pairing with F minor. A movement in the key of F would complete the cycle, and finally this comes to fruition. On one level, the Adagietto fulfills one expectation the moment it starts but it also takes possession of another precedent set in Part 1. This is, of course, the Adagietto’s preview of one of the finale’s principal themes, a tactic that corresponds to the inter-related thematic material between movements 1 and 2. In this way Mahler enables the Adagietto to set up the Rondo Finale as the crowning articulation of D major as tonic. But although there is a structural balance between Parts 1 and 3 because of this shared technique, there are at the same time crucial differences, ones that articulate the changes that have occurred regarding the work’s tonicity.

Example 10-10 Symphony No. 5 (fourth movement).

(F major \(Vβ\) of D)

\begin{align*}
1-46 & \ F \ Vβ \\
47-59 & \ Gb \ Iα \\
60-62 & \ E \ \text{Whole-tone passing} \\
63-71 & \ D \ I \\
72-103 & \ F \ Vβ \\
\end{align*}

The movement sets out in F and cadences at bar 11, which simultaneously
closes the first paragraph and begins the second. At Figure 1 the music cadences in A minor, establishing an axial relationship in a way that is now an almost expected part of Mahler's musical grammar. F major is quickly regained and the third paragraph, cadencing at bar 33, is followed by a short codetta. The second section begins with a transitional passage from Figure 2, which transforms the tonic F into a dominant. The foreground tonal processes of this movement now begin to reflect those that govern the entire work. F as a dominant seventh chord finally discharges not in a resolution to B flat but to G flat, creating a V\(\alpha\)-I cadence in G flat.

It is a highly charged moment because so many significant events coalesce at this point, especially at bar 46. Just as F was the last dominant axis member to be tonicized so here we tonicize the one remaining tonic axis member G flat, which, up until now, has made only fleeting appearances in modulatory contexts. This in itself gives a sense of a cycle completed, complementary to the completed cycle of dominant axis keys. As I have already mentioned the act of making F function as a dominant brings the background tonal plot explicitly into the foreground, and at the same time, the manner in which the dominant function is played out directly relates to the shout of joy from the second movement. In that movement, although D major was preceded by an E flat minor passage, the foreground cadence involved D flat major harmonies, and so at the last, D was established via a V\(\alpha\)-I cadence.

**Example 10-11** V-iv, 46-7 and V-ii, 463-4.

The corresponding V\(\alpha\)-I to G flat cadence here in the Adagietto clearly
makes reference to the "shout of joy" motive, although here it is more of a blissful dissolution than a triumphant affirmation.

At bar 50 the first violins begin the theme that will subsequently appear in the finale. The tactic is the same as that used in the first movement, where the second movement's tonality and themes were prepared in the coda of the preceding movement. The principal tonalities of this central section, G flat major and D major, stand in the same relationship to one another as C sharp and A, adding another point of symmetry to the work. Within this middle section Mahler outlines his eventual tonal goal in the same way as the first movement. Here the music moves down a whole-tone step from G flat to E major followed by another to D major between bars 59 to 63. Thus the eventual tonic is prepared in the midst of the penultimate movement. The essential difference between Part 1 and 3 is that here the preparatory gesture is enclosed within a wider Vψ context, giving it a tonally goal-oriented impetus that was entirely lacking from the transition from the first to the second movement.

The Adagietto's role is not too far removed from some of Mahler's other more modest movements (in terms of size). One thinks of Urlicht in the Second Symphony or Das himmlische Leben in the Fourth. The weight that these movements attain comes from the fact that they all make explicit or bring to the surface that which has covertly affected us from the deeper structural levels. In both of these earlier instances and in the fourth movement of the Third Symphony, Mahler has articulated the exposure of his background tonal scheme in the most dramatic way—with the introduction of the human voice. Here, the tactic remains the same, with a highly individual orchestral sound to articulate its special place and function instead of the human voice. Nor is it surprising that this area of a composition should be singled out for this kind of treatment. It sets the stage as it were, for the work's culminating event—the Finale. It is not a tactic without precedent either—one need only recall some of the late-Beethoven works already discussed in this thesis: the Largo introduction to the finale of the Hammerklavier, or the G sharp minor sixth movement of the Opus 131 Quartet, both of which boldly articulate the hitherto absent dominant, catapulting us into finales that emphatically seal tonicity.

The end of the Adagietto exudes high expectation of the finale to follow. As might be expected the finale uses a rondo form, one that can repeatedly return to rejoice in D major's tonicity. Similar to the Scherzo, there is the sonata form element of a second tonality articulated by a new theme which is later resolved to the tonic. In broader terms, the two movements share a profusion of rhythmic energy which celebrates the tonicity of D major. The obvious difference between them is the more thoroughly joyous nature of the finale. The earlier D major movement is fissured, especially in the central section, which indulges in mysterious episodes and bizarre transformations. The whirl of Viennese gaiety becomes sinister, even a little nightmare-ish (presaging the
Scherzo of the Seventh). One can almost sense the bitter alienation, incompre-
hensibility and disgust that characterized the Scherzo of the Second Sympho-
ny in such passages as that between Figures 15 and 17.

Programmatically, or rather autobiographically, it is not difficult to interpret
the meaning of the work accordingly, in terms of the growth of the man who
composed it. Part 1 confronts death and seeks a release from pain. D major
provides the solution, or at least clearly indicates the path towards it, articula-
ted by the shout of joy and the brass chorale. The Scherzo celebrates the vic-
tory but, despite the feeling of energy and potency that accompanies this
movement, there are moments of darkness and doubt, especially between Fig-
ures 10 and 15. Elucidation and complete fulfillment comes through love,
specifically for Mahler, his love for Alma Schindler to whom the Adagietto
was composed as a musical love letter. Such a programmatic interpretation
is verified just as much by the tonal plot as well. The Adagietto provides the
key, the completion of the tonal cycle that was implied in Part 1, the evocation
of the entire dominant axis in the service of establishing the tonicity of D. Just
as in the earlier symphonies, programmatic details, even when they are impu-
ted from recollected details from sources other than the composer, tend to
comport with what the tonal plot reveals in a more universal language.

The Rondo-Finale celebrates, more unreservedly than the Scherzo, the tonic-
icty of D. It is the difference between the memory of a triumph enjoyed at
leisure in relative security, and one experienced in the heat of battle. There is
little that could be construed as being contrary to the overall sense of affirma-
tion that the movement exudes. As the movement progresses the expectation
that the chorale will be regained becomes more acute, especially as Mahler
continually implies the imminent arrival of some culminating event even
though he repeatedly withholds it. When it does arrive it comes as a joyful
inevitability. The breakthrough in the second movement is inherently more
dramatic however—though this is not surprising taking into account the tonal
context in which it is placed. Because its position is more precarious in the se-
cond movement, there are two waves of affirmation, the first breakthrough at
bar 464 is followed by a second at bar 500, actually marked "climax" (Höhe-
punkt) in the score and brought about by a V7—I cadence. For Mahler to
give a literal repeat of the chorale in the finale would commit a symphonic-
dramatic impropriety. It is not possible in the context of the overall tonal dra-
ma that the second chorale could attain the same expressive properties as the
first. The second comes after the individual and collective tonal processes of
the first four movements (and most of the finale) have made the tonicity of D
an irrefutable fact. The second wave, the actual Höhepunkt in the second
movement, re-dramatizes the establishment of D, essentially by placing its

16Donald Mitchell, Gustav Mahler Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 131. Mit-
chell cites words to this effect in an inscription in Willem Mengelberg's hand on the score
Mengelberg used for conducting the work.
tenuous grip on tonicity in peril with the move to F major harmony. Mahler, quite simply, cannot dramatize either the chorale's arrival or its subsequent hold on D major as tonic—he can only bask in the satisfaction of having attained it.

Example 10-12
Symphony No. 5 (fifth movement).

1—166  D I
167—176  Bb Iβ
177—186  D I

187—252  B IVα Adagietto theme

253—272  G IV
273—279  D I
280—306  A V
307—336  C Vβ of V
337—348  B V of V of V
349—356  Db Vα
357—372  D I

373—422  D I Adagietto theme resolution.

423—440  Bb Iβ
441—454  D I
455—478  C Vβ of V
479—525  D I
526—537  Bb Iβ
538—580  C IIβ
581—591  Ab IIα
592—622  A V
623—642  G IV
642—686  G IV Adagietto theme
687—702  F V
703—710  a v
711—748  D I Chorale
749—791  D I

The Fifth Symphony marks the end of the first compositional period for Mahler just as much as it initiates the second. With his next symphony Mahler reverts to a concentric tonal scheme, and, although it may not appear so at first sight, this is a dominating feature in most of his subsequent works. But one
of the problems we face with the familiar terminology of concentric and progressive tonality, is that they imply the existence of fundamentally different musical universes. The situation might even appear revolutionary, given that the former is ubiquitous in tonal music before the latter quarter of the nineteenth century and the latter is more or less exclusively the domain of composers at the very end of the tonal era. But as we shall see, it is a great mistake to consider Mahler's late concentric works as indicative of retrenchment, or that they are inherently less dramatic than his progressive tonality works.
Chapter 11
Symphony No. 6

With the Sixth Symphony, we witness the most whole-heartedly concentric tonal scheme of Mahler's career up to this point. Even the First Symphony contained a significant internal progressive tonal relationship despite the outer concentric frame. Likewise the Third, which gives the impression of being concentric at first glance, reveals, on closer inspection, a Vi—V progressive tonal scheme. Mahler's use of progressive tonality had previously ensured that the focus of his works was the finale, to the point where it enabled even so slight a movement as Das himmlische Leben in the Fourth Symphony to fulfill this finale-oriented compositional aim. Despite quitting progressive tonality, however, Mahler remains faithful to the idea of placing the symphonic weight firmly on the finale.

It is clear from the example of the Fourth Symphony, that a finale's modest proportions does not necessarily have a direct bearing on the amount of emphasis and weight it will attain. The finales of Symphonies 2 to 5, despite differing vastly in terms of size and construction, have in common the role of producing a verdict on tonicity during the course of their finales, and as such they carry the weight of the denouement of the background tonal processes of the entire work. While Mahler has clearly not abandoned the idea of placing the symphonic weight in the finale, the concentric tonal scheme here raises a number of questions. For instance, can a concentric tonal scheme provide that same structural weight and focus on the finale that his earlier progressive tonal schemes had?

To achieve the same degree in structural weight in the finale in this work was not so much a case of finding a new direction, but of reverting to the earlier nineteenth-century models that were initially responsible for the evolution of progressive tonality in the first place. These were discussed in chapter 4—the most notable examples being among the late works of Beethoven. In works such as the Hammerklavier Sonata, or the Opus 102 no. 1 Cello Sonata, the ability to focus attention on the latter stages of the work was made possible by delaying background tonicization in the early stages—something which was all the more imperative if the first movement involved sonata form. Avoiding background tonicization in the early stages is the cornerstone of Mahler's ability to produce progressive tonal schemes. But Mahler is not necessarily precluded from continuing this practice on account of the eventual concentric outcome. The tactic is summed up by Schoenberg's explanation of the technique of progressive tonality.

From the outset the tonic does not appear unequivocally, it is not definitive; rather, it admits the rivalry of other tonics alongside it. The tonality is kept, so to speak, suspended, and the victory can then go to one of the rivals,
though not necessarily.\textsuperscript{1} (italics mine)

With the Sixth, Mahler withholds deeper level tonicization just as he had done previously in sonata-form first movements such as in the Third and Fourth Symphonies, leaving the finale to reveal, unequivocally, a fully realized statement of A minor's tonicity. The work's inner programme is also tied up in this process of avoiding tonicization.

Example 11-1 Symphony No. 6 (first movement)

Exposition

\begin{align*}
1-76 & \quad a \quad i \\
77-129 & \quad F \quad I\beta \\
\end{align*}

Development

\begin{align*}
130-148 & \quad a \quad i \\
149-156 & \quad e \quad v \\
157-182 & \quad a \quad i \\
183-221 & \quad d \quad iv \\
222-229 & \quad G \quad IV \text{ of } iv \\
230-255 & \quad Eb \quad IV\beta \text{ of } iv \\
256-264 & \quad g\# \quad v\alpha \\
265-271 & \quad b \quad ii \\
272-290 & \quad g \quad v\beta \text{ of } V \\
\end{align*}

Recapitulation

\begin{align*}
291-294 & \quad A \quad I \\
295-356 & \quad a \quad i \\
357-378 & \quad D \quad IV \\
\end{align*}

Coda

\begin{align*}
379-394 & \quad f\# \quad iv\alpha \\
395-421 & \quad e \quad v \\
422-433 & \quad eb \quad v\beta \text{ of } V\beta \\
434-448 & \quad C \quad V\beta-V \\
449-486 & \quad A \quad I \\
\end{align*}

The tonal outline of the exposition is what would be expected from a movement attempting to avoid tonicization. In a repeated exposition Mahler gives us the tonic A minor and an axis relative in F major. This is a non-tonicizing relationship and therefore the responsibility for a more thorough tonicization of A minor falls on the development section. The axial relationship between A and F is very much highlighted by the dominant preparation before the fate rhythm at bar 57. The chord is, strictly speaking, $V^{b12b97}$ of A minor, but can also be seen as a juxtaposition of a B flat major triad on the dominant of A. It

is not too far fetched to re-interpret this chord axially admitting the possibility that the B flat chord could function as the true subdominant to F and the E in the bass could act as a leading note, thus tonicizing F. It is no coincidence that when F is attained some twenty bars later, that the bass motion at the cadence (bar 76-7) involves a leading note step from E to F.

The development section begins by returning to the tonic A minor. This in itself does not represent any significant weakening of the sonata form as it would in a classical example—the tonic axis has been continuous since the beginning of the movement. The move back to the original tonic reaffirms the tonic axis on the more surface levels but still does not suggest that any deeper level tonicization is forthcoming. However, a move on to C minor (vβ) at bar 139 generates anticipation that a structural dominant is at hand. C minor gives way to its axis relative E minor (v) in a climactic resolution at Figure 16. This is very much in the early stages of the development section however, certainly too early to imply that a preparation for a return to the tonic is under way. A minor is indeed anti-climactic when it is regained at Figure 17. If the development section was intent on providing a background dominant then it must start again, because the immediacy of the resolution here relegates this event to the middleground. In the wider tonal context, the initial stages of the development section continue to focus on the tonic, not the dominant.

If the music almost appears to scuttle its initial intentions, it is because the structural dominant is provided at an inappropriate point in the movement. The immediacy of the resolution of the dominant amounts to a willful act of avoidance of any substantial tonicization process, after which the music is forced to take a different path. This comes in the form of modulation in the subdominant direction, and herein lies the essential tonal dichotomy of the work. As we have seen, the use of the subdominant axis to avoid tonicization was a prominent feature of works such as Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* Sonata. The technique achieves the same structural ends here, but at the same time it is helps to convey the programmatic element of the work.

As much as no official programme was written, there are universally-held interpretations of several passages. The fate rhythm and the tonic major to minor progression (first heard at bar 57) are universally accepted as symbolic of the overriding progression from major to minor and the ultimate tragic end that the work entails. We know the inspiration behind the second subject of the first movement (Alma) and of the trio sections of the Scherzo (Mahler's children at play). One of the other prevalent "ideas" behind the work is that of escapism, particularly the sections of repose punctuated by the cow-bells. The Alma theme, the child-like trio in the Scherzo and the alpine evocations of the cow-bell episodes, are all given in the subdominant (or IV of IV) at one point or another. Subdominant bias, reinforced by the fact that most of the

---

positive aspects of the inner programme are associated with it, means that if a progressive tonal scheme were to eventuate in this symphony, the tonal and programmatic solution would doubtless lie in the subdominant direction—or conversely, the initial tonic A would begin to act as a dominant. This would be consistent with Mahler’s previous progressive tonal schemes.

This is not a matter of pure conjecture. The lack of background tonicization of A minor experienced so far in the first movement engenders a degree of doubt over tonicity—certainly it is not inconceivable that A minor could be forced to relinquish its position. The point here is one that Donald Mitchell has noted, that the concentric scheme of the Sixth is "... as dramatic in its symbolism as the most mobile of overall key schemes".\(^3\) For as long as Mahler can maintain doubt over tonicity of A and offer an alternative through subdominant bias, he retains the ability to dramatize the realization of that progressive tonal scheme, or conversely, he can dramatize the process whereby this option is systematically snuffed out.

Of the cow-bell episodes Barford notes that in them the "... panorama of feeling is temporarily held at arm's length ...".\(^4\) This interpretation also makes sense in light of Mahler's personality, as one who held a great love for mountain ascents and was generally "... accustomed to violent exercise!".\(^5\) After the failed attempt to establish a structural dominant at Figure 16, the music embarks on an exploration of the subdominant regions. The process begins with an inconclusive D minor from Figure 19. This gravitates towards G (IV of IV) from bar 213, reaching a new, tonally stable section complete with new theme at Figure 22. This central episode centers on G and later E flat, which looks forward to the axial pairing of these keys in the Andante, itself an area of repose in the context of the symphony’s three A minor movements. E flat holds the most prominent position in the development, a passage of some 26 bars in length which promises to be even longer. The chorale at bar 250 ends on the dominant of E flat but we are wrenched away via an interrupted cadence to G sharp minor.

The interpretation of the function of the G sharp minor passage is open to debate. It could conceivably function as vA of A minor, but because of the E flat context preceding it, it appears as yet another subdominant shift, from E flat to its subdominant minor. This continues the trend of the continually expanding series of subdominant progressions. By bar 264, the subdominant interpretation of G sharp is confirmed as the music shifts to B minor, which is the last remaining axis relative of G and E flat. At Figure 26 we return to G minor.

The central portion of the development then has focussed on the supertonic

\(^{3}\)Donald Mitchell, *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 76.


\(^{5}\)Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler, Memories and Letters*, 122.
axis G-Eb-B. As a rule, any interpretation of the supertonic axis, whether it functions as V of V or conversely IV of IV, depends on context, but in this case the relationship of these keys to the tonic was via D, which implies a subdominant direction. However, this interpretation is easily overturned—the axis system inherently possesses a great capacity for harmonic or tonal puns. Mahler will in fact reinterpret the tonal status of the supertonic axis in the coda of this movement and, with even greater tonal ramifications, in the Andante. Mahler will later realize the potential for the supertonic axis to function as V of V and, in so doing, makes the possibility of a progressive tonal scheme resolving in the subdominant direction less likely.

As the development moves towards a climax from bar 283, there is no sign of a tonicizing dominant, creating a real doubt as to where, tonally, the movement is heading. The transition back to the principal theme is quite unusual, consisting of a sequence of chromatically ascending tonal shifts, from B flat minor (bar 279) to B minor (bar 283) through harmonies of C major, with the penultimate chord before the return of A being C sharp major! This is certainly not a dominant preparation—in fact, because C sharp is an axial relative of A it provides no springboard at all. As a result the arrival of A major at Figure 28 sounds anacrustic, not thetic. If A major here is anacrustic then it entertains the possibility that a completed resolution will take us to D.

Example 11-2 VI-i 287—291
This transition is highly reminiscent of the corresponding point in Beethoven's *Hammerklavier* and the Brahms Third Symphony, both of which were discussed in chapter 4. The dominant is not articulated before the return of the principal theme and the tonic is conjured out of a rising chromatic sequence, the result of serendipity rather than a calculated attainment of a clear and pre-defined goal. Here, the chromatic line in the upper part has A as its goal, but the corresponding chromatic line in the bass implies D as the goal of its ascending motion. Like Beethoven, Mahler clearly avoids the tonicization capability of the sonata form and in so doing keeps this weighty aspect of symphonic procedure in reserve for the latter stages of the work. The corollary of this situation is that if tonicization procedures fail to materialize later then the way is open for a progressive tonal scheme.

Also in the manner of Beethoven's Sonata is Mahler's reinforcement of the subdominant bias of the development section during the course of the recapitulation. Mahler does not resolve the F major second tonal area from the exposition, the so-called "Alma" theme, as would be expected—rather, in what must be a unique case, it is given in the subdominant D major. Granted, Mahler does not make too great a point of this, the section is heavily truncated—but this is primarily because the theme will be the focal point of the coda, and so Mahler wisely refrains from emphasizing it too much here. But his underplaying of the "Alma" theme in no way detracts from the significance of this tonal irregularity. The subdominant makes its mark and so remains at the forefront of our attentions.

The coda begins at bar 379 on a dominant pedal of B minor, which is iv\text{\textalpha} relative to the D major just heard. As a result, the coda immediately begins to evoke the subdominant orientation of the development section. With the tonality moving to E minor it is debatable whether the tonality is still moving away from the tonic in the subdominant direction or back towards it. E minor is potentially poised to function as the dominant minor in a resolution to the tonic, but this is contradicted by the move to E flat minor at Figure 40. Just as in the development section the supertonic axis is the focal point, this initial section of the coda from bar 379 to 433 outlines a B—E\text{\textbeta} framework, implying the subdominant axis relative to D.

In the discussion of the development section we saw how the supertonic axis had the potential to function as IV of IV or V of V. Here E flat effects that about-face to function as v\text{\textbeta} to C, itself V\beta to A. This is the most important tonicizing progression in the movement so far, e\text{\textbeta}—C-(E)—A; in axial terms, a v\text{\textbeta} of V\beta—V\beta-(V)—I progression. The C major passage recalls that which prepared the recapitulation, both thematically and because of the similar use of chromatically ascending harmonies. But here the chromatic line strives emphatically towards the dominant of A and the subsequent resolution appears as a conscious act rather than a mere accident.
So at the last Mahler provides an emphatic dominant preparation, goal-directed towards the tonicization of A. The final statement of A major also goes some way to neutralizing the subdominant association that the "Alma" theme acquired in the recapitulation. But it is fair to say that the movement does not assert the tonicity of A unreservedly. The use of a non-tonicizing second tonal area (Iβ) and the avoidance of any conclusive tonicization process in the development section assures this. Certainly, for all doubt to be effectively removed, the whole recapitulation should have attained the degree of tonal security that was afforded the final stages of the coda.

Before continuing on to discuss the central movements I need to discuss the two most contentious issues regarding the Sixth—the order of the central movements and the excised third hammer blow in the Finale. The argument over the ordering of the central movements continues. Colin Matthews, in an editorial footnote in Deryck Cooke's book on Mahler, outlines the history of the movements' changing order:

The symphony was first published with the scherzo [sic] placed second; but it was first performed with the Andante second, and subsequently republished twice during Mahler's lifetime with the movements in that order. Although the International Mahler Society edition of the work (1963) insists that the first published order should be re-adopted as the correct one...

Norman Del Mar notes that the original conception of the Scherzo preceding the Andante was altered prior to the work's premier and was never played—Mahler's reaction in rehearsals being that:

...the Scherzo was too similar in style and dynamism to follow directly upon the enormously strenuous twenty-two-minute opening movement. Equally, for the Andante to precede the long slow introduction that opens the monumental Finale was not really satisfactory, whereas by reversing the order the necessary contrast and relief on both counts was solved at a single stroke.

He also notes that the argument for reverting to the original order is not based on sound evidence and that the four paragraphs of Redlich's section entitled *The Textual Problem* preface his Eulenberg edition of the score "...are full of vague terms such as 'must have', 'probably', 'possibly' or 'evidently'." In the end, Del Mar concludes that we simply do not know for sure any true intentions to revert to the original position hence there is no justification to continue the practice in modern performance.

Matthews comes to the same conclusion regarding the placement of the Andante.

---

8Norman Del Mar, *Mahler's Sixth Symphony—A Study*, 92.
that Erwin Ratz's [editor of the 1963 International Mahler Society edition] de-
cision to tamper with the order has no documentary evidence at all to support
it) might derive from a desire on Mahler's part to weaken the symphony fur-
ther. But whatever the cause of the confusion, there is no musical case for
playing the Scherzo before the Andante...9

The comments of Matthews and Del Mar raise two points. The first is
Mahler's imputed desire to emasculate the work. Alma Mahler certainly doc-
uments Mahler's fear over the symphony's awesome power,10 so it is con-
ceivable that the decision to place the Andante second represents just such an
attempt, taken in the same mind as the decision to omit the third hammer-blow
in the Finale. The possibility that Mahler subconsciously desired to emascula-
tate the work by switching the movement order prior to the first performance
gains more weight when the views of other commentators are brought to bear
on the subject. De La Grange cites Willem Mengelberg's personal copy of the
second edition (with the Andante placed second), on the title page of which
Mengelberg inscribed "On Mahler's instruction, proceed with the Scherzo II,
then Andante III" (translation mine).11 Mengelberg was an ardent and loyal
supporter of Mahler's music and it is unlikely that he would have misrepre-
sented the composer's intentions. De La Grange goes on to add that the final
performance that Mahler himself gave of the work, in Vienna on the 4th of
January 1907, had the Scherzo in second place.12

Ultimately this amounts to more than unverifiable hearsay evidence that
Matthews and Del Mar imputed it to be. The first published version could well
be the version that Mahler first intended but which he subsequently changed
on account of his own emotional response to it. Perhaps later, when the com-
poser became less preoccupied with the work, he decided to go with his ori-
ginal intentions. This brings us to the second point Matthews makes—that the
work's musical logic does not support placing the Scherzo second. But musi-
cal logic is, in my view, precisely the grounds on which the placement of the
Scherzo second can be defended as I will endeavour to do later in the chapter.

The second bone of contention surrounding this work is Mahler's decision
to excise the third hammer blow in the Finale. For all that Ratz and Redlich
are willing to submit their own assertions on the movement ordering with no
documentary evidence they go no further into the realms of conjecture than
does Del Mar himself who in order to justify the reinstatement of the third
hammer blow in the Finale writes:

9Colin Matthews, "Introduction" in Norman Del Mar, Mahler's Sixth Symphony—A
10Alma Mahler, Gustav Mahler, Memories and Letters, 100.
11Henry-Louis de La Grange, Gustav Mahler, Chronique d'une Vie, II, L'age d'or de
Vienne, (1900—1907), (Paris, 1983), 1157.
12Henry-Louis de La Grange, Gustav Mahler, II, L'age d'or de Vienne, 1157.
Nevertheless, there no longer remains any moral obligation to omit the third hammer blow or to observe the attendant revisions which robbed this moment of its drama in deference to the last score published in Mahler's lifetime. Fate cannot still be felt to stand threateningly over the composer who has been dead . . . for sixty years. Superstition must play no further part in what is now primarily an artistic decision. Only the meaning and structure of the work can offer guidance in such an ethical problem. [italics mine] 

Del Mar goes on to state that perhaps the only way to perform the movement with only two hammer blows is to have the percussionist raise the hammer but gently put it aside at the last minute behest of the conductor. He is obviously concerned that everyone in the audience should know that there should be three hammer blows.

However, Mahler's musical logic might still have been at the root of it and it would be premature to contest his last will and testament regarding the blows on the grounds that he was not of sound mind regarding this work, especially if, in taking his side, we can find some logical basis in the decision to excise the third blow other than superstition.

Alma remarks on Strauss's insensitivity to the idea behind the hammer blows:

"'Why ever does Mahler smother his effect in the last movement?' he said. 'He gets his fortissimo and then damps it down. Can't understand that at all.' He never did understand. He spoke simply as a showman. Anyone who understands the symphony at all understands why the first blow is the strongest, the second weaker and the third—the death blow— weakest of all."

What comes into play in conjunction with the idea of the diminishing intensity of the hammer blows is the fact that, in terms of the tonal drama, the point where the third hammer-blow occurs is one of immense tonal weight. Both the first and second blows represent interrupted cadences. The first replaces the expected V—I in d with V—IV$^6_4$. The second replaces the expected V$^{13}_3$—I in D with V$^{13}_3$—VI in D, a progression which, in hindsight, reveals itself to have been II$^{13}_3$#3—III in G minor. The third blow comes firmly in the context of A minor. Immediately prior to its appearance a perfect cadence (V$^{64}_4$—i in A minor at Figure 164) brings about the return of the introduction in the tonic key for the first time. The weight that accrues on this point of resolution is considerable and, despite the visual absence of the actual hammer blow, the blows of the development section are audibly evoked by the bass drum on the downbeat of this resolution. Mahler may well have decided that evoking the hammer blows of the development at Figure 164 conformed with his original long-range conception of the blows of fate diminishing in intensity.

---

13 Norman Del Mar, Mahler's Sixth Symphony—A Study, 152.
14 Alma Mahler, Gustav Mahler, Memories and Letters, 100.
This is not so easily relegated to the realms of unsubstantiated conjecture as are many of the issues surrounding the order of the movements. One could well be forgiven for thinking, on listening to the movement with no prior knowledge of the score, that the third blow would have come on the downbeat of Figure 164. Both the previous blows came after long dominant preparations. The prominent thematic elements during these preparatory dominants have many factors in common—in particular the rhythmic profile of the heroic fanfares and the generally exalted tone of these passages (see example 11-3). In addition the preparation for the first hammer blow at Figure 129 culminates in a step-wise melodic descent (beginning on $d''$ in the trumpet at Figure 128 descending, via the horns, to $d'$ at Figure 129). Against this the upper strings rise in contrary motion.

Many of these features are duplicated in the passage immediately prior to Figure 164. Mahler clearly evokes the exalted, major-key atmosphere of the dominant pedals prior to the first two hammer blows and the inverted dominant pedal here ($e''$ in the first violins and flute) brings with it the expectation that we are approaching a critical structural landmark. As the following example shows the theme beginning at Figure 163 shares the rhythmic profile of the various heroic fanfares prior to Figures 129 and 140. Finally, Mahler duplicates the same contrary motion convergence on the tonic that we saw prior to Figure 129.

**Example 11-3** Related themes VI-iv, 328—31, 469—77 and 765—72.

![Example 11-3](image)

If Mahler had given the third hammer blow at Figure 164, and the precedent set by the passages prior to the previous blows suggests this to have been the most logical course of action, then the weight it would have accrued in the context of so important a tonal resolution would certainly have destroyed Mahler's long-range plan of the hammer-blows diminishing in intensity. Perhaps this is why, in order to avoid the effect of diminishing intensity of the hammer-blows, that Mahler initially placed the third blow at bar 783. But such is the degree that the third blow is implied by events leading up to Figure 164 that to make it explicit ten bars later could well have struck the composer as unnecessary, or even worse, tautological.

One could be accused of facetiously taking up the role of devil’s advocate
on this issue if it were not for the fact that Mahler's decision to excise the third hammer blow is thoroughly defensible on musical grounds. For the purpose of this study it is a minor point. The ordering of the central movements is likewise not a paramount consideration. The thrust of this chapter has been to show how Mahler creates the possibility for a progressive tonal scheme which he then dramatically discards and ultimately, the ordering of the central movements does not greatly affect this. As with other works, the essence of the symphonic drama is primarily located in the outer frame.

In the end, Del Mar's case for placing the Andante second is certainly more convincing than his emotionally-wrought plea for the restoration of the third hammer blow. But I will persevere with the order which places the Scherzo second so that I might offer some explanation why conductors continue to adhere to this order in the face of scholarly arguments to the contrary.

Given the nature of the Scherzo, placing it second at least has the weight of historical precedent on its side. It is a parodistic Scherzo, one that reflects the first movement as if in a distorted mirror. The heroic quality of the march is now disfigured and limping in 3/4 time. The first movement's march theme is reduced to its crudest essentials, a relentless dotted rhythm and falling minor third.

Example 11-4 VI-i, 2—7 and VI-ii, 2—6.

Tonally, the resumption of A minor comes as a distinct shock after the breakthrough to A major and the Alma theme at the end of the first movement.

The precedent for the parodistic scherzo has already been discussed in this thesis, in works by Beethoven such as the *Hammerklavier*. Others examples can be found in his Ninth Symphony and the Opus 130 Quartet and Brahms uses it in his Opus 8 Piano Trio. All of these examples place the parodistic scherzo second so that the object of the parody is still fresh in the memory. But these parodies reflect more than the surface characteristics of the previous movement alone. The Scherzo of the *Hammerklavier* for example, reflects the conflict between B and B flat (IVβ and I) that had been the focus of the climax of the first movement recapitulation. Here the Scherzo reproduces the tonal scheme from the first movement in all its essentials. More importantly it reproduces a tonal scheme that failed to produce a significant background tonicization of the tonic A in the first movement. As such both Mahler's and Beethoven's scherzos act directly to postpone the deeper-level tonicization
processes until later in the work—an act entirely consistent with a compositional aim of placing the symphonic weight in the finale. As we shall see later the Andante goes some way to providing the necessary tonicization processes. But if the Andante is placed second, it pushes a considerable weight of resolution on to the ensuing Scherzo. This, in turn, de-emphasizes the Finale, an action that one might expect of the composer already fearful of the last movement's "dark omen".15

The specific points of similarity between the first movement and Scherzo are immediately apparent. The trio section is given first in F, then later in the key of D, reflecting the use of both those keys for the second subject, the "Alma" theme, in the first movement exposition and recapitulation. In the first movement the tonic eventually assimilates the contrasting Alma theme. The Scherzo's coda likewise takes over the Trio material. But whereas the final statement of the Alma theme is engendered with a sense of exhilaration in the closing pages, the transformation of the trio theme is rendered pathetic and hopeless, in the minor mode.

Example 11-5

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI-ii</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1—97</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98—172</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173—182</td>
<td>V of d</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>183—198</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>iβ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>199—272</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>273—344</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345—353</td>
<td>f#</td>
<td>ivα</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>354—370</td>
<td>eb</td>
<td>ivβ of IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>371—445</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is also the same tendency within this movement towards subdominant bias even in the tonic sections such as between Figures 65 and 69. D minor (iv) takes over from A minor from Figure 65. After touching on B flat major (IVβ) at bar 45, we move towards E flat major (IVβ of IVβ) at Figure 68. But the attempt to escape in the subdominant direction is undermined—at bar 60 the harmony turns from E flat to C minor and A minor is re-established at bar 65. It is a familiar sequence, one that was used in the coda of the first movement, moving through the tonicizing sequence Eb-C-A or (vβ of vβ)—vβ—i.

The same sequence occurs at the end of the Scherzo on a somewhat larger scale. The second trio section in D major, then moves on to an F sharp pedal at its conclusion at Figure 95. Once again the implied tonal direction is further in the subdominant direction away from the tonic A. The F sharp pedal appears to have a dominant function and it eventually resolves as vβ—i to E flat.

15Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler, Memories and Letters*, 100.
minor (ivβ of IV). But the music observes the twice-repeated precedent from the first movement—the bass descends to C natural at bar 370 and A minor is regained via a vβ—i bass progression. The same tonicizing progression Eb-C-A has now been conspicuous at several structurally significant points and it continues to be prominent in the Andante.

The Scherzo and the first movement are indisputably linked, and it has important psychological ramifications for the entire work. Despite the A minor key of the first movement, the tone is one of heroic determination and vigour (it is marked Allegro energico, ma non troppo). The Scherzo implies a different view of the same subject because of the similarity of their tonal schemes. But the Scherzo is bitter, at times close to the feeling of disgust that Mahler associated with the Scherzo of the Second Symphony. 16 Most of all in the closing pages the Scherzo is pathetically despairing in its outlook.

The two movements represent the two sides of the modal dichotomy that is ubiquitous in the foreground texture—typified by the tonic major to minor progression that is an integral part of the fate motive whenever it is heard. Clearly, all the above inter-relationships register more powerfully when the two movements are juxtaposed. But it is even more important that the two movements follow each other because together they hold back from providing a deeper level tonicization of A. The tonicizing sequence Eb-C-A in the Scherzo prepares us for a large-scale development of this sequence in the Andante. As long as the Scherzo comes second, the symphony follows a logical pattern of expansion.

Example 11-6

Symphony No. 6 (third movement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>local relative to A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—55     Eb   I  IIα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56—99    e-E iv-IVβ v-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100—114  Eb   I  Vβ of Vβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115—123  C   IVα  Vβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>124—145  A  IVα of IVα  I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146—151  e# IVβ of IVα  iα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152—172  B   Iβ  II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173—201  Eb   I  IIα</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Andante continues to exhibit the subdominant bias that has already been a feature of preceding movements. However, the first tonal shift is an axial one to G minor (iα) at bar 21, which returns to E flat at Figure 48 providing a stable, closed first tonic area. The episodes in the rondo structure begin in the

keys of E minor at Figure 51 and C (separated by a short reprise of E flat at bar 100) at Figure 56. Both keys are subdominant axis members (ivβ and IVα respectively). The second and more developmental episode from bar 115 initiates a tonal sequence delving further in the subdominant direction. This produces the now familiar Eb-C-A sequence.

Edward Seckerson in a recent review that defended the placing of the Scherzo second did so because he felt that it "... somehow heightens the precarious fragility of the Andante."¹⁷ This is certainly the impression I gain from the central section where the tonicizing sequence takes place. In the context of the preceding A minor movements, E flat has always represented a precarious tonal centre, one that indicates the farthest point of expansion in the subdominant direction away from A minor, but also one that can be reinterpreted, initiating the Eb-C-A tonicizing sequence. On the one hand it appears to deny the tonicity of A, on the other it is poised to confirm it. At this point in the Andante the music assigns a Vβ of Vβ function to E flat, a move which makes even more remote any hope of a progressive tonal scheme that will escape to the subdominant. The inevitability of the A minor finale hangs over this central passage like the presence of a sobering reality amidst a beautiful illusion. The solo violin that closed the Scherzo in quiet despair resurfaces here with a similarly appoggiatura-laden theme (bar 119).

It is important to note that Mahler deliberately exacerbates the sense of fragility surrounding the tonic E flat major. He does not provide a tonicizing dominant of any substance beyond a foreground level. Such is the weakness of E flat's tonicity that there seems no real demand to return to it. The grand climactic return after the second episode comes in the key of B major (Iβ).

Little of this sense of foreboding accompanies the recurrence of the tonicizing progression Eb-C-A if the Andante is played second. There is nothing to fear in a return to the key of A if the movements are ordered this way. The first movement ended in exhilarating triumph and A major, so there is every expectation that the symphony will involve progressive modality and end in the major. The Scherzo annihilates such expectations and in so doing makes the prospect of the return to the tonic a matter of some trepidation. It gives the tonal processes in the Andante considerable weight, which they otherwise do not possess if it is placed second. Without the weight of foreboding, the Andante is relegated more to the order of a contrasting interlude such as the second movement of the Second Symphony.

The tonicizing Eb-C-A progression is not isolated to this one central episode the following diagram shows how the progression is magnified across the Andante and into the Finale.

Example 11-7
Tonicization processes, VI-iii— and VI-iv
Andante

<p>| | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>c#</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Eb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vβ</td>
<td>Vβ</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vβ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vβ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from this that the C minor Introduction to the finale is very much a focal point, the most important manifestation of Vβ that the work has produced. The whole passage (1—114) also illustrates a number of axial phenomena at work at a foreground level, mirroring the larger axial progressions that tonicize A minor. The German sixth on a pedal C bass with which the movement opens strongly implies C minor, but ends up functioning, not as bVI#6 of C minor but as Vα#6 of A minor. The implication of C minor is finally realized after this false start and Vβ as a large-scale dominant preparation begins in earnest from bar 49. The slow chorale modulates to the dominant minor of C announced by the fate motive at Figure 107. This provides C minor with its own internal tonicization process. The return to C minor is also articulated by the fate motive.

The short Allegro moderato section that follows slowly unfolds the dominant function of the C minor introduction at a foreground level. From bar 107 the bass begins to alternate between C and E or Vβ and V. The harmony coalesces into an augmented triad from bar 112, an expression of the dominant axis C-E-Ab which can equally represent a V, Vβ or Vα to I cadence, (or all three simultaneously for that matter). A minor is thus established with a weight of resolution second to none in the work so far—there is a definite awareness of having arrived at the work's centre of gravity.

As in Beethoven's Hammerklavier, the most important tonicization process comes between the third and fourth movements, situated in a slow introduction. The exposition of the Allegro proper does not contain a tonicizing dominant, but there is now much less doubt over the question of tonicity. But Mahler can continue the course of his tragic drama by attempting to escape what is now almost inescapable. Contrary to normal sonata-form practice, the second tonal area is in the subdominant, a choice that reflects the tendency towards the subdominant in both the Scherzo and first movement. The childlike innocence of the Scherzo's trio, the "Alma" theme and the sanctuary of the mountain music (cow-bell episodes), have all counterbalanced the darker A minor music, and they have been given subdominant associations on subsequent appearances. Here the key of D major takes over one of the introduction's themes, but at Figure 118 there is an "... enthusiastic upsurge of the
whole orchestra . . .". an ecstatic passage that implores for (and indeed almost promises) deliverance from A minor. This passage is crucial in later developments. Although the broader context is D major, the theme from Figure 118 is clearly in G major or, the subdominant of the subdominant. Within the second tonal area there is a mild structural dissonance, a I—IV—I progression relative to D.

Example 11-8 Symphony No. 6 (fourth movement).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example 11-8 Symphony No. 6 (fourth movement).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1—8   c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9—48   a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49—113 c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPOSITION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>114—190 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>191—228 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOPMENT.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>229—270 d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>271—277 F#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>278—287 B♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>288—335 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>336—363 d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>364—380 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>381—396 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>397—414 c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>415—440 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>441—457 G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>458—478 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>479—503 g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>504—520 V of d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECAPITULATION.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>521—574 c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>575—611 B♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>612—641 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CODA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>642—727 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>728—772 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>773—789 a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>790—822 a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When this theme returns at Figure 124 in the development, it is transposed to D, and in so doing provides a sense of resolution. The development section has already centered on D minor, restating much of the introductory material. From Figure 123 the music touches on the other subdominant axis members F sharp and B flat. The resolution of the G major theme in conjunction with the overall subdominant focus of the development up to this point once again fuels the possibility of a tonal progression to D. Certainly there is a feeling of imminent climax after bar 288.

The first appearance of the G major theme resolved back to D at bar 217. It seemed to be moving towards a summarizing statement before it was cut off in mid flight by the restated introduction that heralded the development section. Here in the development section, the corresponding passage is greatly expanded—what was originally 24 bars in length has now doubled. But what is more, the entire section takes place on a dominant pedal of D major. Mahler builds up enormous pressure through this prolonged dominant, until, at bar 334 we are poised to discharge this energy in an emphatic cadence in D major.

It makes for a highly unusual structure—A minor has received its most forceful tonicization process in the introduction and exposition, which would seem to settle the question of tonicity. In direct parallel however, the subdominant is established here as if it were the tonic, almost in total defiance of the earlier tonicization processes. In so doing, the music succeeds in reviving the hope of a progressive tonal scheme resolving to the subdominant, with all the attending implications of escape from the darker A minor music. Primarily, it is the ecstatic quality of the Alma theme that the passage aspires to. But instead of the usual haven that the subdominant provided in the first two movements, the resolution to the subdominant produces the calamitous hammer blow.

In the last movement he described himself and his downfall or, as he later said, that of his hero: 'It is the hero, on whom fall three blows of fate, the last of which fells him as a tree is felled.' Those were his words.19

The second part of the development section, as if reeling from the experience of the outcome of the cadence to the subdominant, progressively moves in the opposite direction, that is, in the direction of the dominant. The music progresses through A and F minor (I and iβ) before C minor is reached. This is followed by another move in the dominant direction to G (V of vβ). A major appears heroically at Figure 139, but quickly asserts itself as the dominant of the D, the key where the first hammer blow took place. There are enough thematic similarities with the passage prior to the first hammer blow to imbue the corresponding passage here with a painful sense of inevitability—which is tragically confirmed by the second hammer blow.

It is an unusual characteristic of this movement that it continues to gravitate to the subdominant. The deceptive cadence that coincides with the second

19Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler, Memories and Letters*, 70.
hammer blow takes us to G minor, which could act as the dominant of C minor and perhaps precipitate a return to the movement's introduction. But from Figure 142, we are poised on a dominant pedal of D. It is a remarkable piece of dovetailing where at the point of recapitulation, the C minor introduction is superimposed over the D pedal that results from the cadence. It is a deflating experience as the subdominant which has strained to assert itself as tonic is yet again swallowed up. D becomes II\textsuperscript{9/7} in C minor. But placing D at the root of the German sixth chord has little or no effect on its functional status—both this chord and the bVI\textsuperscript{6} that opened the movement function as dominant preparations for the key of C minor.

The movement's introduction is given a full recapitulation here, although this time the key of C minor is not interrupted as it was by the tonic at bar 9. There is one last subdominant event before the tonic is regained, that being the passage in B flat major (IVβ) from Figure 147. This passage reaches its climax at bar 600, but a dominant pedal at Figure 150 slips down a semitone to a dominant pedal of the tonic A major. The tonicity of A is totally assured and from here to the end of the movement, conflict over modality is the primary source of drama.

Despite the eventual concentric tonal outcome of the Sixth Symphony, Mahler still proceeds with compositional tactics familiar from his progressive tonality works. The first movement avoids tonicization at the deeper levels and emphatic foreground articulations of tonicity are kept to a minimum. The use of an axis member (Iβ) as the second tonal area and the avoidance of any prolonged dominant preparation or teleological tonal sequence at the end of the development, ensures that sufficient doubt remains over tonicity. As a result, the possibility of a tonal progression to D is credible—certainly the nature of the thematic material heard in the subdominant areas offers a positive alternative to that of the A minor sections.

The tonal drama in the latter stages of the work once again involves subdominant bias, but the action takes place in a radically altered climate. The tonicity of A is very much assured by the tonal processes at the beginning of the finale. Two of the three movements leading up to the finale are in the key of A minor, and, even though their tonicization processes are muted, A minor is indisputably the main contender. The hero of the finale still searches for an escape in the subdominant direction, only to be struck down at the precise moment that the subdominant is about to be tonicized.

Far from retreating into a safe haven of classicism, Mahler's concentric scheme has merely been the result of a shift in dramatic emphasis. Instead of dramatizing the transfer of tonicity from the initial tonic to a rival key, Mahler dramatizes the systematic destruction of the rival key's bid to claim tonicity, leaving the original tonic as a tragic inevitability.
Chapter 12
Symphonies 7, 10 and Das Lied von der Erde
Part I: Symphony No. 7

With the Seventh Symphony, it appears at first glance that Mahler has returned to the model of the Fifth Symphony. There are a number of identical features—both are five-movement works with a progressive tonal scheme based on the rising semitone, and both culminate in energetic rondo finales suffused with diatonic, major-key gaiety. The considerable amount of criticism this work has received has partly been due to this apparent lack of individuality, a fault that is compounded by the fact that its finale is not widely held to be as convincing as its counterpart in the Fifth. Deryck Cooke goes so far as to level the charge of "Kapellmeistermusik" at this movement.

As I have already mentioned, Mahler's work after the Fifth tends to be concentric in its tonal organization rather than progressive and there is no doubting this with regard to the Sixth, Eight and Tenth Symphonies. But to make such a claim with regard to the Seventh seems to ignore the obvious facts. However, in the course of this chapter it will become clear that the Seventh is not a thoroughly progressive tonal work but one that evinces strong elements of concentric tonality.

In its tonal structure, the Seventh is more closely linked with the Tenth than the Fifth Symphony. The crux of the tonal drama in Symphonies 7 and 10 is the contest between tonal rivals from the same axis—or to put it another way, they both seek to transfer tonicity from the original tonic to one of the other tonic axis members. The Seventh is successful in transferring tonicity from E minor to C major—the Tenth threatens to dislodge F sharp major from the tonic position and to replace it with D only to have F sharp reassert its position in the later stages of the finale. Mahler in fact envisaged concluding the Tenth in the key of B flat major, simply by recomposing the music from Figure 322 to the close. This does not so much indicate indecision but rather the potential for multiple outcomes based on the innate interchangeability of the axis members. The tonal preparation leading up to the finale, that is movements 1 to 4, could endorse any of the tonic axis members as tonic. Mahler could change his mind without jeopardizing the integrity of the preceding movements, something that he could not possibly do in his early progressive tonality works. To conclude the Fifth Symphony in D flat major, the original tonic, would be a musical nonsense.

3 Deryck Cooke et al.,"Introduction to the MS and the Performing Version" in Gustav Mahler, a Performing version of the Draft for the Tenth Symphony, prepared by Deryck Cooke, (London, 1976), xviii.
It would seem that there are different tonal processes at work in Symphonies 7 and 10, which brings an altogether separate category into our existing definition of progressive tonality. I have already put forward the proposition in chapter 5 of creating a separate category for works of this nature, labelling them as examples of axial progressive tonality as distinct from trans-axial progressive tonality. To reiterate what was said in that earlier chapter, an axial progressive scheme shifts from one tonic axis member to another, whereas a trans-axial scheme progresses to a key belonging to a different axis altogether. If we draw an analogy with colours, a trans-axial progression, such as in Mahler's early progressive tonality works (Symphonies 2, 4 and 5), changes colour completely—whereas a work like the Seventh (and Das Lied von der Erde also) changes the intensity and shade but not the basic colour itself.

The Schumann Quartet in A minor Op. 41 no. 1, discussed in chapters 3 and 4, first brought forth the need for this separate categorization. The tonal progression in that work was from F to A, and is therefore an axial progressive scheme. It is perhaps no surprise that one of the first excursions into progressive tonality in absolute music involved this intermediate step based on axial rivalry, for despite the tonal progression there remains an element of concentric thinking. This is because the two rival keys never change function. They are always members of the tonic axis, no matter which of the two keys is victorious. The corollary of this is that the dominant axis is also fixed. In contrast, a trans-axial scheme changes the functional status of the keys it engages, so that the key that initially appears to be tonic (G major in Mahler's Fourth for example) is revealed to be a dominant (Vβ of E).

The axial progressive schemes in the two symphonies under discussion in this chapter exploit the axis system by focussing on the possibility for multiple resolution of one dominant axis member. The key of B functioning as V of E minor for example can also function as Vβ to A flat or Vα to C. The first two movements of the Seventh focus very much on two of the dominant to tonic resolutions the key of B can undertake, the two options being V—i in E minor or Vα—I in C major.

Just as in Mahler's works involving trans-axial progressive tonality, one of the primary considerations is to ensure the initial tonic is not established too emphatically so as to allow the transfer of tonicity later. This would appear difficult in the Seventh with such a large-scale dominant upbeat resolving to E minor at the beginning of the work. But Mahler is able to undermine the tonicity of E in two ways. The first is by exploiting the inherently close relationship between axis members which keeps C's claim to tonicity to the fore. The second is by avoiding resolution and avoiding any prolonged focus on the tonic key. This is achieved by spending a disproportionate amount of time in the dominant B and the other dominant axis keys G and E flat. The tonic E minor is given very little time in which to articulate its own tonicity.
John Williamson draws a parallel with the dominant bias in the First Symphony.4 We have already seen in that work how dominant bias could be employed to de-emphasize the tonic and delay a conclusive articulation of tonicity until the finale, making the final act of confirmation a highly dramatic event. Here Mahler uses dominant bias so that he is not forced to disclose which of the tonic axis members he will eventually choose as tonic. A third

method whereby Mahler transfers tonicity is through the manipulation of tonal sequences, a process that will be explored later in this chapter.

The B minor Introduction functions as a dominant upbeat to the E minor exposition and to do this, it must first avoid tonicization processes that would suggest that B minor is the tonic. Tonicity is avoided in two ways. Firstly, the very opening involves an impure triad ($i^\#6_3$), followed by a parallel whole-tone shift of this chord, a move that fails to indicate tonicity at all. Secondly, the use of the flattened second at the point of cadence (bar 17) suggests the possibility of an eventual E minor outcome. The cadence is in fact a mixture of $bII-i$ and $V-i$ in B minor.

The indeterminate B minor is then interrupted by a march theme at bar 19.

Example 12-2 VII-i 19—27.
The harmony, although consisting of diatonic chords does not suggest of itself any governing tonal centre, but the upper voice leading traces out an ascending scale in E minor. The octave ascent from \( b' \) to \( b'' \) is extended to \( d'' \) and this acts as a pivot. The note belongs to the dominant axis relative to E, strictly speaking the leading note. But this dominant function is transformed from a leading note to a dominant fifth, linking up with the E flat in both the upper and lower parts in bars 25-6. The outcome is a resolution to A flat minor.

It is a crucial sequence with regard to the progressive tonal scheme. The banal march at bar 19 is stamped with an identity—a specific tonal sequence. The B minor introduction, which is already implied to be a probable dominant, proceeds to confirm that status by tracing the eventual tonic in its upper register. At the end of this process we are diverted from the expected resolution to E minor, and a resolution to A flat minor takes its place. The sequence then is \( b \rightarrow (e \text{ implied}) \rightarrow a \ b \), or in functional terms, \( v \rightarrow (i \text{ implied}) \rightarrow i \alpha \). This will have important ramifications in the recapitulation.

With the arrival of A flat minor, we are given a version of the principal theme of the exposition. But it is important to note that this is a unique version, unique because of where it is pitched in relation to the tonic triad. Example 12-3 VII-i, 27-28 and 50-51.

This particular version is not heard again until the point in the recapitulation immediately after the banal march theme. What is important at this stage is that this particular version of the theme articulates A flat, the wrong key. E minor, the key a major third lower than A flat minor is the implied tonic. After B minor is briefly regained from bar 32, we move to a more emphatic dominant preparation for the coming E minor. With the arrival of E minor at Figure 6, brings the sequence set in motion by the march to a point of completion, confirming our originally expectations. E minor is indeed the tonic and so the full sequence is \( b \rightarrow (e \text{ implied}) \rightarrow a \ b \rightarrow e \) (confirmed).

E minor is given some degree of security once it arrives. The first paragraph, from Figures 6 to 8 confirms the tonic cadentially and then ends on the dominant. As expected, this is used as a springboard for the second paragraph, but it is from this point that the axial rivalry between E and C becomes
apparent. The main theme in the cellos, violas and horns at bar 65 has its first phrase slightly altered. Instead of descending to $a$ in its third bar, it now descends only as far as $c'$. This would not be unusual if were not for fact that $c'$ here forms the root of a C minor triad causing an abrupt sense of tonal dislocation. The shift to C minor plunges the music into uncertainty and it only finds its bearings once again when the rising chromatic bass from Figure 10 cadences on to the dominant B major at bar 80.

Here we have a new theme, one that reflects the tenor horn theme of the B minor Introduction, because of the added sixth chord with which it begins. The horn counter-theme parodies the march theme from bar 19 and the melodic cells of the first phrase are built exclusively on the interval of the fourth, recalling the transition passage before the E minor exposition (bar 45-9).

The substance of the B major theme is a curious amalgam of material from the B minor introduction and as such does not imply the usual sonata second subject but a kind of compressed recapitulation, assimilating material from the introduction. This is dominant bias in action and it performs the two functions mentioned at the outset of this chapter. Firstly, it disrupts the progress of the E minor music in the exposition. After fifty bars of dominant preparation Mahler quits the tonic after only seventeen bars—the result being that the tonic is not permitted the necessary duration in order to consolidate its position. Secondly, by implying something of a return to the point of origin, the theme, while not disputing the fact that B is the dominant, disputes the sole claim of E as the logical resolution of this dominant. At bars 91-2 the bass slides up from B to C juxtaposing these two chords. This gives a fleeting impression of a $V_\alpha-I$ progression in C a progression that comes into play with more assurance before the true second subject area.

In the music that follows the apparent $V_\alpha-I$ cadence in C at bar 91, F sharp remains a prominent melodic feature, so in fact the tonality shifts to G major, which is cadentially ratified at bar 96. As such, the $V_\alpha-I$ cadence is revealed to be a fleeting foreground event, but the passage has still succeeded in exposing B as a possible dominant of C. It is important to remember that the previous tonic section exposed the E—C rivalry and the fact that the ensuing section has exposed the true dominant of both keys further entrenches this rivalry. Certainly the E—C rivalry most claims our attentions and the dominant, far from being the focal point as might be expected in a sonata-form movement, is a secondary consideration—its function as a tonicizing agent is taken for granted. As the movement progresses it is the question of which tonic axis member the dominant will resolve to that constitutes the crux of the symphonic argument. We are equally aware of the dominant as a disruptive free agent, that keeps the initial tonic E at arms length not allowing it to gain a firm grip on tonicity.

The principal theme returns at bar 99, though E minor is not emphatically
stated (it opens on an A minor harmony), and so this passage has a transitional quality, a fact that is confirmed by the dominant pedal at Figure 13 which appears to press us forward towards new goals. Clearly, the regained principal theme is not the primary objective here and we feel that an event of greater structural significance is imminent.

Over the course of the exposition, it is curious how the dominant keeps persisting and that the return to E minor seems incapable of providing a satisfactory resolution to discharge the tension. It seems as if the dominant is seeking a resolution other than to the tonic E minor. Given the axial rivalry that has existed throughout the exposition so far, the desired resolution must certainly be to the key of C. Once familiar with the work it becomes an inevitability. We no longer perceive B major as V of E minor but rather as Vα of C major. Nor is this exclusively a submerged middleground event, the actual cadence that establishes C major at bar 117 is a Vα—I cadence.

Now we experience the kind of thematic duality that is usually associated with sonata form, with the Mit großem Schwung theme reminiscent of the "Alma" theme from the preceding symphony. But it is important to note that such thematic duality is largely absent from the material given in the dominant. With the arrival of C major, Mahler is articulating the dichotomy at the heart of his work, the axial rivalry between E and C. At the same time, the usual sonata dramatization of the tonicization process (the provision of structural dominants) is also active, but decidedly muted. What we experience is a concurrent axial conflict between E and C with the sonata tonicization functioning almost as a sub-plot. In the end, we take the tonicization process much more for granted and readily accept that this is a work that will involve a concentric tonal scheme. We know that the axis around B is fixed to having a dominant function and that the axis around E is fixed to a tonic function. The principal concern is which of the tonic axis members will gain ultimate superiority.

The march theme from the introduction follows the C major theme, this time the upper voice-leading spells out G minor or v of C. For the second time in the exposition, the dominant of C is emphasized which goes some way to balancing the emphasis on E's dominant. At bar 145, E minor takes over once again with an inversion of the original principal theme. It is an extended re-statement of the original E minor section, the first paragraph (bar 145—62) establishing the tonic before again moving on to the dominant. The second paragraph reintroduces the E minor-C minor dichotomy (bar 165) as before. This clearly indicates that E minor's return has not overcome the rivalry of C for tonicity.

Following the same chronological sequence, the B major theme resumes at bar 174, this time in the minor. In terms of structure the exposition resembles that of the Second Symphony much more than anything in Part 1 of the Fifth. Like the Second, the movement here involves a double-exposition structure.
where the first statement involves an axial tonal dichotomy (c—E in Symphony II and c—C here). The second statement involves the more traditional sonata-exposition progression of i—v, which, in the case of both works, sets the stage for a background level tonicization process in the development section.

Although this closing statement is primarily a restatement of material heard earlier in the exposition, there is a gradual intrusion of elements from the B minor introduction. This is particularly noticeable at bars 180-1 and 192-5. So the summary nature of this final section incorporates the entire movement so far and not just the allegro exposition. In so doing, Mahler articulates the fact that the introduction and B minor are far from a redundant structural antecedent to the exposition. The Introduction will be prominent again in the recapitulation where it will delay the resolution to the tonic and further hold the issue of tonicity suspended. Consistent with the conclusion of the exposition, the end of the recapitulation will also bear the intrusion of elements from the Introduction, but on an even larger scale.

The development falls into two sections, the first developing each of the main thematic groups mainly by placing them in different tonal contexts, the second focussing more on transformation techniques. Tonally the whole section revolves around the dominant and its axis partners maintaining the level of dominant bias experienced in the exposition. B minor continues after the exposition leading, via E flat at bar 216, to the next section in C. The theme which characterized the dominant in the exposition is then developed at bar 245 in G major. The second section begins in E flat major with a dramatic transformation of the march theme from bar 19 of the Introduction. This appears again at Figure 38 in the same key—a G minor episode bridging the gap. Finally we move via an emphatic dominant preparation back to B major. The development is framed by substantial episodes in the dominant, enclosing material that focuses on the other dominant axis members, particularly G and E flat.

More than any other development section Mahler has composed, this one provides such an emphatic structural dominant that a concentric tonal scheme is practically guaranteed. The only conceivable progressive tonal scheme that could result now is one where the dominant bias, which is certainly considerable, might elevate B major to tonic status. This possibility can be entertained less and less as the movement continues and the large scale structural dominant of the development section resolves back to E in the recapitulation. Dominant bias continues and the possibility that B is in fact the tonic reaches a peak around Figure 42. B major, instead of turning itself into the dominant of E as would be expected at this point, reaffirms its own dominant. At Figure 42 we are poised to resolve to B major for a second time and bar 338 sees the return of the B minor Introduction. This is consistent with the extreme dominant bias experienced so far, but we now have the expectation,
Based on the chronological sequence of events in the exposition, that E minor will eventually return. But even though the resolution back to E seems assured, this protracted reaffirmation of the dominant still robs the tonic E of sufficient time in which to assert its own tonicity.

Finally the tonic resolution is attained at bar 373. There are three entries of the principal theme, each progressively involving more influence from G (C major bars 397 and 415). The dominant theme reappears at bar 427, unassimilated by the tonic key, thus continuing the tactic of dominant bias even into the recapitulation. E minor does not resurface until the coda. Like the Sixth Symphony first movement, the second subject is both truncated and transposed to a key other than the tonic. The act of truncation can be justified by the fact that both themes are the focal point elsewhere in their respective movements; the Alma theme in the Sixth dominates the coda, the corresponding theme here has already been the focus of the B major conclusion of the development section and it is also incorporated into the recapitulated B minor Introduction.

But the choice of key has more important ramifications—the G major here is yet another case of dominant bias. But it is strictly speaking the true dominant of C and so its presence here can only exacerbate the tonal rivalry between E and C (just as the presence of G major passages did in the exposition). It marks the first step towards the tonicization of C and the relegation of E to a subordinate status.

At bar 487 the march tune from bar 19 of the Introduction returns. This time the upper voice-leading outlines an octave ascent in C minor, just as, at the corresponding point in the Introduction, the upper register had outlined E minor. In the Introduction there ensued an axial substitution of A flat minor before the implication of E minor was borne out by the exposition. The tonal sequence here in the recapitulation is identical but it implies that C minor will be the eventual tonic and so, by implication, the E minor at bar 495 is an axial substitute for the tonic, not the tonic itself.

Example 12-4 VII-i. Corresponding tonal sequences.

When discussing the A flat minor episode in the Introduction, I noted that it used a unique version of the principal theme, identical in most particulars of rhythm and melodic contour, but unique because of where it is nestled relative to the tonic chord. The theme in this unique configuration returns here in the same role. The precedent is set in the Introduction that this version of the theme (see example 12-3) is associated with a tonic substitute not the true tonic itself. Here the sequence is expanded, to the point where it exceeds the
movement's boundaries—the sequence being completed in the second movement.

The effect of these unique tonal processes is particular to this symphony. There is a sense of brilliance in the movement’s conclusion, because of the grandeur of the invention, the concentration of important motivic material (especially the interval of the fourth) and the translucent clarity of the orchestration. But underlying this is a equally strong sense that the coda embodies a sense of defeat, or at best, its victory is hollow and without justification. The tonicity of E minor is exultant in the way that one would expect at the end of a sonata-form movement, but the climactic statement of tonicity comes precisely when the background tonal processes have pronounced the end of its reign.

It is not difficult to understand why the movement’s inner programme has been interpreted as suggesting twilight, clearly a reaction to the conflict between "... sombre and glittering sonorities..." The ensuing Nachtmusik movements and the C major daylight of the finale makes it an even more logical assumption. These sequential processes that rob E of its to tonicity, certainly confirms this interpretation. Just as the daylight gives its most dazzling display in the moments before it is extinguished, so does the initial tonic key of E minor.

The second movement fulfills our precedent-based expectations in tonicizing C minor. Tonally, there is little complexity in this movement. The tonic is reinforced by the Iβ pairing of A flat major, analogous to the E—C pairing in the first movement. A flat remains subsidiary throughout however and there is never any implication that tonicity will be transferred by repeating the same sequence of events that transferred tonicity from E to C. The most remarkable passage in the movement comes immediately before the return of the principal theme at bar 211. This involves an abrupt shift from the tonic chord of C minor to octave B naturals, from which ensues an eerie passage that evokes the Introduction to the first movement, in as much as it fixes on B as its tonal centre and maintains phrygian characteristics. Like the Introduction to the first movement, the phrygian element implies a dominant function, ordinarily to E. Mahler is clearly reactivating the axial rivalry of the first movement, this time E intruding into a C minor context—the reverse being the case of first movement. It must also be remembered that the focus of this axial rivalry in the first movement was the role of B and the ambiguity created by the dual role it could perform; V to E or Vα to C. Once the rivalry is reactivated Mahler emphatically resolves it in favour of C as the tonic. The point of resolution involves a Vα#5—I cadence at bar 223.

Any lingering doubt over the tonicity of C is substantially laid to rest by this act of reaffirmation between bars 211 and 223. The work, which has always

---

5Deryck Cooke, *Gustav Mahler, An Introduction to his Music*, 89.
been concentric at least in terms of the C-E-Ab axis holding tonicity, has now indicated the primary tonic within that axis. Nothing occurs in the ensuing movements that can dislodge C from this position. The Scherzo is a tonally one-dimensional movement in D minor that sits somewhat independently, neither confirming nor contradicting C's tonicity. The fourth movement is in the subdominant F major, and while in an axis system it is not inconceivable that it could function as IVb of E, the movement presents nothing to support such an interpretation. At more than one point however, the foreground processes intimate the imminent return of C major. Chief among these is the passage from bar 312, where the increase in rhythmic animation anticipates the Finale, especially the rushing string semiquavers at the end of the Finale's first section (bar 47). At bar 331, after a stepwise descent from C in the bass, we are poised on the dominant of C major, but the cadence is interrupted and F major is regained via a II—I cadence.

Example 12-5  Symphony No. 7 (second movement
1—29 V of c  v of i
30—82 c  i
83—140 Ab  Iβ
141—160 c  i
161—178 f  iv
179—188 V of c  V of i
189—210 c  i
211—222 b  vα
223—261 c  i
262—294 Ab  Iβ
295—343 c  i

The finale provides an emphatic restatement of C's tonicity, but it is crucial to remember that here tonicity is a much more settled affair, certainly relative to works such as the Fourth or Fifth Symphonies. In those earlier works, an emphatic statement of the tonic was imperative to resolve the work's tensions. The finale of the Seventh is not under the same duress because the tonal tensions exerted by the previous movements have been largely resolved as early as the second movement. In addition, the functional role of each individual axis has been settled from the outset. This is not to say that the Seventh is not a finale-oriented work—a statement of the tonic is still required, in as much as the Symphony needs a statement of similar proportions to the first movement in order to balance the overall structure. In connection with the issue of tonicity, there still remains some thematic loose ends from the first movement that must be redressed before a full resolution can be obtained.

The most important issue still to be resolved resulted from the two corresponding sequences in the first movement. In the first sequence the tonicity of
E, implied by the march theme but interrupted by A flat minor, was confirmed when E minor articulated a more stable version of the A flat minor theme as the principal allegro theme. (This is a ploy that Mahler also used in the Third Symphony. The version of the principal theme given in A flat minor at bar 27 (like the eight-horn opening in the Third) is perceived as a dissonance because it did not itself outline the tonic triad. The latter version of the theme in E minor (bar 50), like the F major theme at Figure 23 in the Third, is perceived as a resolution because it outlines the tonic triad). Although C minor was implied as the true tonic in the corresponding sequence in the recapitulation, and was subsequently confirmed in the second movement, the new tonic never confirmed its position by articulating the first movement's principal theme. The cyclic return of this theme in the finale culminating in a dramatic version of it in C minor at bar 476 is not a mere "conjuring trick", but a necessary move to ensure a full resolution of all the work's dramatic tensions.

Example 12-6 Symphony No. 7 (fifth movement).

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
1-6 & e \quad i\alpha \\
7-52 & C \quad I \\
53-78 & Ab \quad I\beta \\
79-105 & C \quad I \\
106-119 & D \quad II \\
120-156 & C \quad I \\
157-196 & a \quad iv\alpha \\
197-219 & C \quad I \\
220-240 & A \quad IV\alpha \\
241-248 & Db \quad IV\beta \\
249-266 & A(c#) \quad IV\alpha (iv\beta) \\
267-290 & C(E,Ab) \quad I,I\alpha \text{ and } \beta \\
291-306 & A \quad IV\alpha \\
307-359 & Gb \quad IV\alpha \text{ of } IV\alpha \\
360-410 & Bb \quad IV \text{ of } IV \\
411-445 & C \quad I \\
446-461 & D,d \quad II,ii \\
462-475 & c# \quad iv\beta \\
476-485 & c \quad I \\
486-491 & B \quad V\alpha \\
492-505 & Bb \quad IV \text{ of } IV \\
506-516 & Db \quad IV\beta \\
517-538 & C,Ab \quad I, I\beta \\
539-590 & C \quad I \\
\end{array}
\]

The movement opens with a brief introductory passage that presents, in miniature, the tonal plot that dominated the first part of the work. The timpani outline a triad of E minor and continues to do so even after the horns have entered, polytonally, on a triad of B minor. At bar 4 the horn's B minor triads alternate with ones of G major, which prompts the wind to likewise enter with G major triads. All the time the timpani's E minor triads persist. When C major is reached it marks the completion of a revue of all the main tonal centres from the first movement. More importantly it confirms the subsidiary role of these tonalities to C.

Example 12-7 VII-v, 1—7

C major appears here as an unequivocal tonic. All the essential elements of the tonal plot point to this—the function of the dominant axis has remained fixed since the start of the work, and, after C was established in the second movement, the central movements did not produce any viable alternative for tonicity. The E minor side of the axial rivalry has not been reactivated. Because of this stability, the finale exists as a celebration of its own tonicity. Unlike most of the finales in preceding works, there are no tonal demons that
have to be exorcized within the finale itself. Even the Sixth has to defeat the possibility of a subdominant tonal progression. In the Second Symphony, the finale begins from a position where the final solution has not been realized in any palpable form at all. Consequently the finale of the Seventh is not as dramatic as its predecessors. The first episode moves, almost predictably, to A flat major, which again creates a broad statement of tonic stability in the same way as it did in the second movement. The second episode (bar 155) begins in A minor and tends to alternate between that key and the tonic. There is little tension at any level, the changes of key providing contrast but no real threat to C's tonicity.

None of the dark nocturnal elements of the preceding four movements intrudes on the Rondo until its latter stages. From bar 446 to 505, we embark on a chromatic tonal descent from D minor down to B flat minor. Each centre (except B major) gives forth the principal first-movement theme with the climax being the midpoint, the C minor announcement of that theme. It is marked Pesante and its heavy tread and highly dissonant foreground features renders it a point of massive stylistic dislocation in the otherwise rhythmically animated and diatonic movement. It is a shock from which the movement struggles to recover.

The C minor visitation of the first movement's principal theme ties up that loose end discussed earlier, but it evokes the first movement a little too vividly, implying that the spirit of the first movement is not far below the surface. Certainly, it contrasts greatly with the corresponding movement of the Fifth which strives inexorably and unchallenged towards the chorale and a victorious D major. In the context of the D major Rondo the chorale is very much at home—indeed the work's purpose has been to seek out a context where the chorale will be the crowning manifestation of a more general optimism as opposed to a voice in opposition as it was in the second movement. Here in the Seventh, the reminiscence is totally in opposition to the movement in which it is set. The movement only succeeds in assimilating the theme at bar 581, where the head motive is given in C major. But it lasts a mere four bars, after which the music rushes hastily towards a conclusion.

A sense of long-range resolution is finally gained by using the first movement theme to articulate the progressive modality that is achieved over the course of the Symphony. But I sense an inescapable feeling of inadequacy in this final transformation, because it is dwarfed by the sheer power of opposition of the earlier C minor reminiscence. This feeling, that foreign elements from the world of the first movement have intruded into the diatonicism of the finale, is reaffirmed at the penultimate bar, where the gaping spectre of whole-tonality is suspended motionless before us in the form of the augmented triad. Whole-tonality and a sense of suspended animation are features associated more with the first movement introduction than the C major finale. What is even more telling is the fact that the symphony ends with a gesture that implies
continuation, not closure. The final six bars clearly evoke the end of the first tonic section of the movement from bar 47 to 52, the augmented triad in the penultimate bar represents a mean of the juxtaposed C and A flat major triads at bar 51. The precedent for continuation leaves the penultimate chord charged with tension and uncertainty which Mahler rescues with a profound sense of humour through the final C major chord.

I have no doubt that Mahler intended a truly cyclic work., one where the first movement reminiscences represent not so much a resolution of previously unresolved tensions as a reactivation of the earlier sound world. It is a tactic made all the more striking because of the context of fragile diatonicism into which it is placed. The final impression is that any continuation of the work—and Mahler does imply continuation—would land us back at the B minor introduction, starting the whole process over again. Programmatically, it is difficult to avoid the night—day exegesis because of the central Nachtmusik and the bright C major finale. But in programmatic terms, the cyclic thematicism, rather than articulate unequivocal tonal victory, lays the seeds of doubt as to the security of the C major world. If the Symphony supports a night—day programme it is not in the sense of an allegory for the victory of good over evil, but rather of the perpetual cycle of time. In confirmation of this is the fact that the type of tonal scheme the work is based on is perfectly capable of supporting such a cyclic duality. Compared with the early progressive tonal works the E—C duality represents different sides of the same coin, whereas the C#—D progression of the Fifth for example marks a progression to a new world, one which excludes the former.

In conclusion, I would reiterate that the kind of progressive tonality in evidence in the Seventh is strongly tempered by a concentric element. This is because the B-Eb-G axis (the keys of B and G especially) are cast in the role of dominant, with no change of function occurring at any point in the work. By implication, the tonic is likewise fixed in the C-E-Ab axis and so it is a battle within a larger concentric framework (the tonicity of the C-E-Ab axis), to ascertain which axis member will gain the primary position. The result is still a progressive tonal scheme of sorts, but one that has less overall tension than those where the original tonic key or axis is forced to change its function during the course of the work. As an expression of this it is interesting to quote Schoenberg’s comments on the work.

I had less than before a feeling of that sensational intensity which excites and lashes one on, which in a word moves the listener in such a way as to make him lose his balance without giving him anything in its place. On the contrary, I had the impression of perfect repose based on perfect harmony.... I have put you with the classical composers—but as one who to me is still a pioneer. I mean, there is surely a difference in being spared all extraneous excitement, in being at rest and in tranquility, in the state in which beauty is
Part II: *Das Lied von der Erde*

I do not wish to embark upon a full analysis of *Das Lied* here, but it is worth including a brief note on the background tonal framework of the work, primarily to note the similarity with the Seventh in the degree of cyclic thinking and the interaction of both progressive and concentric elements within the one work. The work falls into two *Abteilungen* the first consisting of songs 1 to 5 and the second solely taken up by song 6, "Der Abschied". Tonally, the first part is oriented around the key of A mainly due to the frame of reference provided by the outer songs—while the second part is centered on the key of C.

The tonal dichotomy apparent in the overall scheme, is embodied in the double tonic sonority that governs much of the thematic material, notably at the very beginning of the first song.

Example 12-8 "Trinklied I", 5—9 and "Der Abschied", 568—72.

The tetrachord a-c-e-g can be interpreted as either an A minor triad with an added seventh, or a C major triad with an added sixth. In the end, although a tonal progression of sorts has been accomplished, the superseded tonal combatant maintains a latent presence even when its opponent is clearly in control of tonicity. The first drinking song contemplates life embittered by the despoiling spectre of death. The final song contemplates death, taking solace from the earth's continual process of renewal, as symbolized by the image of spring. The tonal plan reflects this sense of duality that, nevertheless remains interconnected.

The means of achieving the transfer of tonicity is not dissimilar to earlier

---


8 Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, (Ann Arbor, 1984), 6
works. Here the familiar tonal manoeuvres provide mutual service to the poetic idea of the first song. The text of this song, especially the refrain, focuses on images of darkness, with the nocturnal setting of the poem mirroring the protagonist's pessimism in the face of inevitable extinction. As would be expected, this is also the over-riding impression gained from the music, with the tonal plan emphasizing the subdominant regions in order to achieve this.

Example 12-9
"Das Trinklied vom Jammer der Erde"

**Strophe 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-52</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>Schon winkt der Wein—</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53-80</td>
<td>d—g</td>
<td>iv—iv</td>
<td>of iv</td>
<td>Wenn der Kummer naht, liegen wüst die Gärten der Seele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-89</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>iv of iv</td>
<td>Dunkel ist das Leben . . . (refrain)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strophe 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>89—124</th>
<th>g</th>
<th>iv of iv</th>
<th>Herr dieses Hauses!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>125—136</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>Dein Keller . . . goldenen Weins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137—152</td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>IVβ</td>
<td>Die Laute schlagen . . .</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153—178</td>
<td>eb</td>
<td>iv of IVβ</td>
<td>Ein voller Becher Weins . . . alle Reicher dieser Erde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>179—202</th>
<th>Ab</th>
<th>IV of IV of IVβ</th>
<th>(refrain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Strophe 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>203—308</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>iβ</th>
<th>Das Firmament blaut ewig,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>309—325</td>
<td>b♭—B♭</td>
<td>IVβ</td>
<td>Du aber Mensch, wie lang lebst denn du?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No refrain

**Strophe 4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>326—405</th>
<th>a-A—a</th>
<th>i—I—i</th>
<th>(refrain)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In the first strophe D minor is only fleetingly established, but it instigates a move through the cycle of fifths in the subdominant direction from A minor to G minor. Strophe 2 re-establishes the tonic before moving to B flat major at bar 137, once again a sub-dominant axis member (ivβ). As the above diagram shows, there is an even longer succession of subdominant modulations in this strophe. The third strophe begins in F minor, which I have labelled iα for convenience, whereas in truth, F minor functions here as ivα relative to the A flat major which has preceded it. So the movement in the subdominant direction continues as does the effect of continual darkening.

The images in the text continue to darken also as the protagonist takes us through his assessment of life's value. The image of the ape howling in the graveyard, a shocking image of man's agony over his inability to comprehend death, is the crisis point in the song, but no resolution is offered and so the song retreats once more into the fatalism of the refrain and the escapism of
sensual pleasure.

That Mahler uses continuous subdominant modulations to illustrate the nihilism of the text is clear, but just as importantly, the subdominant modulations avoid the establishment of a tonicizing dominant, and so A minor maintains only a tentative grip on tonicity. Mahler continues to avoid any dominant to tonic relationships over the remainder of part 1, moving through the subdominant keys of D minor, B flat and G (iv, IVβ and IV of IV) in songs 2 to 4 before regaining the tonic A in the fifth song.

The potential instability of A as tonic is compounded by the fact that no solutions are found to the central poetic conflict of the first song. Just as the protagonist in the first song retreats from the contemplation of life's futility, so in songs 2 to 4 we are faced with characters who are too preoccupied with life to contemplate its temporality. This culminates in the picture of the drunkard in spring in song 5 who is resolutely disinclined to contemplate anything. By analogy, the drunkard's rejection of the regenerative image of spring carries with it the avoidance of the degenerative image of death.

At bar 65 of song 5, Mahler again returns to the a-c-e-g double-tonic sonority. Although we are in a broader A major context, the chord is transformed from the a753 that opened the work to C653. This functions as a preparation for the final song which will both exploit this other side of the duality inherent in the original tonic sonority, and confront the life-death conflict that part 1 has tried to avoid.

The sixth song continues to use subdominant bias also. Like the initial tonic in the first Abteilung, no large-scale tonicizing dominant is provided, and so the tonicity of C is not unequivocal.

Example 12-10
"Der Abschied"
1—54  c  i
55—136  F,db  IV,ivβ
137—165  a  ivα
166—287  Bb  IV of IV
288—302  a  iva
303—373  c  i
374—429  c  i
430—459  F  IV
460—572  C  I

In the end, C major attains tonicity more by the fact that the work ends in that key rather than any teleological tonal process. As a result, this does not represent a victory for C major over the previous tonic, it is more the case that the work resigns itself to being bi-tonal and the added sixth chord with which the work ends, is a lucid foreground expression of this.
Part III: Symphony No. 10

There is no space available here to review the sequence of events that led to the performing version of the Tenth Symphony, especially as Cooke provides this in the preface to his score. As he explains the Symphony was handed down consisting of 72 pages of full-score draft and 93 pages of short-score.

The present score is in no sense intended as a 'completion' or 'reconstruction' of the work. First of all, no completion has been necessary, in the usual sense—that is, free composition to fill gaps in the structure, as in Süssmayr's completion of Mozart's Requiem. Mahler's draft continues without interruption from beginning to end, even if the continuity is only tenuously preserved in places.

Cooke himself best sums up the value of the work.

Mahler's actual music, even in its unperfected and unelaborated state, has such significance, strength and beauty, that it dwarfs into insignificance the momentary uncertainties about notation and the occasional subsidiary pastiche-composing, and even survives being largely presented in conjectural orchestration . . . . After all, the thematic line throughout, and something like 90% of the counterpoint and harmony, are pure Mahler, and vintage Mahler at that.

As for the success of Cooke's realization of the draft materials, Theodore Bloomfield assesses the relative merits of Cooke's and the other unpublished realizations of the draft by Joseph Wheeler, Clinton Carpenter and Remo Mazzetti.

Each of the four versions casts some light on what Mahler might have done had he lived to finish, hear, and revise the symphony. No single verdict need be reached; the cleanest sound belongs to the Cooke version, the greatest emotional impact comes from Carpenter, and the most imaginative treatment comes from Mazzetti. If I had to choose the most viable version . . . I would proceed from the revised Cooke version and insert certain passages from the others, to a degree consistent with textural continuity and overall proportion. This approach might produce a rendition of which Mahler would have approved.

Voices of dissent over the completed Symphony have been a constant factor in the work's history. But the integrity of the work is nowhere more apparent than in its tonal organization. The Symphony represents a Mahlerian tonal

---


10Deryck Cooke, "The History of Mahler's Tenth Symphony", Gustav Mahler, Tenth Symphony, xiii.

drama of fascinating individuality and it justifies attention in a thesis on
tonality even if the reader (or the writer for that matter) disagrees in principle
to performing the work in conjectural orchestration. The tonal contour of the
work is verifiable from Mahler's draft materials, though for convenience all
references are to the 1976 edition of Cooke's score.

The Tenth Symphony like the Seventh sets up an axial rivalry, one which
remains present throughout most of the work. The difference is that the Tenth
finally rejects the tonal options that the other tonic axis members provide and
settles on the original tonic of F sharp. But it must be reiterated that the overall
concentric tonal scheme does not necessarily diminish the overall tension to
the level of a classical work. The question of tonicity is still held in the balance
and confirmed only in the finale.

As with the Seventh Symphony, the Introduction plays a crucial role, pro-
viding the focus for the axial rivalry that will dominate the work. In that work
the dominant function of B was assured but the question remained as to whether
it was more likely to resolve as V—I in E or Vα—I in C. The tonality of the
solo viola line with which the Tenth opens is initially vague, suggesting G
or B minor. At bar 5 the melody emphasizes d', the result of a stepwise as-
cent through b and c#. The ensuing descent over the next two bars confirms
a D tonality indicating both the major and minor thirds of the triad and culmi-
ning at bar 8 on the dominant note a. The remainder of the theme descends
down as far f before rising back up to be poised on the earlier-stated
dominant at bar 15. The expectation is for a resolution to D but instead we are
presented with an axial substitution of F sharp major. The A natural, instead
of resolving as a bass fifth, proceeds to function as a leading note for the third
of the F sharp major chord.

The initial axis rivalry is between F sharp and D with A natural having a
pivotal role, as a dominant with a potential to resolve as Vβ—I in F sharp or
V—I in D. F sharp major and minor make up the first section which ends with
a restatement of the introduction theme. Here it is tonally more ambiguous,
but settles on the dominant of D at bar 48. As at the opening, the function of
the A natural is changed and a second more expansive F sharp major—minor
section ensues.

All in all, the exposition is remarkably static, there is little contrast beyond
tempo changes. When a change of key does finally occur, it moves to B flat
minor. The entire tonic axis is therefore represented, but a second tonal area
containing a tonicizing dominant articulated by a contrasting theme (the usual
practice in sonata form), is entirely absent. The B flat minor episode re-works
previous material, mainly the semiquaver figures from the F sharp minor sec-
tions. The exposition ends at its point of origin, the introductory theme for
unaccompanied violas. The viola theme is extended in range, screaming up as
high as d". This reaffirms D as a tonal rival, but more importantly Mahler is
stressing the vast contrast between the almost hysterical desolation of the viola
theme next to lush F sharp major music. The thematic contrast dramatizes the rivalry between D and F sharp for tonicity rather than dramatizing the structural dissonance of a tonicizing dominant.

Example 12-11 Symphony No 10 (first movement).

```
1-15  d (-V)  iβ (-Vβ)
16-31  F#  I
32-39  f#  i
40-48  d (V)  iβ
49-72  F#  I
73-80  d  iβ
81-90  f#  i
91-103  bb  iα
104-111  d  iβ

112-129  a  vβ
130-132  f#  i (vβ of eb)
133-134  eb  (vβ of C)
135-136  (V of F)
137-140  F  Vα

141-152  F#  I
153-171  f#  i
172-177  bb  iα
178-193  F#  I
194-212  ab  ii
213-275  F#  I
```

The dominant A natural fails to materialize at the end of this third appearance of the solo violas. G sharp is reached in its place cadencing into A minor and the beginning of the development section. The development, like the exposition is remarkably homogeneous and indeed more traditional than usual, with Mahler choosing to develop motivic fragments from the exposition rather than create large episodes of contrasting material or extreme transformations such as can be found in the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies. However, the section does provide a structural dominant and so effects tonicization at the background level. The A minor with which the section begins is followed by a chain of thirds, through F sharp and E flat minor, touching on C as the dominant of F at bar 135. F major is implied at bar 137 and so the development is framed by two dominant axis members in A minor and F (vβ and Vα). The return of the tonic is by no means emphatic—there is no actual Vα—I cadence that leads us back. The music stops dead in its chromatically rising sequence
on the augmented triad on D, and after a pause begins the recapitulation.

The recapitulation offers no new tonal directions as far as the principal material is concerned. As there was no dissonant second tonal area set up there is no pressing need for resolution. The exposition set forth axis rivals exclusively and Mahler is content to restate this rivalry—B flat minor appearing again at bar 172. There is no great thematic duality with which to contend either. An overview of the movement so far reveals an unusual lack of conflict, or, as Agawu puts it, "The entire movement is saturated with the sound of F#, resulting in a kind of stasis . . ."¹² This saturation echoes the corresponding movement in the Ninth and it has a similar emotional effect, one of obsessive clinging enhanced by the obvious tenderness and nostalgia that these tonic-key themes project. Like the tonicity of D major in the Ninth Symphony, the tonicity of F sharp is almost too good to be true, it has been established so utterly unopposed and without all the usual trappings of sonata form. Despite the tonic saturation in the corresponding movements of both works, there is a sense of fragility surrounding the tonic because of the muted, ineffectual or non-existent tonicization processes at the deeper levels.

Out of this context comes the massive A flat minor interruption at bar 194. The sense of dislocation is enormous, firstly because a fully orchestrated, sustained chord presents a sound event totally out of context with the movement so far, and secondly, because the whole-tone shift in tonality is confusing. The supertonic axis makes little sense in relation to the tonic without a further step to clarify its function, one that would designate it as a whole-tone divider between I and Iα or as V of V for example. Both of these outcomes would have a dramatically different effect, the difference between a tonicizing and non-tonicizing progression.

The climax of this passage is the famous nine-decker dissonance,¹³ which is, in essence, a dominant minor 19th on C sharp (making the A flat minor chord, in retrospect, a dominant preparation). However, its tonal function is not entirely clear. Straddling the two appearances of the chord and maintained between them is an insistent d" in the trumpet. What we have then is a catastrophic rendering of the axial rivalry that has been an integral part of the movement since the violas introductory theme. We are witnessing the climax of the conflict between F sharp and D, with both axis members being represented by their respective dominants, a C sharp dominant chord and the prolonged A natural.

Initially, the resolution of the dissonance implies that D might come out on top in this confrontation, as the last trumpet A is prolonged the violins enter with excruciating intensity on d"", after which the falling string lines outline

an A minor triad, v of D. But following the precedent of the solo viola line, the prolonged A natural functions as G double-sharp, resolving to the third of the tonic chord, F sharp.

The dissonance has all the intensity of a world-shattering revelation. It is interesting to compare it to a similar event in the first movement of Nielsen's Sixth Symphony. The fact that both men had heart conditions makes the interpretation that these passages represent a life-threatening pain very tempting. Conjectural programmatic interpretations aside, this dislocation is indeed catastrophic in as much as the blissful element of the F sharp music cannot exist in its shadow. Certainly it delivers, somewhat violently in fact, contrast that the movement so far has suppressed or been unwilling to explore. As Cooke notes, a feeling of valediction enters the music that remains until the end of the movement.

Once the Symphony's outcome is known it is easy to see the menacing aspect of the dissonance at bar 208 as a partial disclosure of the eventual adversary to the world of the F sharp major music. This is of course the D minor music that marks the work's spiritual low point at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth movement. The very nature of the D minor music, punctuated by funereal cracks on the bass drum, clearly carries a death association, and so there emerges a life-death conflict associated with axial rivalry of D and F sharp.

F sharp major regains control after the shock of the passage from bar 194, but D continues to intrude (at bar 221, after a mere eight bars of the reinstated tonic). F sharp is soon reinforced as tonic, with D functioning as bVI and resolving to the dominant at bar 226 followed by the tonic resolution at bar 230. A brief excursion into E flat major (IV½) at bar 244 culminates in a brief return of the introductory theme, unaccompanied in the first violins. As at the beginning of the movement the solo line finds its way to A natural which functions as the leading note to the third of the tonic chord, reaffirming the tonicity of F sharp and its primacy over its axis rival D. In addition, the final page of the movement goes some way to resolving the huge dissonant chord of bar 206-8, by assimilating the idea of a chain of thirds over the dominant root into an F sharp major context (bars 267—73) by maintaining diatonic intervals.

F sharp is the key of the first Scherzo, with sections in both the major and minor mode. But the axial rivalry that dominated the first movement is still present, especially towards the end of the movement. Although the Scherzo avoids any direct confrontation with the conflicts of the first movement, it contains an important transformation of the head motive of the first movement's solo viola theme—one that will play an important role in the final resolution to F sharp major in the finale.
The third movement, a short movement in B flat minor, starts the second part of the symphony. Functioning as a kind of compressed exposition, it contains another transformation of the head motive of the solo viola theme (see example 12-11) and a rising scale passage (bars 8—11) that Mahler transforms to become a central character in the funereal dirge that opens the finale. Tonally the movement is simple, involving an ABA scheme in B flat, with the key of D featuring in the contrasting section. B flat is Iα in the wider context of the symphony, and the movement maintains an axial relationship internally—the I—Iα—I relationship of B flat and D. But it is of particular interest that D minor maintains a presence in this movement for that key is the medium-term goal of the Symphony. In addition, the passage contains disquieting tonal events that expose the vulnerability of F sharp's tonicity.

The music twice attempts to escape the grip of D minor—from bar 105-8 there is a dominant preparation that promises a shift to the major mode. The ritardando prepares it as a significant event, but the cadence is interrupted, leading to a chord of B flat, thereby deflating all expectations. At bar 111 the process is repeated, though this time the music is poised on the dominant of F sharp major. The resolution proceeds directly back to D however with an even greater feeling of deflation. Mahler is clearly articulating the tonal reorientation of the work. In the first movement, attempts to establish D via its dominant (in the form of the single note A natural) repeatedly resulted in a resolution to F sharp (with A functioning as G double sharp). The failure of D to assert itself in an F sharp major context sealed its subordinate status. Here, the failure of F sharp to assert itself in the context of D minor marks a fundamental reversal in
the symphony's tonal orientation, designating F sharp as a subordinate tonic axis member. After D minor is briefly regained the movement slips back into B flat minor and a truncated repeat of the opening material.

The second Scherzo begins in the key of E minor which functionally belongs to the supertonic axis. This is irrespective of which point of reference you take, Bb, the key of the third movement, D minor the eventual tonal goal of this movement or the overall tonic in F sharp. As such it presents an obvious break with the tonic axis which has dominated the previous movements. But it is not a tonal shift without precedence, remembering that the crisis of the first movement between bars 194 and 212 was initiated by a move to a supertonic axis key in A flat minor. It should be remembered also that A flat minor functioned as V of V of F sharp, with the nine-decker dissonance acting as an enhanced dominant. A repeat of that sequence here would take us firmly into D.

**Example 12-13 Symphony No. 10 (fourth movement)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>E minor</th>
<th>D minor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—122</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123—165</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>166—209</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210—225</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>226—247</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>248—290</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>291—311</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Iβ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312—379</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>380—409</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>410—443</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>444—485</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>486—504</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>505—608</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the diagram of the tonal outline suggests, there is a traditional scherzo-trio pattern with contrasting keys, while at the same time the movement involves a progression to the key of D. The question is whether this tonal modulation is a teleological progression or some form of interruption. Certainly there have been numerous references to D as the most probable axis rival to F sharp, and the central passage in the third movement again emphasized D; reversing the bias towards F sharp that had characterized the F#-D relationship in the first movement.

The movement encompasses a large-scale ii—V—i progression in D minor, which occurs despite the recapitulation of the principal E minor material after the final appearance of the key of A major. One would expect that this recapitulatory event would make a concentric tonal scheme imperative for this
movement, but Mahler's handling of the recapitulation severely limits its effectiveness as a definitive statement of tonicity, enabling us to accept the progression to a new tonic in D minor.

The initial stages of the Scherzo contain no real surprises. The use of C major for the trio section (Iβ) neither confirms nor contradicts E minor's tonicity, creating a long section of functional uniformity. It is the A major sections themselves that behave somewhat abnormally. A major takes over the trio theme and with it comes the expectation that the precedent of the C major trio will be observed. The first C major trio falls back to E minor without reaching a climax (bar 166), but is regained at bar 210 where a sense of climax and closure is achieved. This is followed by a second return of E minor. The A major trio compresses this process into one section, reaching a climax and closure involving the same basic material as before between bars 269 and 281. The precedent set in the C major trio leads us to expect the return to E minor, but instead there is a brief interlude in C major (albeit with the constant presence of A as an added sixth in the tonic chord), which is enough to constitute a middleground structural dominant (Vβ relative to A). A major is allowed to set up its own tonicization process in the middle of the movement. The dominant function of this C major passage becomes more assured at bar 300 where g# intrudes into the tonic chord resolution. The dominant functions of C and E are united in the resulting augmented triad c-e-g# and this chord effects the cadence into another A major section at bar 312.

Not only does A major gain significant tonal autonomy via this tonicization process, it now embarks on a thematically separate path. Although the individual motivic cells can be traced to previous music (especially to what by now is emerging as the work's ur-motive, the three-note cell that begins the viola solo in the first movement). Certainly the new development has an exultant tone contrary to the rest of the movement, beginning with a triumphant octave leap reminiscent of the E major climax in the Fourth Symphony's Adagio. A major is triumphantly reaffirmed with cadences at bars 336 and 361. At bar 366 there is a detour to C major, at which point Mahler proceeds to duplicate the essentials of the tonicization process from bars 300 to 311. This comes in the form of an ascent from C to E in the bass (Vβ—V) over the period from bar 366 to 379.

At bar 379 we are poised to resolve conclusively to A major. Here we have another remarkable example of Mahler's structural dovetailing. Our expectations are deflated firstly by resolving to an A minor chord after the dominant preparation and with the resumption of the principal E minor theme. The A major chord arrives late at bar 384, by which time it has lost all ability to make an impact. Concurrently the first violins give the principal theme in E minor, ignoring the underlying A major harmony.

These events plunge the music into kind of tonal limbo, poised between E
minor and A major. In response, the movement attempts to establish some degree of structural normality by asserting the trio section in B major, ostensibly as if the Scherzo was in no tonal crisis at all. At bar 432, B major embarks on the climax passage that has articulated impending closure on previous occasions, but its intended tonal goal is ambiguous. The theme that articulates closure (previously bar 219 and 278) is not forthcoming either and the section cadences inconclusively into B minor. A second attempt at climax takes place from bar 478 reaching the dominant of B minor at bar 485. But the cadence is an interrupted one to an E minor chord, which functions as chord ii in a ii—V—I cadence into D major. The closure-articulating theme does now eventuate and this installs D as tonic, at least in a local sense.

As the movement moves towards its conclusion D minor becomes more entrenched, and in so doing becomes progressively more disturbing. A tonal progression to D has remained a latent possibility, especially in light of the first movement's close axial relationship between D and F# sharp. But it has always been, programmatically, the less favourable option, not only because D consistently carries a minor-mode association against the predominantly major association of F# sharp, but also because of the uninvitingly sparse and barren texture associated with that key. Although the orchestration here differs greatly from the solo viola theme of the first movement, Mahler's (not Cooke's) intentions for the end of the movement clearly indicate a thematic decay punctuated by timpani, bass drum and cymbal culminating in the funereal thud of the muffled bass drum, evoking utter desolation and despair.

Example 12-14 Symphony No. 10 (fifth movement)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>d</th>
<th>F#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-29</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-57</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>IVα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58-65</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-77</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>IVα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78-144</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145-178</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>179-224</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>V B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225-242</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>IVα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>243-266</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>267-283</td>
<td>V-Vα</td>
<td>V B-V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>284-298</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>V B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>299-314</td>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>I B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315-334</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>Iα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>335-346</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>IV B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>347-400</td>
<td>F#</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D minor continues to dominate the early stages of the finale, and it is only via a process of recollection and working through elements of the preceding movements that F sharp is restored to its position as tonic. Mahler originally considered ending the work in B flat major, the third tonic axis member, most likely in order to express a reconciliation of the F♯-D conflict, exploiting the fact that B flat lies equidistant from either of those keys. The reasons for Mahler's change of heart is open to conjecture. Having begun the movement in D minor, the progression to F sharp major was perhaps considered more desirable because it tonicizes the major third of D, thus enhancing the resolution from the minor mode to the major. B flat maintains the minor third of the initial D minor tonic and therefore represents a more mellow tonal option.

It is perhaps paradoxical that a work like the Seventh, which appears on the surface to adhere to a radical progressive tonal scheme, is one where the issue of tonicity is decided beyond reasonable doubt by midway through the second movement. The Tenth, on the other hand, appears on the surface to be thoroughly concentric, whereas on closer inspection, the question of tonicity is not unequivocally settled until the latter stages of the finale. Here lies the distinction between a classical concentric scheme and one of Mahler's concentric works such as the Sixth or Tenth Symphonies. The classical work has the tonicization processes firmly situated in the sonata-form first movement, after which a concentric tonal scheme is assured. In contrast, Mahler's Tenth maintains axis rivalry for as long as possible, and so although the tonicity of one of the axially-related keys is assured, the final decision is withheld.
Chapter 13
Symphony No 8
Part I: Thematic Duality versus Sonata Form

In this thesis I have found it necessary to cover a wide range of material outside the core issue of progressive tonality in Mahler, and in order to avoid any late digressions I had not originally intended a detailed discussion of the Eighth. Not only is it concentric, but it is clearly separate from Mahler's other works that end in the same key in which they begin in that no serious tonal rival presents itself during the course of the work. Having said that, an investigation of the tonal relationships within the work interpreted through the axial system helps to gain a more comprehensive picture of Mahler's compositional strategy in a work that, despite its success, seems to generate more than its fair share of confusion and criticism among commentators.

Both Mitchell and Greene have undertaken lengthy discussions of the Eighth, focusing their investigations on the nature of its duality, especially in the first movement. It is a logical course to take, one that follows on from the discussion of the role of sonata form in the movement. It is difficult to find a commentator who wholeheartedly endorses Bekker's contention that the movement is Mahler's most frank and unreserved endorsement of sonata form.\(^1\) Barford simply concludes: "Part I is approximately in sonata-form, with a condensed recapitulation."\(^2\) Redlich considers that the movement adheres to sonata form only as an "... unorthodox variant of its traditional type."\(^3\) Mitchell down-plays the impact of sonata form even more:

"... when considering the music of Mahler's late or final phase, to approach it with the concept of 'contrasting themes' or conventional sonata 'duality' in mind is no longer adequate to the forms we encounter."\(^4\)

What we know already of Mahler's sonata forms in his works prior to the Eighth should promote some degree of scepticism. Indeed, Redlich's summation is virtually meaningless, since hardly a single example of sonata form in Mahler could be said to be orthodox. The traditional objective of sonata form, the dramatic presentation of the process of tonicization whereby one key asserts itself as the central point of relativity at all structural levels, is something Mahler's sonata form movements tend not to do—at least not exclusively or unequivocally. Having said that, what drama there is in *Veni Creator Spiritus* has little to do with promoting keys that actively rival E flat's tonicity either, the kind of tonal drama Mahler usually employs to replace traditional

---

1Paul Bekker, *Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien*, (Berlin 1921), 338.
sonata duality.

Given most commentators' antipathy to the sonata model one might wonder why the notion was ever formulated. Bekker's assertion is not entirely groundless however, and, as Greene notes, the structural outlines of the movement—the beginning of the development, recapitulation and coda for example—are firmly drawn. Such demonstrative formal gestures seem to suggest the unfolding of a tonicization drama in the traditional sense. But these outward displays are not totally consistent with the movement's internal structures and goals—in short, the dictates of sonata form are not an omnipresent influence. It is this gulf between the outer vestiges of sonata form and the dramatic dictates of the text that makes the movement increasingly less straightforward.

Example 13-1 Symphony No. 8, Part I, *Veni Creator Spiritus*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-45</td>
<td>E♭</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-65</td>
<td>D♭</td>
<td>IV of IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-107</td>
<td>A♭</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>108-134</td>
<td>E♭</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135-155</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>vα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156-168</td>
<td>E♭(V)</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>169-216</td>
<td>A♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>217-226</td>
<td>c♯</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>227-230</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>231-244</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>245-253</td>
<td>B♭-G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>254-257</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>258-289</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>290-311</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>312-354</td>
<td>E♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>355-359</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>360-365</td>
<td>D♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>366-384</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>385-412</td>
<td>V of E♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>413-487</td>
<td>E♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>488-493</td>
<td>A♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>494-503</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>504-507</td>
<td>E♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>508-518</td>
<td>D♭</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>519-580</td>
<td>E♭</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very briefly one can amass a number of significant points that detract from
the importance of sonata form in the movement. The second tonal area re­
volves around the keys of D flat and A flat, or IV of IV and IV relative to the
tonic, E flat. This subdominant emphasis subverts the usual function of clas­
cical sonata form. Secondly, the effect of prolonging a dissonance over the
course of the development section is destroyed by a significant return to the
tonic at bar 314. Finally, and what is probably most destructive to the sonata
model, the tonal dualities of the exposition (if we call them that in the interim)
are not resolved in the recapitulation but are actually restated and, paradoxical­
ly, imbued with goal status. These points alone justify maintaining some
scepticism regarding Mahler's unreserved pursuit of sonata form in his hymn.
But dismissing sonata form as a source of form-generating dichotomy in the
movement poses a more difficult question. A movement of this size needs
some form of duality to sustain itself. The question is, where does this duality
reside if not in the traditional unfolding of sonata form?

"When one looks more closely, however, into the details that generate the
form and the overall effect, the initial impression of an exciting, easily under­
stood movement disappears. And, in contrast to the immediate and overpow­
ering effect of the sheer sound made by three choruses, seven soloists and full
orchestra, the effect of the music and its structure on the meaning of the text
proves to be subtle and hard to grasp. Individual images in the ninth-century
Latin text are not painted by the music in a straightforward way. For a phrase
of the text is often repeated with a significantly different musical motif. And
a musical idea is frequently used to set significantly different ideas in the
text."

For Greene, the movement's duality resides in Mahler's different settings
of particular lines of the text. He illustrates his point by showing how Mah­
ler's Veni I and Veni II themes (the settings of 'Veni creator spiritus' at bars 2
and 21 respectively) give the text two rather different connotations.

The characterizing intervals of Veni I are the falling fourth (bar 2) or third
(S:1) and an upward leap of a seventh. The triple meter in the third measure,
which makes the accented syllable of "creator" come a beat too soon, seems
to exemplify an eagerness or even impatience that the Spirit come.

Veni II, on the other hand, exemplifies aspiration through the attainment of
a series of melodic goals.

Instead of simply leaping upward a seventh, it reaches upward through a ser­
ies of seconds and thirds; it arrives at an octave above the lowest note in the
motif (E-flat), but then surpasses this peak by reaching on to F, then contin­
ues to surpass itself by reaching on to G and then A-flat.

---

6David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality,199.
7David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 200.
8David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality,201.
Compared to this he finds Veni I "lapidary" and "objective" in tone. Veni I seems more concerned with the power and majesty of the Spirit than with what either the aspiration for or the presence of the Spirit may feel like.9

If nothing else, Greene identifies two paths that were open to Mahler in setting his text. The text petitions divine presence and is supplicatory in tone almost throughout. Veni I embodies aspiration through its inherent rhythmic characteristics and, in addition, it implies the glorification of divine majesty by the sheer size of its utterance. Veni II embodies aspiration as well but at the same time implies the excitement of the petitioner actually experiencing divine presence. Aspiration and fulfillment are in effect experienced simultaneously. Greene summarizes:

The Veni I passage presents human aspiration . . . and subordinates it to a blazing vision of divine majesty. The Veni II and Imple passages exemplify aspiration in a way that makes it coincide with fulfillment . . . and the divine as an objective reality is subordinate to the human feelings.10

As Greene points out, the question of which entity is "subordinate" can give rise to considerable theological debate.11 But such theological dualities as he mentions are not necessarily present in Mahler's music and we can equally say that the act of glorification inherent in Veni I is as self-fulfilling as the act of aspiration in Veni II. As far as the music of the exposition is concerned, the theological duality inherent in the human-divine relationship is latent rather than explicit. It is not until the development section that Mahler's music begins to exploit this duality.

Like Greene, Mitchell considers that duality resides in thematic relationships, specifically in the transformations of the head-motive from the Veni I theme, which he labels as "x".

It seems to me to be beyond doubt that it is x—the x factor, one is tempted to name it—that is the prime promoter of such duality that the movement reveals. If we accept that, then it enables us, I believe, to come to a fundamental conclusion about how we perceive the hymn as form, i.e. that few of its unique features—those that make it what it is—effectively derive from the form to which it is popularly supposed to conform, i.e. sonata form.12

As Mitchell goes on to point out, the x motive later becomes the mouthpiece of doubt instead of affirmation, and cites the orchestral passage from Figure 23 as an example. Deryck Cooke has also noted the despairing element that co-exists with the confident music.13 The motive regains the confidence of

---

12Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 539-40.
its opening statement later in the movement, such as in the contrapuntal sections of the development (see Figure 46). Mitchell notes it is the last thing we hear at the triumphant conclusion to Part II.\textsuperscript{14}

But how much doubt and scepticism actually exists within the thematic material? How palpable can a thematic duality be if it does not articulate any deeper level structural dichotomy? If there is a deeper level dichotomy then Mitchell's contention that $x$ is the prime promoter of duality may be placing too much emphasis on a foreground event. If a palpable tonal opposition exists as well then the transformed $x$ motif would draw its efficacy from the background duality that it is articulating.

It seems to me that the meaning behind the various thematic transformations relate to the kind of work the Eighth Symphony actually is. The natural inclination in a work that is sung throughout would be for the text to determine the structure. But the work is contingent on two generic formal planes, the symphony and semi-dramatic world of cantata, oratorio or, as Mitchell suggests, motet.\textsuperscript{15} In terms of the work's thematic processes there is a strong leaning toward the symphonic. As Dika Newlin puts it:

> In spite of the exclusively choral character of the Eighth Symphony, it would be hard to justify the application of the term "cantata" to it, for it completely lacks that freedom of structure which characterizes the cantata. Every scrap of thematic material is worked out symphonically, and the inter-sectional thematic relationships are never lost sight of.\textsuperscript{16}

Given that composers can, and indeed must, impose musical structure on a text, it is apparent even in the more "symphonic" choral music that composers respond to different sections of a text within a continuous movement by providing new, essentially unrelated music to underline the change in emphasis. The continuity of works like Bruckner's \textit{Te Deum} or the "Gloria" from Beethoven's \textit{Missa Solemnis} for example, only thinly disguise a more sectional approach to form. This is not to say that such works are without unity and conviction but it is not the unity that we find in abstract instrumental forms like sonata form. \textit{Veni creator spiritus} similarly highlights changes in the emphasis of the text but does so, more often that not, in such a way that is consistent with abstract instrumental forms.

We need to decide whether Mahler's motivic double-meanings are intentionally symbolic or whether they merely represent the usual \textit{modus operandi} of Mahler the symphonist? If a case for a deeper level structural dichotomy can be established then this has to take precedence as the source of duality and the foreground thematic events relegated to a position of manifestations of that deeper level duality.

\textsuperscript{14}Donald Mitchell, \textit{Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death}, 538.

\textsuperscript{15}Donald Mitchell, \textit{Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death}, 524.

\textsuperscript{16}Dika Newlin, \textit{Bruckner, Mahler, Schoenberg}, (New York, 1947), 193.
Part II:
Thematic Articulation of Tonal Duality.

Before progressing much further we need to expand on Greene's description of the inherent characteristics of the Veni I theme and its derivatives. One of its primary features is the upper neighbour note on the first beat of the second bar, which propels the theme forward towards resolution. The resolving melodic progression $ab'' - g''$ has the $g''$ falling on the third beat of the 3-4 bar. In hindsight, with the 2/4 bar following the 3/4 bar, the metrical placement of the resolving $g''$ becomes even more uncertain.

Example 13-2 Veni I theme VIII-i 2—5.

These metrical uncertainties within the central bars has the effect of withholding goal-status from any of the notes its passes through, with the result that the drive towards resolution continues and the theme only comes to rest on $bb'$ at the end of the phrase. After the first two notes, we are primarily aware of the A flat on the first beat of the bar, the F on the second beat of the 2/4 bar and the final B flat as points of accentuation. Incidentally, the concluding $bb'$ refers back to the same pitch from the theme's first bar and so for all the exploring of the text there is no implication of fulfillment—rather the theme has returned to it's point of origin without confirming any new goals.

In contrast to the Veni I theme, which does not give the $ab'' - g''$ melodic progression sufficient metrical emphasis for it to constitute a resolution, the brass response to the opening choral invocation uses a metrically altered version of the Veni theme which gives the same progression more emphasis—and in so doing radically alters its expressive content. It maintains the original identifying characteristic of the leap of a seventh to an accentuated upper neighbour note, but the 4—3 melodic resolution sees the consonant G fall on the first beat of the new bar. This derivation of the Veni I theme I call Veni Ia.

Example 13-3 Veni Ia.
At this point the theme is harmonically at odds with the dominating trumpet theme which sustains the opening tension. But later in the movement, Mahler increasingly uses the opening two bars of the Veni la theme in a specific role; that of articulating tonal goals. At this stage of the movement the motive's capabilities for resolving the opening tension is severely limited. Both here and at its second occurrence at 'Mentes tuorum visita' (Figure 5), the theme cannot break free from its parent motive with which it is contrapuntally combined in a subordinate role.

The first time we hear Veni la in isolation is at bar 136. This is significant because it takes a primary role in articulating the negative pole of D minor.

**Example 13-4** Veni la themes, bars 135—41.

It is the horn theme that most closely resembles the parent motive. Metrically it lands with considerable force on $f'$ before falling by step to $d'$, forcefully articulating both the new tonic and the minor mode. Example 13-4 also shows the theme in the upper winds and first violins (which appears at bar 135), whose melodic features are derived from the Veni la theme as well and also the "Gloria" motive which will feature prominently later in the movement. But we must remind ourselves here that the duality that has come into existence at this point is primarily a tonal one. Mahler has derived from his principal theme a motive which is both metrically and harmonically straightforward, making it perfectly suited to the task of articulating tonality. This is Mahler the symphonist at work—something we have seen before. In the Third Symphony's first movement for example, Mahler alters his tonally ambiguous principal theme (in D minor but with a tendency towards Bb) to the point where it is purely triadic (in F), thus enabling it to forcefully articulate a tonal rival. The main theme in the introduction of the Seventh undergoes a similar metamorphosis to yield the more triadic principal theme of the Allegro.

Having firmly attained D minor, the ensuing section (Infirma I) returns to the Veni I theme. But it is by no means a literal reprise and Mahler's handling of the theme uncovers the central duality of the movement. This duality has already been suggested by the tonal shift to D minor, but now the dramatic
reasons for the tonal shift are articulated, or more specifically vocalised, at a foreground level. The Veni I theme stays virtually intact rhythmically, but by changing the mode and altering the intervallic content of the theme Mahler produces a variant that is the antithesis of the original. The forward propulsion and the impression of impatient striving created by the upper neighbour note and the metrical irregularities have been eliminated. Unequivocal major-key modality is not only darkened towards the minor but also shrouded in ambiguity—the theme lies suspended between D minor and its axis-relative B flat.

Example 13-5 Infirma I theme.

The instrumentation suggests frailty—with a solo violin suspended high over a pedal in the lower strings. It is reminiscent of the fourth movement of the Third Symphony (see from Figure 8) and it is significant that the grace-note oboe theme, the death symbol of the night bird that accompanies Nietzsche's lines dealing with man's "deep grief" for his mortality in the earlier work, is quoted here in the flute at bar 147.

I am sure that most listeners would perceive that the movement has entered the realms of doubt, the obverse of faith whose expression has dominated the opening pages. But how does this duality manifest itself—in which aspects of the music does it reside? Quite simply, in nearly every parameter. In terms of harmony (note the pervasive emptiness of the augmented triad), melodic construction, texture and text, the entire countenance of the music presents a dramatic contrast with the preceding music. In terms of word-setting the duality is imposed by Mahler's decision to paint the affliction of frailty itself rather than the striving to be released from it.

The music and the words contradict one another: the text ("making firm . . .") prays for the overcoming of the condition (physical weakness) which the music paints. In that Infirma I is motivically related to Veni I, human corporeal frailty is set into a duality with awesome spiritual majesty . . .

But what is most important here is that negative pole established at 'Infirma nostri' is not confined to foreground thematic events exclusively but rather

coincides with and draws its power from the first instance of substantial tonal opposition. D minor marks the first appearance of the dominant axis (\(\text{v_\alpha}\)).

Here at least is one aspect of Mahler's formal tactics that comports with his usual handling of sonata form—the notion of the double exposition. In both the Second and Seventh Symphonies (and in the Ninth) Mahler divides the exposition into two parts, as if he were providing a composed-out second expository statement instead of relying on a literal repeat. Although both statements contain tonal shifts they differ in tonal function. Like the technique seen in the classical concerto and most graphically in the Brahms concertos, the first exposition is passive in nature, containing no real modulation at all or modulation exclusively within the existing tonic axis, while the second expository statement is active, moving to a dominant key. Mahler readily employs the same technique. In the Second Symphony, c–E (i–I\(\text{\alpha}\)) was followed by c–g (i–v). In the Seventh, e–C (i–I\(\beta\)) was followed by e–b (i–v). Here the non-tonicizing subdominant progression of Eb–(Db)–Ab (I–IV of IV–IV) is followed by the progression Eb–d (I–v\(\text{\alpha}\)).

Admittedly this can only partially bolster the sonata-form argument, since Mahler does little to maintain his tonal duality and the end of the exposition from Figure 21, focuses on E flat once again. It is also significant that the main area of thematic contrast ('Imple superna gratia') and the main tonal duality (D minor) do not coincide. As John Williamson puts it:

\[
\text{... [the movement] exhibits the thematic dualism of the sonata within a pattern of statement and counter-statement but fails to provide a systematic tonal antithesis.}^{18}
\]

The duality of the 'Infirma nostri' section resumes with the instrumental section that begins the development section but it is not enough to suggest that Mahler's commitment to sonata form was all-embracing. More compelling is an interpretation based on the unfolding drama. 'Firmans virtute' from Figure 21, carries the melodic profile of 'Imple superna gratia' and returns to the same quietly confident supplicatory tone. The impression given is that the frailty painted in the 'Infirma nostri' section is gradually being infused with strength. It is a process that is peremptorily cut off by the instrumental bridge but it intimates the psychological drama that will dominate the development section.

The gulf between human frailty (so vividly depicted in Infirma I) and divine majesty is likely to induce doubt and fear of unworthiness in the supplicants. After the abrupt interrupted cadence at Figure 23, the music begins to convey that element of doubt and fear through fractured instrumental textures, tonal insecurity and metrical irregularities, all of which deprive the Veni-derived themes of their familiar confident and striving character. The inversions and

---

permutations of the Veni I theme attain an almost Webernian isolation, hanging in goal-less suspension. They appear over an A flat pedal with which they invariably clash harmonically.

By returning to the text 'Infirma nostri' (Infirma II) at Figure 30, Mahler confirms that the reactivated tonal duality of the instrumental interlude denotes a temporary inability to overcome human frailty and unworthiness. Infirma II uses the Veni Ia-derived "Gloria" motive (see Example 13-4), though here Mahler creates a triadic version of the motive through intervallic augmentation. As a result, it is even more heavily weighted than any of its predecessors—almost stationary in fact, eschewing the forward propulsion derived from neighbour-note resolution. On account of this inherent lack of impetus, this section continues to depict human frailty rather than the process of strengthening for which the text beseeches. But this state of inertia is not tolerated for long and the petitioned-for act of strengthening begins to take place.

In terms of tonality Mahler reveals with simple clarity the work's central dichotomy and the process towards resolving it. Human frailty comes first in the key of D minor (vα) with Infirma I. The A flat pedal of the orchestral interlude reveals itself as the dominant of C sharp minor which is confirmed when the earlier text returns. But human frailty is not the focus of the text and the divine spirit and the act of invoking it quickly brings about the resolution of this tonal tension as soon as it is set up. The plea 'Infirma nostri corporis' is in fact answered before our ears. C sharp minor functions as vα of Vα, or conversely it is two steps in the dominant direction. The following diagram graphs the tonal progress from this point.

Example 13-6 Cycle of Dominants, Figure 30—38.

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>c#</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vα of Vα</td>
<td>Vβ of Vα</td>
<td>Vα</td>
<td>Iα</td>
<td>IVα</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig. 30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At a background level the cycle of dominants heading back towards the tonic was clearly Mahler's tactic to express the gradual process of spiritual infusion and the unfolding communion between the human supplicants and a divine presence. At the foreground level too the act of strengthening is equally apparent. The 'Infirma nostri' text and motive is infiltrated by the "Firmans virtute" motive at Figure 32 culminating in an almost complete restatement of the "Firmans" theme setting 'lumen accende sensibus' at Figure 33 (see example 13-7 next page).

At Figure 34 the "Gloria" theme is again prominent, used again in a key-defining role, which contributes here to the atmosphere of positive affirmation and arrival (significantly at the tonic axis key of G major—Iα). As mentioned
earlier, this theme eschews all sense of striving that its parent motive gained from the resolution of neighbour notes and martial dotted rhythms. Paradoxically it was precisely these, essentially static melodic features, that produced an air of disconsolate inertia when the theme appeared in the context of D minor at bar 139 and at the second setting of 'Infirma nostri' at Figure 30. Again we are faced with the kind of expressive "about-face" that Mitchell discerns in his "x" motive. But again I must emphasize that it is the parameters of tonality, modality and text from which the theme's dichotomous appearance draws its lifeblood. It is merely Mahler the ever-economical symphonist needing a metrically square theme and using an already existing one rather than compose something new for the purpose. The two psychological states the theme is called upon to express are spiritually polar opposites, but both the blissful content of Figure 34 and the dreary discontent of bar 139 and Figure 30 are essentially inert states.

Example 13-7 "Firmans virtute" and "Infirma" themes.

The sense of arrival at a more elevated spiritual plateau, of the gradual infusion of the senses with divine light, continues all the way up to the choral entry of the "Accende" theme. Arriving in the key of C major at Figure 36 the ensuing Veni I material is treated to this same rhythmic ironing out that produced the "Gloria" motive from the Veni I material. The dotted rhythms are replaced by even quavers and semiquavers (see example 13-8 next page).

Mahler's cycle of dominants does not stop at the tonic key of E flat or one of its axis relatives, but passes on to the subdominant. In actual fact, the subdominant is imbued with goal status, something that Mahler's handling of the foreground thematic material, the cessation of striving, seems to confirm even before the mighty "Accende" theme bursts in. This juncture sees the first instance of the Veni Ia motive being augmented so as to contain the interval of a ninth. It is with this augmentation, "... exultantly altering the interval of the seventh ... as if trying to reach the stars," that Mahler crowns the final

pages of Part II. As we shall see, the climax of the recapitulation evokes this passage, duplicating many of its melodic and rhythmic features to articulate the ultimate attainment of a spiritual goal.

Example 13-8 VIII-i, 254—61.

'Accende lumen sensibus' at Figure 38 expresses the polar opposite of Infirma I and II. Though both texts are supplicating in tone the emphasis has been on the music depicting the affliction that craves relief. The latter half of the development section is a full-throated expression of religious ecstasy in response to those requests being granted even though the text is still in the act of petitioning. The massive choral entry confirms E major's goal-status (even though the cadence falls on to a mediant pedal), and with it a very clear tonal imagery begins to emerge. Around the tonic key of E flat, which is associated with the central idea of supplication and petitioning, there is a negative pole of the dominant axis associated with doubt and unworthiness stemming from humanity's inherent condition of physical and spiritual frailty. In contrast to these, the subdominant axis is associated with the sought-after plateau of heightened and ecstatic consciousness, the direct result of divine interaction.

In terms of thematic content the "Accende" theme is derived from Veni I, sharing the prominent descending fourth (8—5) and also the same melodic profile.
Greene maintains that the "Accende" theme fuses elements of Veni I and II together, though the latter is evident only from bars 272-4. He is correct in saying that any duality derived from different settings of the same text tends to dissolve—especially when different themes are actively involved in expressing the pervading state of ecstasy in contrapuntal combination (such as the "Praevio" double fugue at Figure 46).

The violent contrast of 'Hostem repellas' at Figure 42 sees the issue of thematic duality resurface. In terms of melodic contour, the theme constitutes a kind of retrograde inversion of the Veni I theme and turns to the minor mode. The duality of the "Hostem" section is thrown into relief by what follows it—the double fugue on 'Praevio' which is "... as tightly structured as the ['Hostem'] is nearly chaotic."20 But unlike the "Infirma nostri" sections the underlying mood is one of supreme confidence that these negative forces will pose no obstacle. This is primarily due to the fact that the change to the minor mode is not bolstered by any change in tonality—an illustration of how thematic duality alone struggles to instill any potent sense of dichotomy. Ultimately the degree of duality you experience depends in part on how you receive the character of the "Hostem" section. I find its determined vigour suggestive of resolve more than fear and the 'Hostem' shrieks at bars 292 and 295 that Greene finds "terror-stricken" as derisively hostile to the envisaged foe hurled from a position of immense spiritual strength. Other commentators too, such as Williamson, hear only the "martial routing" of the foe.21

Turning back to the question of the role of sonata form in the movement, it would be fair to say that both the contrapuntal combination of thematic material and the tonal scheme thus far could be held consistent with Mahler's usual practices. But the premature reprise of the tonic at the "Praevio" fugue shatters the integrity of the development section as a prolongation of dissonance. Certainly this is well outside the accepted norm. Perhaps it is not so surprising if we project what impact the comparatively tortuous and sustained tonal opposition of a typical Mahler development section would have on the work. We

---

20David B. Greene, *Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality*, 211.
21John Williamson, "Mahler and 'Veni Creator Spiritus'," 32
need only cast our minds back to the Fourth, Sixth or Seventh Symphonies to see that Mahler's usual wide-ranging tonal excursions would have run the risk—by introducing unnecessary ambiguities—of destroying the goal status the section has already attained. It is no surprise therefore that Mahler limits his tonal conflicts so that the section maintains its sense of arrival at a sustained spiritual plane. In addition, the regaining of E flat is, in my mind, closely allied to the same compositional decision not to use a progressive tonal scheme in this work—an issue I will discuss later in the chapter.

Veni I and II themes and Veni Ia provide the bulk of the material in the double fugue and Mahler freely treats this material to augmentation. But Mahler frequently draws from other sources, as in the setting of 'amorem infunde cordibus' at Figure 59 which borrows from the "Hostem repellas" theme from Figure 44 and the combination, at Figure 61, of the "Accende" theme with the "Firmans virtute" theme from Figure 21 (a theme which has already been associated with 'lumen accende sensibus' at Figure 33). The climax just prior to the recapitulation (from Figure 63) employs the ardent aspiration inherent in the Veni II theme.

It is at the point of recapitulation that the whole sonata-form argument resurfaces.

For example, it is impossible not to feel the weight of tradition behind the massively prolonged dominant pedal (figure 58 et seq.) that prepares us for the recapitulation at figure 64 but then—a contradiction of convention that is typical of the composer—persists beyond it, thus bringing extra impetus to the restatement of 'Veni creator spiritus' and postponing the conclusive affirmation of the tonic until figure 69.22

On the surface we have a climactic return of the tonic key but there is something unusual about the unresolved dominant pedal—the V—I64 progression that underlies the return of the Veni I theme. It is not difficult to find a reason for its deployment. To have let the dictates of traditional sonata form have complete sway would have created a great dramatic inconsistency within the movement. The latter half of the development section has been occupied with expressing the exhilaration at divine presence. Consequently, the reiteration of the invocation can hardly be thought of as a sought-after goal. Goal status has already been bestowed on the "Accende" theme and even if we accept the complicated emotional web inherent in the act of prayer—that the act of invoking the spirit is fulfilling in itself—it does not surpass the experience of the "illumination of the senses" that has just been so graphically illustrated.

Mitchell maintains that "... in the case of the hymn one should not fuss too much about the formal myth since it [does] not seriously mislead."23 The point is that in performance the historical myth of sonata form leads to major errors of interpretation. Donning the cap of record reviewer for a brief

22Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 542.
23Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 545.
moment illustrates how the weight of historical insistence on the sonata-form model influences performance decisions. Tennstedt's 1987 recording (EMI, CDS 747625 8) inexplicably introduces a sizeable *ritardando* just prior to Figure 64 and arrives at the recapitulation of *Veni creator* maintaining his greatly reduced tempo. Tempo I is resumed at Figure 69. The effect is one of great relief at having arrived at a long-sought after goal. Other recordings I have at hand—Haitink (Philips, 6500 259) and Bernstein (CBS, SBRG 72491), treat the recapitulation in a similar way with regard to tempo. Mahler's tempo indications are clear—Tempo I (subito) remains in force from the first 'Accende' exclamation (Figure 38), and, with the exception of one slight alteration (*etwas breiter* at Figure 54 just prior to and presumably cancelled out by the returning Accende theme at Figure 55), remains in force all the way to and beyond the point of recapitulation. Only Solti seems to realise the need for sustained urgency. He too institutes a sizeable *ritardando* before the return but resumes his original tempo (or thereabouts) immediately upon resolving to E flat at Figure 64 and maintains this momentum all the way through to Figure 69.

It seems clear to me from the indications of the score both in terms of tempo and tonality (the unresolved dominant pedal) that Mahler wished to maintain a sense of ongoing striving right through to the end of the movement. Solti's is the only interpretation out of the four mentioned that comports with the score in this regard. It creates, what seems to me, the necessary effect of an arrival, not at an end goal, but rather at an interim goal, one which might act as a springboard to project us even further. As I mentioned earlier, the spiritual process that the movement is involved with is a self-perpetuating one—invoking of the Creator illuminates the senses which inspires more invocation to either prolong the divine interaction or to attain even greater heights of spiritual fulfillment. This dense web of mutually-sustaining supplication and fulfillment is maintained by the text all the way to the movement's coda. Mahler's decision not to fully resolve his dominant preparation allows the movement to maintain a narrative course instead of succumbing to the architectural and dramatically inappropriate goal status usually associated with sonata-form recapitulation.

As Mitchell noted, the dominant pedal is finally resolved at Figure 69. But by this time the resolution carries little weight. It coincides with the return of the comparatively less significant 'Qui paraclitus diceris', which also brings about a shift to the tonic minor. A residual tension remains from the unresolved dominant leaving no doubt that a more emphatic resolution must take place at a later point.

That the resolution of the dominant pedal does not carry any significant goal-status is heightened by the nature of the passage from Figure 69. Although it is far less demonstrative, it is just as developmental as anything in
the development section. Veni I and Ia themes continually intertwine with
snatches of the "Imple superna" theme while the accompanying strings de vel ope the "Qui Paraclitus" motive. Even by Mahler's own standards, where
strict restatement of the exposition's themes and the usual practice of ground ing tension in the recapitulation is not always abided by, the nature of the the matic invention here seems contrary to normal practice.

Tonally we are soon confronted with another irregularity. The "Qui Paraclitus" theme initiates a modulation to the dominant, cadencing there at Figure 71. From this point until Figure 79, the music retraces its steps through the tonic E flat and on to A flat major, cadencing forcefully in that key at Figure 76 and again (as the climax of the section) at Figure 79. What we have then is a cycle of dominants starting from V moving towards and bestowing goal status on the subdominant.

This is exactly the same tonal procedure that dominated the first half of the development section leading up to the breakthrough of 'Accende' and E major. In this respect the recapitulation can be interpreted as a second wave that follows the same path as the development, moving from feelings of doubt and unworthiness based on human frailty through a process of supplication to ultimate fulfillment, all underpinned by a V—I—IV tonal progression. There is some support for this from the text as well. 'Qui Paraclitus diceris, Donum Dei altissimi' shifts the emphasis of the text for one of the few times in the movement (the corresponding text in the exposition and the text of the coda being the other points that differ) from supplication to glorification and in so doing it draws attention to the gulf between divine majesty and humanity. It is surely no accident that Mahler set a text that draws attention to the divine attribute of "Comforter" with a theme wracked by tortuous chromatic turns which set it in opposition to the confident and aspiring aspects of the "Veni" and "Imple" themes that surround it both here and in the exposition.

The climax at Figure 79 is based on augmented and non-augmented versions of Veni Ia in a brass and woodwind fanfare. Here is the same sense of calm ecstasy that preceded the arrival of the "Accende" theme in the development. As I have already pointed out, the Veni Ia theme denotes goal attainment rather than the striving of the parent motive because the resolving 4—3 melodic progression is given metrical emphasis. The striving aspect of the martial dotted rhythms is dissipated through augmentation and when the axial modulation from A flat to E major takes place the Veni Ia theme evolves into the "Gloria" theme which dispenses with dotted rhythms altogether. The remnants of the Veni Ia theme in the woodwinds (bar 497) likewise replaces dotted rhythms with even note values.

A clear relationship exists between this passage and that from Figures 36 to 38. They both involve axial modulations within the subdominant axis (C—E {IVβ—IVα} and Ab—E {IV—IVβ} respectively) and also contrapuntal
combinations of augmented and unaltered statements of the Veni I theme. What separates them is the level of goal status they each attain. The section from Figure 36 is set up to prepare the arrival of the Accende theme, with the 64 chord that announces the key of E major delaying resolution until the "Accende" theme bursts out. As I noted earlier the "Accende" theme is not announced with a full cadential resolution but takes place over a mediant pedal. For all its triumphant expression of divine infusion it maintains some of the striving characteristics of the Veni I theme on account of this withheld harmonic resolution.

Harmonically, the corresponding section in the recapitulation attains full goal status. It is the logical conclusion of all that has gone before—an expression of spiritual attainment that passes beyond the ability of words to express (hence it is instrumental). It is only after the attainment of this supreme spiritual goal that the fundamental attitude of the movement changes.

The text in the coda marks a distinct change from supplication to glorification, which is sustained to the end of the movement. From Figure 81 counterpoint built on inverted and diminished versions of the Veni I theme gallops away at a brisk tempo. Once again it is significant that Mahler avoids the theme's characteristic dotted rhythms and, in their place, uses running semiquavers—focussing on celebratory exuberance rather than striving.

The setting of 'Gloria' at Figure 83 brings us back down to earth almost literally. Once again, just like the previous glorification text ('Qui Paraclitus diceres'), the very act of glorification reinforces the gulf between divine majesty and humanity. In this regard it is no coincidence that the version of the "Gloria" theme used here relates directly to the Infirma II theme from Figure 30 and recalls the same key (albeit in the major mode). As at the opening of the development section this key functions as a dominant of the dominant (V of V), moving to B flat major at Figure 84 (where the Veni I theme is restated) before moving on to the tonic at Figure 85. It is a brief cycle of dominants that clearly evokes the larger tonal progressions of the development and recapitulation, further reinforcing the analogy between this tonal procedure and the goal-oriented striving that is the subject of the text.

Contrapuntal activity increases with a kaleidoscope of themes passing in quick succession including the "Imple superna" theme at Figure 85 combined with the descending melodic profile of the "Firmans virtute" theme and motifs from Veni II. Two bars before Figure 88 the dominant pedal is regained, bringing with it the expectation that the cadence that was adjourned at the beginning of the recapitulation will now come to a full closure. The conclusive perfect cadence brings with it a triumphant antiphonal exchange of the Veni I theme between the two choirs. All the associative and inherent properties of attainment make this theme the obvious choice as the mouthpiece for resolution of the long-range structural dissonance.

The final paragraph follows a second perfect cadence at Figure 90. Here the
musical representation of divine majesty was doubtless foremost in the composer's mind. Thematically, this last passage focuses on Veni II, for reasons grounded both in sonata-form and dramatic propriety. In terms of sonata form it is appropriate given that the theme was removed from its chronological position set down in the exposition. Such re-ordering is a typical Mahlerian trait, such as in the Sixth Symphony's first movement where Mahler places little emphasis on the "Alma" theme in the recapitulation only to have it dominate the coda. It is dramatically appropriate that the theme that preceded the recapitulation and the aborted resolution of the dominant pedal should return here. The regaining of the dominant pedal at bar 541 clearly evokes the earlier structural juncture and the passage that follows articulates at a foreground level the resolution of that earlier harmonic interruption.

At the beginning of the chapter I noted that the Eighth came in for some degree of criticism. Part of the reason for this is the conflict between the generic formal types that constitutes the movement, and the resultant absence of a consistent symbiotic relationship between the various structural levels. The goals of sonata form, such as the regaining of the tonic at the recapitulation, can be at odds with the goals of the text—although I hope I have been successful in showing that Mahler was aware of this and took steps to minimize the discrepancy. In light of Mahler's obvious attempts to keep a tight reign on the sonata principle, to stop it over-shadowing the dramatic integrity of the text, Bekker's claims, that the movement represents Mahler's most thorough use of the form, remains of dubious worth. But with this conclusion one is left with the uneasy situation of accepting that the combination of the text and sonata form ultimately compromised both.

If Mahler's compositional decisions are defensible, it would very much depend on finding a valid reason for Mahler's insistence on at least the vestiges of sonata form. Mitchell tentatively offers the explanation that Mahler used the sonata principle in order to "import" duality to a text that essentially offers none of its own. The exposition offers contrasting first and second subjects, but then again the text has the effect of down-playing any duality for, as Mitchell again points out, they are equally "vocal affirmations of faith", the major difference being that one is expressed "dynamically" the other "lyrically." 24 As already suggested, the choice of subdominant keys for the second subject was undoubtedly meant to down-play sonata duality as well.

In the end duality is not so much imported via sonata form but rather it is drawn from the implicit dualities of the text. Although the text is almost uniformly supplicating in tone, Mahler draws three separate dramatic entities from it. The elements of affirmation of faith, the fear of human unworthiness and experienced spiritual ecstasy come to be associated with members of the

tonic, dominant and subdominant axes respectively. This tonal symbolism cuts across the usual sonata-form topography of duality and resolution and relegates the latter to sub-plot status.

There are points where sonata form and text-derived duality coincide. The duality provided by the dominant axis, occurring where it does, comports with our concepts of sonata form based on Mahler's previous practices (as in the Second Symphony) and therefore partially bolsters the sonata-form argument. But the process of resolution comes not from the usual unfolding of sonata form—that is in the recapitulation, but occurs within the development section itself. As almost every commentator will state, the "Accende" theme is one of the most important dramatic events within the movement, the goal of actually experiencing divine presence towards which the movement strives. It seems to me that hand in hand with the goal status of the subdominant axis, with all its positive associations with attainment of spiritual fulfillment, goes the functional necessity for the vestiges of sonata form.

We have seen subdominant bias as a vital tool in Mahler's works involving progressive tonality. Using subdominant-axis keys in conjunction with withholding background tonicization of the original tonic leads to the situation where the initial tonic begins to function as a dominant and the subdominant assumes the tonic role. This was, one might logically assume, never a considered option in the Eighth Symphony. Humans can be moved spiritually by the Creator or the Mater Gloriosa but they do not become divine themselves. As Mitchell has also suggested, progressive tonality might have violated this sense of theological propriety.25 The danger is real—subdominant emphasis, particularly on E major (IV\(_{3}\)), is not only present in considerable quantitative duration, but embodies some of the most affirmative emotions in the movement. On this basis I would suggest that whatever elements of sonata form exist in the movement were not imported to promote duality, but quite simply to help articulate the tonicity of E flat and in so doing provide a counterbalance to any tendency the work might have had towards a progressive tonal scheme.

Part III:

Part II: Schlüspszene aus "Faust"

Part I determines the tonal symbolism for the rest of the symphony. Part II introduces no new tonal conflicts nor does it introduce any associations that might contradict what has already been established. As Example 13-10 shows the movement focuses firmly on the tonic E flat. What modulation it contains, at least in the initial two thirds of the movement, is restricted to the axis relatives B and G, allowing a degree of contrast while maintaining a stable tonal function throughout.

25Donald Mitchell, Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 576-7.
Example 13-10 Tonal Outline of Part II.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1—77</td>
<td>eb i</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78—96</td>
<td>B♭ V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97—166</td>
<td>eb i</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167—218</td>
<td>eb i</td>
<td>Waldung sie Swankt heran ... heiligen Liebeschort (Ch)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>219—265</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>Ewige Wonnebrand ... ewiger Liebe Kern! (PE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>266—384</td>
<td>eb i</td>
<td>Wie Felsenabgrund mir zu Füßen ... mein bedürftig Herz (PP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>385—435</td>
<td>B I♭</td>
<td>Geretet ist das edle Glied ... (Ch)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>436—443</td>
<td>G Iα</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>444—539</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>... Jauchzet auf! es ist gelungen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540—569</td>
<td>d vα</td>
<td>Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest ... kein Engel trennte</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>570—603</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>geeinte Zwienatur ... der obern Welt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>604—611</td>
<td>G Iα</td>
<td>Hier ist die Aussicht frei (DM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>612—638</td>
<td>B I♭</td>
<td>Dort ziehen Frauen vorbei ... ich seh's am Glanze (DM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>639—703</td>
<td>E IV♭</td>
<td>Höchste Herrscherin der Welt! ... wenn du hehr gebietest (DM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>704—779</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>Jungfrau, rein im schönsten Sinne ... Göttern ebenbürtig (DM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>780—844</td>
<td>E IV♭</td>
<td>Mater Gloriosa schwebt einher... Dir, der Unberührbaren ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>845—894</td>
<td>B I♭</td>
<td>Du schwebst zu Höhen ... Wohlgeruch hernieder (Ch MP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>895—905</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>bei den Lokken ... (MP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>906—926</td>
<td>eb i</td>
<td>... durfi' berühren</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>927—967</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>bei der reinen ... (MS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>968—1000</td>
<td>g Iα</td>
<td>Bei dem hochgeweihten (M Ae)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001—1016</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>... bei dem sel'gen ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1017—1054</td>
<td>C IVα</td>
<td>Die du großen Sünderin (M Ae MS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1055—1082</td>
<td>A V of Vα</td>
<td>... gönn' auch dieser ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1083—1092</td>
<td>F V♭ of Vα</td>
<td>... Gönn' auch dieser ... angemessen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1093—1185</td>
<td>D Vα</td>
<td>Neige, neige ... er kommt zurück (UP) Er überwächst uns schon ...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1186—1248</td>
<td>B♭ V</td>
<td>Er überwächst uns schon ... blendet ihn der neue Tag. (Kn Ch, UP)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1249—1371</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>Komm! Komm! ... Blikket auf ... Mutter, könnigen, (MG, Ch, DM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1372—1379</td>
<td>E IV♭</td>
<td>Göttin, bleibe gnädig ... (Ch)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1380—1572</td>
<td>E♭ I</td>
<td>... Alles Vergängliche ... (Ch)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are notable departures from the tonic axis, namely the sections in D minor (Figure 75) and E major (Figures 89 and 106). As purely tonal events these automatically provide a link with Part I—both keys having already played significant roles in the hymn. But the association goes further than a mere tonal reiteration. The thematic material that coincides with the advent of D minor comes from the first "Infirma nostri" section of Part I. The justification for the relationship is clear—in both cases the text deals with the corporeal element of humanity—an element that needs divine aid to be strengthened in life and which must be pared away in death—the objective in both cases being the liberation (and hence the spiritual elevation) of the soul.
The link between the E major sections here and those in Part I are less obvious but ultimately no less engaging. We could undoubtedly trace some of the melodic shapes in Doctor Marianus's aria to previous material—namely Veni I and the "Accende" themes. But more importantly, it is the Mater Gloriosa that actually provides us with a personification of divinity which the more human personages of the scene petition and strive towards in the same way as the congregation of Part I petitioned and strived towards the Creator. Mahler reinforces the link between divinity and E major at Figure 106—the music depicting the Mater Gloriosa floating into vision. In every sense, this is the climax of the first half of the movement. It is prepared by an emphatic perfect cadence which imbues it with real goal-status. Like the A flat-E major section in the recapitulation of Part I, we get the impression that the personages of the movement, who have hitherto expressed mainly striving or excited anticipation, are here transfixed by the appearance of the personification of their spiritual goal.

The E major chorus that follows the entrance of the Mater Gloriosa embraces the most fervent petitioning of the movement. Antiphonal exchanges of the head motif of the "Mater Gloriosa" theme dominates this section from Figure 112 and directly anticipates the passage from Figure 187 to 193. It seems to me that what degree of long-range tonal resolution the movement contains, lies in regaining this air of fervent devotion within the secure realms of the tonic key of E flat at Figure 187. Psychologically the difference between the two passages corresponds to the shift of emphasis from supplication and glorification in Part I. The second passage takes place in the wake of the Mater Gloriosa's acceptance of Faust's soul and indeed the tone beginning with Doctor Marianus's final hymn ('Blicket auf') becomes one of gratitude and glorification rather than supplication.

As Mitchell has suggested, the form of the movement displays a compilatory method involving elements of cantata, oratorio and strophic song (the latter is particularly evident in the music of Pater Ecstaticus at bar 219, Pater Profundis at Figure 39 and Doctor Marianus at Figure 89). If the term "Symphony" with regard to the Eighth has any justification over and above a mere umbrella term to denote a compilatory *Gesamtkunstwerk*, then it lies both with the symphonic handling of the thematic material, particularly in Part I, and with the consistent tonal imagery throughout the work. It is this consistency that brings the Eighth into the orbit of the *Wunderhorn* symphonies, which display a similar generic cross-fertilization, but at the same time keeps a clear line of demarcation from a work like *Das klagende Lied*, the only work where Mahler actually adopted the title of cantata. The difference between the formal types, at least in Mahler's own terms, is clear. It is readily apparent in

---

26 Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 572-5.
27 Dika Newlin, *op. cit.*
the later-abandoned "Waldmärchen" movement and in the "Hochzeitsstücke" that the music traverses an array of tonal areas, none of which carry any specific tonal symbolism. Rather the key changes serve for momentary dramatic effect and one could not imagine these movements making a great deal of sense without the text ("Der Spielmann" is as I have mentioned has a tonal scheme that is a convincing analogue to the unfolding plot). It is difficult to imagine the Eighth without its texts either but it is fair to say that the work's goals and dualities, its sense of striving and ultimate attainment, would remain largely intact and in some measure succeed if the work were performed textless.

On a more stylistic level there are of course many parallels between Part II and Symphonies 3 and 4, particularly with the idea of innocence and Mahler's means of expressing it. Prominent too is the progress towards transfiguration or resurrection. The tonic key of E flat and the hushed entrance of the choir for the Chorus Mysticus, all clearly evoke the conclusion of the Second Symphony—some would say to the detriment of the later work. I do not wish to denigrate the work with more charges of self-repetition, but it must be stated that events at the deeper structural levels also remind us of the earlier work.

After the appearance of the Mater Gloriosa, Mahler sets in motion a massive cycle of dominants which accompanies the petitioning on behalf of the fallen Faust by the three woman and the transfigured Gretchen. The finales of both works involve progressions through a cycle of dominants giving the impression of attaining successively higher plateaus on the way to an ultimate goal.

Example 13-11 II-v and VIII-ii—tonal progressions towards E flat major.

Symphony No 2: tonal progression of the fifth movement

Fig. 11 14 27 31 39 46
key C f Db Gb bb Eb

V of V of V — v of V — V of Vβ — Vβ — v — I

Symphony No 8: tonal progression of part II

Fig. 135 142 146 148(-2) 161 172
key C A F D Bb Eb

V of V of V V of Vα Vβ of Vα Vα V I

For all that the tonal pattern of the conclusion of Part II may have a precedent in the Second Symphony, it is entirely appropriate, for reasons to do with the Eighth's own integrity, that there occurs at this point a large-scale cycle of dominants. We must remember that the E major climax of Part I was gained via an analogous tonal progression and that the rest of that movement used cycles of dominants at a background level in the form of two goal-oriented

---

waves in the recapitulation. We cannot fault Mahler's compositional logic in underpinning the Symphony's climactic gesture of petitioning, striving and ultimate attainment with an even larger cycle than that which preceded the "Accende" section of Part I.

The Eighth is a work shrouded in myths and misconceptions—the miraculous speed of composition without the text at hand and the hypothesis that Part II comprises a continuous Adagio, Scherzo and Finale. Mitchell has put both these issues in perspective, both as exaggerated romance and as an ultimately unenlightening attempt to prop up the work's classification as Symphony. The other misconception, that of the role of sonata form in Part I, I have had cause to debate further. I sympathize with the growing tide of those withdrawing their whole-hearted support from the notion (Mitchell and Greene), but at the same time I hope I have uncovered some plausible reasons why Mahler insisted on maintaining at least the vestiges of sonata form. In the end, sonata form and formal gestures generated by the requirements of the text are overlaid and forced to co-exist. Sometimes the requirements of the two form-generating elements are mutual, such as at the D minor setting of 'Infirma nostri'. At other points, principally the recapitulation, one could equally argue that the structural imperatives of sonata form impose themselves on the movement creating goals independent of the text.

Such conflicts between genres, between symphonic form and the dictates of the text, will always ensure that the Eighth remains a problematic work. However, what I hope to have shown is that, in conjunction with thematic cross-references and inter-relationships, the consistency of both the tonal imagery and the insistence on the cycle of dominants as an expressive device throughout the work, Mahler forged a structural bond between the two movements—the correlation of the expressive bond he clearly felt existed between the texts despite their differences in language and creed.

30Donald Mitchell, *Gustav Mahler, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*, 523-6 and 545.
Chapter 14
Symphony No. 9
Part I: First Movement.

As we have seen, the works after the Fifth Symphony tend to rely more on concentric tonal schemes. Where an apparent progression appears, such as in the Seventh, it is of the order of an axial substitution, inherently less dynamic and less relentless in its pursuit of tonal closure than earlier progressive tonality works such as the Fifth (to which it is so often compared). At the same time there are elements in common between the two periods of composition. The idea of the dominant upbeat is still of crucial importance in works such as the Seventh and Tenth Symphonies, but in contrast to earlier works such as the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies where the process of dominant preparation spans the entire work, the technique plays a much reduced role in later compositions. The earlier tactic was for the initial dominant preparation to actually acquire partially substantiated tonicity which was gradually relinquished as the music supplied more information. In a work like the Seventh on the other hand, Mahler does not prolong his dominant preparation to the same degree, and the music very quickly abandons any possibility that the dominant is in fact the tonic. The difference between these later works such as the Seventh and Tenth and those earlier models is that the emphasis has shifted from dramatizing the change in tonal function, from perceived tonic to an actual dominant, to dramatizing the rivalry within the tonic axis itself for the position of primary tonic.

One aspect that is consistent in facilitating either of these form-generating tonal conflicts is the need to avoid unequivocal tonicization. Mahler's methods for achieving these ends are by now familiar. He can either pass over the usual modulation to the tonicizing dominant and replace it with subdominant bias, as in the Sixth Symphony, or modulate within the tonic axis exclusively, as in the Tenth. This prolongs the possibility for a progressive tonal scheme, even in works that eventually lead to a concentric outcome. In the Tenth, the lack of tonicization processes inhibits the tonic F sharp from asserting its primacy, and so axial rivalry, especially from D, is allowed to flourish. It comes as no surprise that the act of withholding definitive tonicization is the cornerstone of Mahler's ability to provide a progressive tonal scheme in the Ninth also, even though the nature of the tonal progression here differs from all his previous efforts.

The Ninth goes against the general tide, both of concentric tonal schemes and ones involving axial rivalry. It is his only work involving a thoroughgoing progressive tonal scheme after the Fifth Symphony. But the Ninth does not merely represent a falling back on tried and true methods. The first five symphonies, including the First (which involves a progressive tonal scheme
in its finale), involve some form of V—I progression over the course of the work. The Ninth, on the other hand, involves a subdominant progression, specifically IVβ—I.

One would expect this reversal to have some emotional or programmatic significance. All the works involving V—I progressions (with the exception of the Fourth) involve both progressive modality, from minor to major, and a corresponding programmatic progression from a negative to a positive disposition. In addition, a most prominent tonal device within works such as the Second and in the concentric Eighth is the use of cycles of dominants within individual movements to express striving towards a desired goal. On the other hand the large body of works that involve movement in the subdominant direction at one structural level or another tend to be associated with the progression into less desirable states, whether it be the disclosure of murder in "Der Spielmann", suicidal melancholy in Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen, an intensification of grief in Kindertotenlieder or the inescapable confrontation with mortality in "Trinklied von Jammer der Erde". It logically follows, given the consistency of Mahler's tonal language and imagery that this unique reversal in the tonal progression would have been summoned into being by a reversal the usual programmatic profile of his earlier works.

Finding the rationale behind the changed direction of tonal progression might be straightforward when one views the work in its entirety and takes into consideration its programmatic content deduced from the circumstances surrounding its composition. But other aspects of the tonal progression in the Ninth make it altogether less straightforward than many of its predecessors. In a work such as the Fourth for example the transfer of tonicity is comparatively easy to trace. The two rivals G and E are constantly juxtaposed either explicitly or implicitly and the transfer of tonicity at the deeper levels is reflected in the changing relationship of the two keys at a foreground level. In the Ninth the interim tonic and the eventual tonic do not come into direct contact. As we shall see, the first movement focuses more on establishing the subdominant B major (IVβα) as a possible and indeed desirable alternative to D major. But when this ends in calamity, it effectively rules out this avenue of exploration for the rest of the work.

Certainly, D major's tonicity falls well short of the unequivocal status of the classical norm. But this in itself does not compel D to relinquish its tonicity. In this respect the demand for a tonal progression stems from the programmatic content and the failure of the first movement to yield a satisfactory solution to its programmatic dilemma. In every respect the Ninth is a "symphony of life and death" and both elements are irreconcilably present in the first movement.1 The life-affirming music centres initially around the D major refrain

---

1 Donald Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death. This volume does not deal with the Ninth specifically but the description is nonetheless appropriate.
and ordinarily one could predict an alternative tonal outcome by projecting the
tonal ramifications should the programmatically antagonistic elements be vic­
torious. But there is no clear-cut tonality associated with the funereal elements
and the lifelessly sparse contrapuntal textures that confirm the presence of
death. In the face of the lack of an obvious alternative, the first movement rais­
ses the question that if tonicity is to be transferred, then upon which key will it
be bestowed?

The first movement employs the usual methods of avoiding tonicization, by
modulating within the tonic axis exclusively in the exposition and by restrict­
modulation to keys of the subdominant axis throughout the development
section. In part the dependence on subdominant modulation can be seen as a
logical background extension of the harmonic implications of the foreground.
Subdominant bias manifests itself in the very substance of the principal them­
atic material, namely the constant presence of B natural (IVα) in the context of
the tonic chord. It is present in both the harp figure at bar 3 and the solo horn
theme from bars 5 to 8. Throughout the movement it is an ever-present feature
of the viola’s accompaniment to the principal theme.

Example 14-1 IX-i, 3—6.

The added sixth which is so prominent in the first movement has led to a
comparison with Das Lied von der Erde. It is important to point out the es­
tential difference in function that this harmony performs in the two works. As
we have already seen in Chapter 12, the sonority of the added sixth and its
converse form—the minor chord with the added seventh, permeates Das Lied
providing a structural basis which links the governing tonal centres of its two
parts, A and C. While the added sixth is one feature among many that the
Ninth shares with Das Lied and especially "Der Abschied", in the later work
the potential to translate the inherent bi-tonal properties of the sonority into the
deeper structural levels is ignored. It is obvious when we are faced with a D
flat major finale that the tonal reorientation of the D major 6th chord does not
have any direct bearing on the background structure. One would have expec­
ted B major (or at least one of its axis relatives) to succeed if the double-tonic
sonority were to have a far-reaching structural influence. Mahler does imbue
B major with goal status in the first movement but subsequent events render
this avenue of tonal progression unobtainable. B major’s claims on tonicity
are short-lived. But by designating it the desired goal of the first movement
and by subsequently failing to realize this goal, Mahler inflicts serious injury to the positive emotional disposition of the movement.

That this symphony is universally interpreted as a statement of farewell is not without evidence, both musical and biographical. The use of the "Lebewohl" motive from Beethoven's sonata of the same name (Op. 81a) in the finale, is pointed out in most commentaries on the work. Mahler's comments in the margin of the short score attest to the valedictory nature of the music. Redlich draws our attention to "... the restatement of the first subject group (cue 8) [which] carries the significant headline: 'O vanished days of youth, O scattered love ...". Barford points to the same passage and notes the theme's similarity to a waltz by Johann Strauss the younger called Freut euch des Lebens ("enjoy life"). In light of Mahler's personal circumstances (the diagnosis of his heart condition) it is difficult not to interpret the movement as a backward glance over a life soon to be ended. But while the movement contains vast contrasts and a climax (bar 314) that amounts to a brutal announcement of death, the view of life offered in the tranquil D major sections does not allow the prospect of death to intrude.

The motivic characteristics of the D major refrain are at the heart of the movement's expression of valediction. David Greene bases much of his discussion on the Ninth on the interplay between the "ewig" and "Lebewohl" motives in the outer movements. The "ewig" motive (f#—e), so named because it sets that word in the final pages of Das Lied, represents a segment, a non-completion, of the "Lebewohl" motive (f#—e—d). As Greene points out, the connection between this theme and a sense of finality is no mere convention based on the precedent of Beethoven's sonata.

To hear these dynamics, listeners must obviously be aware of the harmonic context; they must know that the first note, the F-sharp, is not the final note in the scale, but is a tone that has downward mobility to the final note, D. On hearing the F-sharp, we expect a lower note, in much the same way that we expect a noun to come when we hear the word "toward"... The downward push from F-sharp to D is not, however, nearly so strong as the downward push from F-natural to D would be. In fact, the motif begins almost balanced between the pull of the D and a resistance to movement of any kind.

The "Lebewohl" motive in the major mode maintains a balance between falling to the finality of D and the reluctance to do so. Clearly the "ewig" motive emphasizes the element of reluctance and puts the expression of finality on hold. Similar to the connotations of the "ewig" motive in "Der Abschied",

---

5David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, (New York, 1982), 264.
here Mahler sustains "... the balance between the sense of a coming final end and the sense of being profoundly involved in what is about to end."  

Greene notes how the principal D major theme "... takes excursions into tunes that are reminiscent of Viennese balls."  

He undoubtedly has in mind the leaps of a sixth and octave that introduce the varied second statement of the theme at Figure 2. It is an association that becomes more overt in subsequent recurrences of the refrain, in particular the statement of the theme at bar 148 that Barford cited as being derived from a Strauss waltz. I will discuss this further later in the chapter. Suffice to say here that these historical connotations embedded in the refrain evoke life in all its sweetness at the same time as the motivic features evoke the leave-taking of it. Of course there is a fundamental ingredient of Mahler's allusion to the Viennese waltz that is missing. The music is not in 3/4 time. Mahler's theme is utterly divorced from the physical action that should normally accompany it and it is not beyond the bounds of reason to interpret this as calculated symbolism on Mahler's part, giving the impression that the substance of life is being viewed through the disemboweling eye of memory. Mahler was undoubtedly aware that the dance he was evoking was one that he could no longer (or would soon no longer) participate in. Bruno Walter's impression of the second movement likewise suggests that the dance evocations were meant to intimate imminent death. He writes:

A tragic undertone sounds in the joy and one feels that 'the dance is over'

Earlier I mentioned that the sonority of the added sixth was not destined to have a bearing on the tonal outcome of the work. But Mahler does call on its expressive qualities. In tandem with the connotations of the themes themselves, the pervasive saturation of the tonic triad with non-triadic tones greatly contributes to the impression that the refrain embodies a cherished and desirable view of life. As Greene notes, the "ewig" motive appears at different degrees, namely b—a, c♯—b and a—g. The b—a and c♯—b versions of the motive in conjunction with the ubiquitous viola accompaniment constantly affirm the added sixth. At the same time there is the f♯—e version of the motive in the main theme—a prominent feature of the horns' counter-melody after Figure 1 also. These features combine to create a tonic sonority of a D major triad with both the added sixth and ninth. This is pandiatonism as Slonimsky defines it. The characteristic warmth that it radiates stems from reduced harmonic tension—the added ninth for example makes the dominant lose its contrasting identity, because two of the notes of the dominant triad are already present in the tonic sonority. Similarly the added sixth diminishes the contrast of the subdominant region.

The characteristic harmonic warmth of the principal theme's pandiatonism

---

is at the heart of the sense of "profound involvement" that Greene described. It emanates a relaxed sense of well-being that carries with it little inclination to explore new areas. It could almost be idyllic if it were not for the serious connotations of the themes themselves. On later appearances the characteristic warmth of the principal theme heightens the contrast between the emotional turmoil and the bare, dissociated counterpoint of the contrasting episodes. The turn from major to minor at bar 26, a typical Mahlerism, is more disturbing than usual, even more so than the fate motive of the Sixth Symphony. It causes a grave sense of dislocation as we are wrenched out of the comparatively tensionless pandiatonicism of the opening paragraph.

As Greene noted the "ewig" and "Lebewohl" motives have a greater downward thrust towards the final d when they appear in the minor mode. At bar 27, the horn gives a minor-key version of the "ewig" motive followed by a decorated version. The chromatic theme that follows in the violins reinforces the high degree of contrast with the principal refrain material. At this point I should add that the characteristic D96 harmony that pervades the opening is the vertical expression of the pentatonic scale. Not only have we entered an opposing world in the minor mode but the chromaticism of the theme at bar 29 and the whole-tone implications that arise from its use of the augmented triad (a-c#-f) represents the polar opposite the pentatonic implications of the opening.

It is significant that Cooke describes the theme as one of "bitter protest". Despite its anguished response to the turn to the minor, the theme registers its opposition to the downward pull to finality by avoiding d. In so doing Mahler avoids transforming the horn's "ewig" motive into the "Lebewohl" motive.

Example 14-2 IX-i, 27—32.

Energetic protest and denial of finality gradually reaps success as the music begins to regain the major mode from bar 41. From here the music moves inexorably towards a climax which will eventually reaffirm D major and the principal theme. Prior to the cadence that clinches success comes a theme at bar 44 which will play a major role in both this movement and the finale. It is a chromatically filled in version of the "ewig" motive that Greene and Cooke refer to as the tragic fanfare.

\[Deryck Cooke, \textit{Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music}, 117.\]
In addition to its relationship to the "ewig" motive the tragic fanfare contains a thematic reference that might also bolster the idea of Mahler deliberately evoking elements of his youth. On first becoming acquainted with the Ninth I was struck by the similarity of this theme to prominent thematic cells in the finale of the First Symphony. It may not be entirely coincidental that Mahler chose to give the US premier of the First Symphony on December 16, 1909 while he was still composing the Ninth. The F minor music of the First Symphony's finale is punctuated by a short fanfare—a triplet figure that Cardus referred to as a "chromatic snarl". It later transforms into the head-motive of the D flat major theme at Figure 16. Further on in the movement, the climactic D major breakthroughs contain more traditional fanfare elements and these too form the basis for a strong relationship between the two works.

The relationship between the Ninth's tragic fanfare and the First's chromatic snarl may not be immediately obvious at bar 44, although they have a descending chromatic motion in common. But as the movement progresses, more conventional fanfare elements appear that relate to the corresponding materials in the earlier work. Mahler allows the rhythmic component of the conventional fanfare elements (significantly triplets again) and the "tragic fanfare" theme to cross-fertilize throughout the movement creating a network of palpable references to the First Symphony's finale (see example 14-3, next page).

Despite the name ascribed to it by Cooke and Greene, the tragic fanfare is not at all tragic until later in the movement. It has a lamenting quality in its falling semitones and there is a certain amount of yearning derived from its similarity to the "ewig" motive. But on its first two appearances (bars 44 and 82) it has an heroic attitude partly derived from its context within passages which confidently proceed towards clearly defined goals and tonalities. When Mahler later transforms it by augmenting its intervals into a diatonic version (which first appears in the B flat major section at bar 92 shown in example 14-3), he brings its heroic qualities to the fore. But as we shall see, it is a confidence that diminishes as the movement proceeds.

Like its counterpart in the First Symphony, the tragic fanfare transforms itself into less aggressive, even sentimental guises. Both the aggressive and sentimental elements appear in the wider context of transcending adversity in the First Symphony. In retrospect, the fragments in example 14-3 that belong to the F minor and D flat major music, in many ways the emotional nadir of the earlier work, carry with them a sense of affirmation because they eventually led to the unequivocal triumph of D major. They come from the heat of a battle that Mahler eventually won. By contrast the corresponding materials in the Ninth appear, for the most part, in contexts where D major's tonicity is precarious and all the negative forces, the announcements of death, have gone

---

unchallenged. The D major breakthroughs vanquish the negative forces in the First Symphony (remembering too that it has its own satirical annunciation of death in the third movement). The climax in the first movement of the Ninth effectively ends all hope of attaining a similar breakthrough rendering the return of the tonic key devoid of conviction.

The climax occurs in bar 47, when the movement still has 407 measures to go. Never again does the music seem so glorious. Never again does the song of resignation enter as a climax or as the goal of striving. Between the reappearances of the main theme, the anguished protest is restated; in its subsequent appearances, it simply spends itself, so that when the song of resigned peace reenters we have less and less of a sense of arrival. More and more, it simply happens.\(^{13}\)

Rather than overwhelming or vanquishing the negative elements, the D major refrain appears as the sole available refuge that the music meanders back to when all avenues to transcendence have been blocked.

**Example 14-3 Thematic relationships between IX,i and I,iv.**

Tied up with the emotional characteristics of the refrain, its evocation of life and its tendency to function as a refuge between turmoil-ridden and desolate episodes, is the fragility of D's tonicity. Despite regular recurrences of the refrain and D major throughout the movement, Mahler never allows it to be

\(^{13}\)David B. Greene, *Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality*, 273.
adequately tonicized. He never provides a background level structural dominant and, as the movement progresses and the negative elements demand to be acknowledged, we increasingly sense that the world that D major consistently evokes, and the tonicity of the key itself, will ultimately prove unsustainable, something that the work's progressive tonal scheme will eventually confirm.

Example 14-4 Symphony No. 9 (first movement).

| 1—26 | D  | I  |
| 27—46 | d  | i  |
| 47—79 | D  | I  |
| 80—107 | B♭ | I♭β |
| 108—141 | g  | iv |
| 142—159 | D  | I  |
| 160—167 | B♭ | I♭β |
| 168—181 | E♭-c | IVβ-ivα of IVβ |
| 182—192 | G  | IV |
| 193—201 | g  | iv |
| 202—210 | d  | i  |
| 211—233 | b♭ | i♭β |
| 234—242 | D  | I  |
| 243—266 | D-B♭-Gb-B♭-Gb | I-I♭β-Iα-I♭β-Iα |
| 267—284 | D  | I  |
| 285—303 | B  | IVα |
| 304—308 | Ab | IVα of IVα |
| 309—337 | b/F♯ | ivα/iα |
| 338—364 | D  | I  |
| 365—371 | B♭ | I♭β |
| 372—397 | d  | i  |
| 398—454 | D  | I  |

The exposition (bars 1—107) does not produce a tonicizing dominant, rather it focuses exclusively on the tonic axis, namely B flat (I♭β). The axial relationship between D and B flat is, in this case, particularly close, owing to the foreground presence of interchanging axis dominants. There is a common thematic cell between both the D minor and B flat major sections, the augmented triad a-c♯-f, which forges the bond. Alternately, this can be interpreted as the notes of the dominant axis superimposed on a tonic pedal. The interchangeable nature of axis relatives is illustrated here by the recurrence of the theme at its original pitch at bar 81, though now we are in the context of B flat. The interchangeable dominant f-a-c♯ is merely superimposed on another tonic-axis pedal.
The turmoil of the chromatic theme in D minor and B flat carries the stigma of negativity partly due to the way the music responds to it. Both times it appears, at bars 27 and 80, the music is quick to suppress the tortured chromaticism and the minor mode. In the first D minor passage, the music strives to shake off its own turmoil and eventually discharges all its tension into the D major climax at bar 47. Likewise, the second appearance at bar 80 nullifies the implication of the minor mode after only two bars whereupon the music embarks on a course that has all the makings of a replica of the earlier D major climax.

But for all the will to suppress the negative elements the music already struggles in the attempt to reach an effective climax. A cycle of dominants from bar 92 leads to a forceful perfect cadence in B flat at Figure 6, although Mahler diminishes the sense of arriving at a goal by displacing the full weight of the resolution until the second beat of the bar. The music continues to strive in search of a more emphatic goal. But the final attainment of the tonic chord at bar 105 brings with it no significant thematic event and so, compared to the climax at bar 47, the attempt to attain a significant goal is frustrated. The fanfare materials, the brass triplets, almost appear to be making the goal of B flat more substantial than it actually is. It is a paradox made more acute by the fact that the trumpet fanfares at this point evoke the almost identical fanfares that proclaim D major's victory in the finale of the First Symphony (see example
With the onset of the development the level of contrast with the preceding material of the exposition is extreme. The antiphonal exchange of timpani and horn ultimately outlines an augmented triad on G flat, but there is no hint as to its tonal function nor is there any definite indication as to the prevailing mode. The timpani fragment at bar 111 suggests the lydian mode on G flat—the horn response hints most strongly at G minor. The events at bars 115-16 cloud the issue further. As the G flat pedal continues the trumpet entry suggests the lydian mode on C flat, but the superimposed horn theme derived from the tragic fanfare gives no clear tonal indication at all. With the tonal options proposed, G flat (Iβ), G minor (iv) or more distantly C flat (IVα), the music seems set to either continue the tonic axis emphasis we have had already, or take us in the subdominant direction. Mahler eventually clarifies these tonal and modal ambiguities at bar 119 when the G flat pedal reveals itself as the leading note in a dominant minor ninth in G minor.

Gaining some firmer ground tonally does not instill any greater sense of purpose or direction and the music continues to be steeped in whole-tone lethargy (particularly from the bass clarinet) and the dissociated and aimless style of counterpoint continues unabated. From bar 130 the music begins to drift back into the orbit of the tonic minor. Eventually the D major refrain returns but it carries with it none of the conviction of a sonata-form recapitulation. The search for a tonicizing dominant or some musical process that will make the climax of bar 47 real and sustainable has found only a world of impenetrable grey-ness where no achievable goals present themselves.

This is the refrain that Barford cited as being influenced by a Strauss waltz. Even if the similarities between the two themes were coincidence, the internal structure of Mahler's theme would still carry the same evocation. One recalls Schoenberg's brief analysis of the motivic construction of the Blue Danube waltz in Style and Idea. Mahler's theme follows the same mono-motivic model with each repetition of the motive used to articulate a simple tonic to dominant progression.

This first incidence of the returning refrain involves more than a purely thematic reference. The music proceeds to retrace the tonal contour, not only of the exposition, but of the movement thus far. D major gives way to B flat at bar 160 and after passing through E flat major the music sets in motion a return to G from bar 174, reaching a stable dominant of that key at bar 182. Mahler's insistence on the I—Iβ pairing of D and B flat and the corresponding IV—Iβ pairing of G and E flat confirms the limited tonal scope of the movement so far. The keys D, Bb and G are precisely the areas that the music has concentrated on already and E flat merely represents an axial extension of G.

From this point the movement begins to develop an affinity with the finale

---

14 Arnold Schoenberg, Style and Idea, 400.
of the Sixth Symphony as the music tries to reach an emphatic climax in a
subdominant axis key. Here the goal is a perfect cadence into E flat (IV♭) an-
nounced by the diatonic version of the tragic fanfare, but at the moment where
the goal might be realized (with the attainment of E flat's dominant at bar 198)
a harmonic interruption extinguishes the opportunity. Just as the returning re-
frain that preceded this section was premature in sonata terms and represented
something of a tactical retreat, the events of bar 196-8 reflects the development
section's failure thus far to realize a meaningful goal in both tonal and
programmatic terms. There is no impetus towards attaining a structural dom-
ninant for D which sows the seeds of doubt as to the likelihood of a concentric
outcome for the work as a whole. Mahler implies that salvation might come in
the form of a progression to a subdominant key. But when his attempt to be-
stow goal status on E flat is scuttled, we begin to sense that this too may
prove an unobtainable goal.

After the attempted climax in E flat at bar 196-7 the music collapses into D
minor, with the harmony of the augmented triad over the tonic pedal (d—f—a-
c#) presaging the return of the D minor theme from bar 29 of the exposition.
When the theme does arrive however it is in B flat minor (bar 211), exploiting
the same axis principle of a pivotal augmented triad functioning as an en-
hanced dominant for any of the tonic axis members. In the movement so far,
we have witnessed three juxtapositions of I and I♭. By now the pairing is be-
coming obsessive, almost to the point where it creates an air of frustration in
the movement.

Up until now I have not addressed the issue of the form of this movement. I
have been using sonata-form terminology, exposition and development, partly
for the sake of convenience. Mahler draws the lines of demarcation between
first and second tonal areas and the onset of the development section well
enough, but already the premature return of the principal theme places the
movement's adherence to the sonata model in jeopardy. I have also borrowed
from Lewis in referring to the returning principal theme as a refrain and to the
contrasting sections as episodes which suggests perhaps a hybrid of sonata
form with rondo or song with refrain.¹⁵ I have no desire to try and explain
this movement in terms of generic hybrids. But the fact that the goal structure
of sonata form is increasingly eroded by tonally and thematically undynamic
formal types further jeopardizes D's tonicity.

The B flat minor episode at bar 211 hints at the influence of variation form
as well. It constitutes a large extension and elaboration of the chromatic theme
from bar 29. In both sections the violins take the theme throughout, confined
mainly to their lower register. The theme is punctuated by brief horn entries
and the woodwind presence is limited to a brooding ensemble of bassoons,
clarinets and cor anglais. It is only once the minor modality lifts that the

¹⁵Christopher Orlo Lewis, Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony, 22-23.
strings climb to a higher register and the upper winds enter. Just as tonally the movement seems incapable of striking out on a new path, the thematic development is remarkably stunted as well. The similarities between this passage and that at bar 29 are so marked that it almost constitutes a refrain in itself and as such it underlines the development section's inability to open any new avenues of exploration. We need only compare the development section here with the corresponding section in the Seventh's first movement, which is full of thematic transformations, presenting some of the exposition's themes (the one from bar 19 in particular) in a radically different light. What we have with the B flat minor episode here is a process of magnification, more intense and involved than the original, but ultimately unchanged.

As the anguish subsides in the bars leading up to Figure 13 we are struck by a structural palindrome, very much suggesting someone retracing his steps. This transition out of the B flat minor episode corresponds to the transition into it. After briefly regaining D major at bar 234, the music from bar 237 returns to material based on the augmented triad theme that formed the basis for the transition from bar 204—10. Having retreated from the B flat minor anguish, the music heads back towards the point of departure, the D major refrain via a kind of epilogue which refers back to the dissociated textures of the episode from bar 108.

This transitional section from Figure 13 begins with a despondent rendering of the tragic fanfare on the trombones as if lamenting the previous section's inability to strike out on a tonally dynamic course. The music wanders aimlessly through each of the tonic axis members, from D to B flat and finally to G flat at bar 250. The shift to E flat at bar 254 promises another subdominant axis episode but the music quickly retraces its steps, returning to B flat three bars later. From bar 136, the rising chromatic passage that had previously prepared the refrain gives a clear indication of the refrain's imminent return. The orchestral texture here is practically identical to its predecessor and the transitional theme begins on the exact same pitch, $bb$. Once again we are struck by the movement's inability to find a new path. It retreats from conflict into the security of familiar material. By now the drama inherent in sonata form is all but extinguished.

The refrain theme at bar 269 is a variation on the Strauss-waltz version from bar 148, starting out with the same mono-motivic structure and adhering to the same I—V—I progression in the context of a four-bar phrase. But the texture is rarefied—the full body of the first and second violins is replaced by two solo violins who pass the theme to a solo E flat Clarinet. Compared with its predecessors, this refrain carries with it a sense that its world is becoming more tenuous and fragile. It is a case of the foreground reflecting the background. With no structural dominant forthcoming, D's tonicity is steadily being eroded and the fact that the principal theme is struggling to maintain its
strength of purpose reflects this growing crisis of tonicity.

The crisis over D's tonicity is compounded by the fact that the music has failed to promote a viable alternative. But with increasing excitement (Etwas fließender) the music sets out in E flat major at bar 279, in a sense picking up from the last E flat major event which was interrupted before its perfect cadence could be completed. Once again, the movement continues to exhibit a single-minded desire to bestow goal status on the subdominant axis which, if successful, would almost certainly imply a progressive tonal scheme of the kind we are familiar with. D to E flat, a Vα—I progression, would immediately remind us of the unbridled affirmation associated with the Fifth Symphony's tonal progression. But E flat, which failed in its previous attempt to establish itself, gives way to another subdominant axis member in B major at bar 285. At this point there is a more positive attitude—a sense that the attainment of a significant goal is pending. There is considerable justification for this. Following the example of Das Lied, the possibility of B as a latent tonic has been present from the outset, because of the double tonic complex d-f♯-a-b that saturated much of the opening material and its subsequent recurrences. Attaining a significant B major goal would promote the possibility of a Vβ—I progression (like the Fourth Symphony). Like the D—E flat option, a Vβ—I progression would push towards a positive conclusion, at least on the basis of precedent.

Mahler cadentially confirms B major for a second time at bar 299 before continuing further in the subdominant direction to A flat major. But he sweeps A flat aside from bars 308-13 and embarks on the same cadential process that established B from bars 295-9. Significantly, it bears all the hallmarks of the passage which tried to establish the goal of E flat in the previous episode—using the diatonic version of the tragic fanfare and a sequence of fifths in the bass. But like the attempted E flat climax this too is ill-fated. The sequence only gets as far as B's dominant before octave C naturals in the horns and low brass blare out with a dynamic of triple-forte.

Like a primeval blare, it has no melody, no harmony, and none of the sense of direction that melody and harmony imply. It is as lacking in energy as it is in direction; its first tone is long, then it pulsates in irregular, unpredictable lengths. It so insists on its unpredictableness that the very principle of regularity on which a sense of the future depends seems to be contradicted. At the moment when a goal is most expected and most needed if goals are to make sense at all, time is frozen; the climax is the impossibility of conceiving a goal.16

Greene elucidates the way in which this event inflicts a mortal blow to the programmatic aspirations of the movement. The likely programmatic identity of the interrupting forces themselves is spelt out by their association with Das Lied.16

---

16David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 274.
"Lied von der Erde." Mitchell compares it with the funeral march central to "Der Abschied."

"... the horns' (figure 47) and then the terrifying octave C's (two bars later) anticipate the same terrifying octaves (trombones again) that, in the first movement of Symphony IX, at the moment of intensest climax (two bars before figure 15) unequivocally thunder forth intimations of mortality." 17

Such a programmatic interpretation of this event is difficult to avoid in light of Mahler's state of health. In a letter to Bruno Walter, Mahler described the impact of his heart condition on his mode of living.

An ordinary, moderate walk gives me such a rapid pulse and such palpitations that I never achieve the purpose of walking—to forget one's body. 18

The admission is extremely relevant considered in the context of this movement. In the passage leading up to the calamity of bar 314 we can easily picture Mahler "forgetting himself" (or attempting to forget himself) striving and exerting himself in the manner to which he was accustomed only to be pulled up and brutally reminded of his infirmity. Mahler felt the restrictions placed on his physical activity most keenly and, in the above-quoted letter, he laments that the spiritual release of violent exercise, to which he was accustomed, 19 was no longer open to him.

On a more structural level the events here, in conjunction with the ill-fated endeavours of E flat major in the previous episode, evoke the hammer-blows in the finale of the Sixth Symphony. This is not surprising given that it is the same tonal refuge—the subdominant axis—that the music aspires to. In both works the music is on the verge of an important climax, one that would greatly increase the chance of a progressive tonal scheme that would carry with it an escape in programmatic terms form the work's negative elements. But at the point of resolution these aspirations are brutally extinguished. The movement has failed to provide adequate tonicization of the initially proposed tonic of D major and its attempt to elevate a latent contender for tonicity ends in disaster. The music that follows reflects that failure.

... the four-square fragment played by the harp in the introduction (bars 3—6) takes on a funereal tread; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the funereal tread it has had from the beginning now becomes clear. Over the notes Mahler writes as a direction to the performers, "like a ponderous cortege," and he tosses in a few trumpet fanfares like those in the dirges in his Second and Fifth Symphonies. 20

The harp figure that Greene mentions punctuates this passage all the way to the tonic return at bar 347 in a kind of irregular ostinato. Tonally the passage plays on the ostinato's ambiguity, which predominantly centres on B. But the

17 Donald Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 362.
18 Gustav Mahler, Selected Letters, edited by Knud Martner, 324.
20 David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 270—1.
flattened seventh in the ostinato (A natural) and the minor ninth provided by the trumpet fanfares of bar 327 would ordinarily imply the dominant of E minor. But the passage exhibits no desire whatsoever to resolve in the tonally appropriate manner—it merely persists in a state of goal-less limbo. In short the style of invention corresponds to the passage that began the development section from bar 108. They involve the same musical materials, the ostinato figure, the disconsolate horn renderings of the "ewig" motive, fanfare elements and harmonically unsupported and somewhat spectral string themes.

From bar 340, fragments of the familiar D major music gradually re-enter and the music falls back into the D major refrain. Once again we do not feel that the music is compelled to return to the principal theme by the dynamics of sonata form—rather it returns because there appears to be no other choice. For Lewis, the refrain at bar 347 constitutes the recapitulation and although I do not agree with the tonal justifications he provides, the residue of sonata form can be perceived through purely thematic considerations.21 The version of the principal D major theme here closely resembles the opening whereas the two earlier refrains are clearly more varied. (It is significant that the refrains at bars 148 and 267 are marked Tempo I—this one is marked Wie von Anfang).

But it soon reveals itself to be no conventional restatement of the opening theme. Its second statement at Figure 16 differs significantly from any previous occurrence. Up until now the degree of contrast between the D major material and the contrasting sections has been firmly drawn. Mahler never allows the tortuous chromaticism that dominates the theme from bar 29 to infect the principal material, which remains diatonic at each appearance. Here for the first time chromatic tensions shatter the refrain's modal purity and shatters along with it the reminiscing and life-affirming character it has always had. Augmented fifths and diminished octaves combine with neapolitan harmony (bar 359) to distort the song of resignation into an embittered song of defiance. Noteworthy too is that one of the more palpable songs of reminiscence, the Strauss-waltz allusion, appears as a subordinate contrapuntal line at bar 360 in the violas and cellos. It too is corrupted by chromaticism and its point of entry relative to the predominant string theme destroys the characteristic simplicity of its four-bar phrasing. It is as if the refrain theme has finally been forced to acknowledge the movement's antagonistic elements and in so doing has laid itself open to their intrusion. This intrusion of reality is the underlying idea behind the entire work. Just as D's tonicity will eventually prove unsustainable, the escapism offered by its associated thematic material is stripped of its ability to function as a refuge.

21Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, 21-2.
At 365 Mahler swings back to D's constant tonal companion, B flat. Once again foreground events confirm the axial relationship—D's dominant merely functions as Vα of B flat. Like the development section, the recapitulation adheres almost rigidly to the exposition’s preordained tonal patterns and associations. I can only emphasize again how restricted the movement is in terms of tonal options and how this reflects the lack of obtainable goals in the programmatic sense. Following the B flat major section and a truncated recapitulation of the chromatic D minor theme, there finally comes a fresh avenue of tonal exploration. But the future it evokes is the antithesis of the life-affirming D major music.

The episode from bar 376 appears even more tonally and stylistically detached from the main material of the movement than any previous episode. Dominating the section are two dissociated contrapuntal lines on solo flute and horn with the cellos and double basses providing a third. The very stylistic independence of the passage in combination with its placement at a point in the movement where conflict is traditionally beginning to subside, is profoundly disturbing. In the larger context of the Symphony it has a premonitory disposition, presaging the desolate, dissociated two-part counterpoint in the finale. The development section started and ended with similarly dissociated textures but never before have the melodic lines spun themselves out to such lengths and there is not even an ostinato pattern in the bass to emphasize any sense of forward motion.
Despite the hint of A minor tonality, there is no implication of a late structural dominant that will ensure D's tonicity. The lack of any thematic or stylistic connection between this passage and the main movement and the fact that at no time does it set up D major as a desired goal ensures that it remains disconnected from the main body of the movement. But it should be kept in mind that A minor is the key of the third movement and that it belongs to the same axis as the eventual tonic D flat. In light of the lack of any successful tonicization of D and the overt stylistic dislocation of this passage, A minor presents itself here as a tonal rival. Mahler is giving us a glimpse into the stylistic and tonal future of this Symphony, the world of the last two movements.

The relationship with the finale is compounded by the abrupt exit from this episode. D minor re-enters at bar 391 with the barest minimum of harmonic preparation and the change in texture only serves to heighten the sense of the music being rescued from a potentially destructive train of thought—a conscious act of turning away. It is an anguished response indeed, comprising simultaneous versions of the tragic fanfare and the chromatic theme from bar 29. The role of the tragic fanfare here provides a direct link with bars 11–14 in the finale where the music responds in a similar way, protesting against the first intrusion of the desolate two-part counterpoint in the tonic minor.

Example 14-7 IX-i, 390-1 IX-iv, 11-14.

I must emphasize the significance of the music's responsiveness at this point. Throughout the movement, and in particular in the development section, Mahler keeps his full-textured refrains and the dissociated counterpoint from coming into direct contact. Once his episodes have spent themselves he engineers the progress back to the refrains by long meandering transitions. The temporal isolation of the refrains, together with their maintained modal
purity (consistently in the major mode and diatonic) ensures that they appear as inviolable entities, unaffected by the negative elements that surround them. Already the intrusion of chromaticism into the principal theme at Figure 16 responds to the influence of the negative elements in the movement. This responsiveness presupposes acknowledgement, in contrast to the avoidance of direct confrontation that the movement embodied earlier and this admission of reality further erodes the tonic's ability to function as a safe haven.

The events of bar 391 come as the second in a series of responsive musical events in the recapitulation. A third comes at the outset of the coda as a solo horn plays the diatonic version of the tragic fanfare (see Example 14-3) Its resignation-filled character indicates the changing disposition of the movement. We need to remember that it is precisely this version of the tragic fanfare that is the focal point of B major's ill-fated attempt to gain tonicity. It also features in the climax of the first B flat major section at bar 92 and in the failed attempt to establish E flat at bar 196—the precursor of B major's failure and collapse at bar 314. Aside from the occasional period of despondency (Figure 13 and following) this version of the tragic fanfare has been associated with heroic endeavour and the fact that it is so sadly subdued at bar 408 suggests that the acknowledgement of which I spoke earlier really amounts to an admission of defeat.

I noted in Example 14-3 that there was some thematic inter-relationships between the Ninth and the First Symphony. In Chapter 1, on the history of the term "progressive tonality" I sounded a note of caution against placing too great an emphasis on the idea of dramatic key symbolism. Although Mahler seems to have forged subjective associations between specific tonalities and specific programmatic ideas, it is totally unsatisfactory to interpret the work's effectiveness solely on this basis as Tischler tried to do. It is the internal relationships between the various tonalities in a Mahler symphony that make it a convincing vehicle of expression, not the keys themselves. Having said that I also noted that there appeared certain symbolic relationships, such as that between tragedy and the key of A minor. A similar case could well be made here for D major, seeing it carried the triumphant conclusion to Symphonies 1, 3 and 5. Considering the allusions to the First Symphony, and in particular the finale of that work, the choice of D major for this movement might well constitute another reference to the past. Significantly, the failure of D major to achieve unequivocal tonicity might further suggest that such triumphant goals were, for Mahler, no longer possible.

As the coda progresses, foreground features give a highly condensed review of the main tonal areas of the development section. Beginning at bar 416, the harmony shifts through a descending chain of thirds outlining the

---

subdominant axis G-Eb-B(Cb). Not for the first time in this thesis a comparison must be drawn with the first movement of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier*, a work that broke new ground in the use of the subdominant axis to avoid a tonicizing dominant in the first movement of a multi-movement work. The technique, at opposite ends of an era, fulfills the same compositional aim—displacing the symphonic weight (created by unequivocal tonicization) from the first movement. Only in the latter stages of the work will the question of tonicity be irrevocably settled, in Mahler's case, with the tonicization of a different key altogether.

The movement's conclusion brings us back to the refrain theme. Again the music suggests a backward glance to the development section—specifically the refrain from bar 269 which also featured the solo violin. Both passages evoke the Strauss-waltz variant of the principal theme and in light of the movement's catastrophic events and D's failure to secure unequivocal tonicity it is difficult not accept this final statement as valedictory. Although the added sixth remains to imbue the theme with its characteristic pandiatonic warmth, the theme has lost some of its vibrancy due to the absence of the violas' customary F♯-A-B-a ostinato.

The Strauss allusion disintegrates as the oboe plays increasingly augmented versions of the "ewig" motive. But the movement is unable to summon a gesture of absolute closure. This is not surprising given that the movement has spent its entirety trying to explore different tonal avenues that might avoid direct confrontation with death and the finality inherent in the "Lebewohl" motive.

After the oboe has held the E for four slow measures and before the E dies away, the D that is the last note of the "Lebewohl" motif is played by piccolo and strings. But the D is played two octaves higher, and because of the wide separation it does not attenuate the "ewig" motif's evocation of a perpetual absence of closure. One is simultaneously aware of "Lebewohl" and its finality and of "ewig" and its uncanny openness.²³

I would suggest that the insufficient tonicization of D renders any emphatic gesture of closure impossible. As the first movement closes it carries with it the sense that both the programmatic and tonal future of the work lies, for better or worse, somewhere beyond the realms of D major. The emotionally sustaining world of reminiscence surrounding the tonic and efforts to reach some form of transcendence in the region of the subdominant axis have proven to be unsustainable in the face of violent annunciations of death. The end result is that the movement's final pages leave us in a state of limbo. As Greene puts it.

The restatement of the theme begins with a wistful tenderness that remembers the past and yearns for the future that it knows it will not have.²⁴

It is the central movements that define the tonal future of the work—one where D major and the emotional sustenance of recollection and reminiscence find no place and the idea of transcending adversity is barely conceivable. We begin to sense that death, which announced itself so forcefully at bar 314 is not only inevitable but imminent. Ultimately the finale is a response to this inevitability.

Part II:
Second and Third Movements.

Barford considers the second movement to be something of a miscalculation:

The next movement, a tedious and far too expansive Ländler, does not rivet the listener's attention like the first. Its main thematic substance is a trivial commonplace of the Viennese idiom, and it is not redeemed by the burden of development it has to bear."25

I propose that the movement's inability to rise above the commonplace was part of Mahler's strategy. Here is another movement that presents a doomed-to-failure attempt to evoke the past, not only from the past of musical history but from the more carefree days of Mahler's own creative youth. There is some resemblance between the head-motives of the principal theme here and the early Wunderhorn song Ablösung im Sommer, but more importantly both the step-wise ascent through the interval of a fifth at the opening and the rustic energy of the theme at bar 10 evokes the First Symphony's Scherzo. Such stylistic backward glances were nothing new for Mahler. But references to the Wunderhorn period, such as in the first Nachtmusik movement of the Seventh, suggested a composer genuinely revelling in a musical idiom still very dear to him. Here such attempts to evoke the past are increasingly burdened with a sense of futility as the movement progresses.

The lack of genuine Ländler spirit in the movement has not gone unnoticed.

The scherzo, in C, is a Ländler—a Ländler divested of all charm, life and significance, presenting the 'dance of life' as something utterly tawdry, stupid and empty."26

Some of the dance materials from the Ländler cross over into the third movement creating a sustained element of caricature in the central movements.

The Ländler and the Rondo Burlesque allude to the kinds of activities—the whirl of life symbolized by the Strauss waltz and the Lehar operetta—that people use to occupy themselves and hide the ultimate futility of life behind a facade of apparently meaningful commotion. By exposing these activities to caricature and showing how helpless they are to resist such distortion, the

26Deryck Cooke, Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music, 117.
middle movements suggest not only that the temporal process is empty and meaningless but also that the emptiness, as well as the pretense of not being futile, is ugly.27

Greene notes that Mahler's waltz-evocations in the first movement are by no means "... stigmatized as ephemeral ...".28 In contrast, the second movement contains a more overt element of self-parody, but this fails to detract from the significance of the two movements shared relationship between dance and life. Both movements follow the same emotional trajectory. Mahler imbues the first movement refrain with a glowing warmth in its early stages just as the Ländler is not totally devoid of rustic charm and vigour at the outset. But both become gradually divested of their sense of emotional well-being.

The waltz evocations in the first movement are already divorced from the physical dimension of life by their not being in 3-4 time. But they also become increasingly less full-bodied as the movement progresses in tandem with the insufficient tonicization of D. Because the music never succeeds in repeating the ecstatic climax of bar 47, one senses that the increasingly disembodied refrains are a direct response to this failure. The solo violin in subsequent recurrences of the refrain material has a fragile delicacy, especially when these passages are contrasted with the textural richness of the opening. In addition, at Figure 16 the refrain as an evocation of life in all its sweetness is poisoned by chromaticism.

Mahler corrupts the rustic simplicity of the principal theme of the second movement in the same way. Its orchestration becomes dry and thin and increasingly prone to chromatic intrusions as the movement progresses. In short, just as with the first movement's principal theme, the Ländler is never again as positive as it is in its opening pages.

It is the central movements, the second Abteilung, that plot the Ninth's tonal destiny—a destiny that is not fully revealed until we reach the D flat major finale (the third Abteilung). The tonal implications of the second movement are by no means straightforward and should be dealt with first before discussing the programmatic implications of the thematic material. The difficulty arises from ascribing a function to the C major tonality of the Ländler in the wider context of the Symphony.

The Ninth is unique in Mahler's output in that the eventual tonic is not drawn from a collection of explicitly-stated rivals. The symphony eventually coalesces or converges on the hitherto unstated D flat. In the context of the work as a whole, the second movement is transitional, helping to facilitate the transfer of tonicity from D to the A-F-D♭ axis. The fact that C major does not represent a possible candidate for tonicity is reflected in part by the decay of the principal theme's identity. In programmatic and tonal terms, the Ländler

27 David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 294.
28 David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 264
represents yet another unsustainable and soon-to-be-discarded option. In the latter stages of the first movement, the only other tonality to suggest itself as a possible rival was the programmatically undesirable A minor. This is to be the key of the third movement. But with the second movement starting out in C major the symphony remains tonally uncommitted. C major does little to clarify the work's overall tonicity—it neither bolsters the position of the previous tonic nor does it suggest a new direction with any conviction. As a member of the supertonic axis relative to D, the relationship between the two is one of tonal ambivalence. Further information needs to be provided to designate C as the dominant of the dominant (Vβ of A), the subdominant of the subdominant (IV of IV) or a whole-tone step en route to the first movement's most frequently-used axis relative, B flat (Iβ). For reasons we will explore later, there is little likelihood as the movement progresses that it could set in motion its own independent tonicization process which might override the first movement's ineffectual tonicization of D.

Example 14-8 Symphony No. 9 (second movement).

1—89 C I
90—147 E Iα
148—217 Eb Vβ
218—260 F IV
261—312 D IVα of IV
313—332 C I (V of IV)
333—368 F IV
369—422 C I
423—444 Eb Vβ
445—465 Gb Vβ of Vβ
466—485 Eb Vβ
486—515 Bb V of Vβ
516—577 C I
578—605 c i
606—621 C I

As the tonal diagram of the movement shows the first section establishes the tonic-axis relative E (Iα) before pursuing a structural dominant in E flat major (Vβ). The possibility for a prolonged dominant fades at bar 198 when the music briefly returns to C major. A chain of thirds (C-A♭-F-D-F) over the next twenty bars leads to the central section, a new Ländler theme in the key of F major based on the falling second motive, the "ewig" motive from the first movement.

Tonally, the movement outlines a large-scale ternary form whose primary centres are C and F. The other most prominent key, E flat, features in both the
outer sections providing a local structural dominant for C (V♭). But as with the subdominant bias in the first movement, there is a potential doubt as to whether the C-F-C scheme indicates a I—IV—I progression in C or a V—I—V progression in F, in terms of the overall tonicity of the Symphony. That C functions so overtly as the dominant to F and the fact that the F major Ländler occurs twice before the tonic is restated, gives the central section considerable stability. This is reminiscent of the third movement of the Third Symphony, which, although beginning and ending in C minor appeared to equally justify a V—I—V scheme in F on the basis of the wider F major context of the first part of the Symphony and, internally, because of the sheer magnitude and stability of the posthorn episodes. The issue is not quite as clear cut here, the Symphony's wider tonal context is still ambiguous, and as a result, the ability of F (or one of its axis relatives) to take over tonicity becomes just another latent possibility.

If C major or one of its axis relatives is to become the tonic it would require confirmation here or in the ensuing movements just as would the scenario of F becoming tonic. But even in the latter stages of this movement, C major does not receive the kind of goal status that we expect of a tonic key. The return of C after the F major central section is quite unusual. Rather than the expected celebration that attends such recapitulatory gestures (compare with the Scherzo of the First Symphony for example) the returning principal theme is drained of all its confidence. The bassoons are no longer supported by the violas and the dryer tones of the oboes answer this phrase instead of the more full-bodied clarinets at the opening. The gusto of the second violins entry at bar 10 is replaced by a lone piccolo. The effect is a curious one. The piccolo seems at a loss to know what to do with its thematic charge. It comes in at the wrong place and upon finding itself totally inadequate to the task of being rustic and robust, apologetically alters the theme before making an embarrassed exit. It tries to re-enter at bar 379 with the same result.

Of equal importance, and what is analogous to the events at Figure 16 in the first movement, is the intrusion of the antagonistic elements from the episodes. In the first movement the antagonist was tortured chromaticism—here it is bland whole-tonality. The process of modal corruption has already been a feature of the movement. The E major waltz theme at bar 90, despite the occasional chromatic colouring maintains a predominantly diatonic disposition. As a result it is slightly comical rather than sardonic. But when the theme returns in the key of D at bar 261 (see example 14-10), the initial descending diatonic scale is transformed into a whole-tone scale and instead of being comic, the waltz becomes "tawdry, stupid and empty." 29

The principal theme undergoes the same process of corruption. The diatonism of the opening gives way to whole-tone emptiness (see Example 14-9).

29Deryck Cooke, Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music, 117.
In addition to the intrusion of whole-tonality the theme's diatonicism is increasingly coloured by minor key inflections and descending chromatic lines from bar 387. When the vigorous string theme from bar 10 finally appears, it is given first in the cellos at Figure 23 and then, somewhat pathetically, on a solo viola at bar 390. In the first instance the three-note anacrusis begins to emulate the original gusto but falls away to an unobtrusive piano dynamic. After three bars it is already turning to the minor mode. The entirely literal major-key, solo-viola statement that follows is out of step with the minor mode of its accompanying voices, giving it an air of unreality, a sense that it is precariously close to being forced out of existence altogether. All in all the effort to revive the principal Ländler is a failure and the movement only begins to regain some sense of forward momentum when the giddy crudities of the waltz material re-emerge after bar 406.

**Example 14-9 IX-ii, principal theme bar 1—7 and 369—75.**

Similarly sapped of all energy and confidence is the final appearance of the C major music (from bar 523). The three-note anacrusis that brought forth the
vigorous theme at bar 10 frequently announces itself but the theme itself fails to materialize even in a less masculine form. From bar 578 the music equals Mahler's most spectral creations such as the Scherzo of the Seventh. The mode darkens to C minor and for a brief moment we are lead into a world of bizarre dissociated counterpoint, primarily between solo viola, horn and double bassoon, forging a link with the dissociated flute-horn counterpoint from the first movement (bar 376—390) and with the similar passages of contrapuntal desolation in the finale.

Comparing the fates of the various thematic strands in this movement gives a clear indication of the future direction of the Symphony and also reinforces the transitional function of this movement and its C major tonality. Note that the "tawdry" waltz that appears at bars 261 and 486 maintains its identity without any trouble. Indeed it grows more antagonistic and irrepressible (to the point where it's reappearance in the Rondo hardly surprises us). As shown in Example 14-10 the theme itself is a parody of the waltz in E major from bar 90. Whole-tonality infects the diatonic version of the theme, disfiguring it with mockery which becomes more virulent on its final appearance in B flat at bar 486. This is in marked contrast to the Ländler theme which becomes more disembodied as the movement progresses and the "ewig"-based F major Ländler which is confined to the contrasting role of a trio and plays no further part. It is significant too that this waltz theme is actually the embryo for the "Lebewohl" theme in the finale.

Example 14-10 IX-ii 261—4 and IX-iv, 3—4.

The corruption of the principal theme and the attendant voiding of C's goal status effectively rules out the possibility of C assuming overall tonicity. As
for the original candidate, D major, the second movement does not reinforce its claim either. The D major waltz at bar 261, coming between the two F major Ländler episodes carries a tonal function subsidiary to F (I–IVα–V–I). But even if we admit the possibility that D (or its axis relative B flat) could stand independently and that its presence actively restated D’s claim to tonicity, the very substance of the music would seem to contradict such a claim. The programmatically favourable aspects associated with the D–B♭ axis in the first movement are nowhere apparent in either of the passages in these keys in the Ländler. Even though the waltz is more vividly evoked (at least this music is in 3-4 time) it has nothing in common with the programmatically desirable first-movement waltz evocations. Rather than offering even the most fragile of havens, the episodes in D and B flat are the embodiment of futility and ugliness.

Because of the subordinate status of the D major "Lebewohl" waltz it creates a situation where, in the event of F or one of its other axis relatives becoming tonic, the new tonic will be able to exert its primacy by assimilating this D major theme, something akin to a sonata-form resolution of a structural dissonance. To a lesser extent, hearing D in a subdominant relationship to F or one of its axis relatives (A or D♭) in the ensuing movements would also compound D’s subordinate status. Either event would serve to reinforce the work’s determination not to end in D. This is precisely what happens in the Rondo Burlesque.

The Rondo Burlesque begins in A minor and moves to the subdominant D at bar 79. Significantly the first important tonal event of the movement reinforces the functional status acquired by D in the previous movement. But by bar 109 D gives way to F major, a tonic axis relative of A (I♭). This F major section brings to fruition the scenario proposed above. The theme at bar 109 relates directly to the D major theme from bar 261 in the previous movement. Example 14-11 IX-iii, 109—11.
As a result, the structural dissonance inherent from the I—IVα—I progression in F in the central Ländler section of the second movement resolves in favour of F major. In so doing, the status of D relative to F specifically, and to the A-F-Db axis generally, is emphatically rendered subordinate. This marks the first of a series of events that redefine D's tonal function within the wider context of the Symphony.

The F major section is brutally barged aside by a highly contrapuntal section in A flat minor at bar 180. This constitutes a structural dominant (vα), one that appears to set up the return of the principal A minor theme as a desired goal, and as such it represents the most goal-oriented tonal process encountered in the work so far. Mahler resumes the principal theme at bar 198 which, in turn, leads to a section (bar 262) where A minor assimilates F major's whole-tone theme. This reinforces A minor as the principal tonic but in addition, by exploiting the axial mobility inherent in the theme's whole-tone relationships, Mahler reinforces axial mobility operating at the deeper structural level—a principal that will eventually allow the hitherto unstated D flat to assume tonicity. D flat is the only axis member that has not had the opportunity to give this theme but, as shown in Example 14-10, this whole-tone theme constitutes the model for the opening of the principal "Lebewohl" theme in the finale. As soon as the finale is reached, we become aware of a completed axial cycle of transformations involving this one thematic idea.

Example 14-12 Symphony No. 9 (third movement).

The third movement, as the title denotes, is a rondo—and the period up to bar 310 constitutes the first A-B-A structural component. Aside from subsidiary excursions into D and A flat minor, the primary tonal centres have been the tonic axis members A and F. The second episode beginning at bar 311 seems intent on tonicizing the one remaining tonic axis member, but Mahler interrupts the progress towards D flat major with a prolonged section in D major. This is the crucial and final affirmation of the subdominant status of D, making the possibility of returning to that key as tonic even more remote.
The horn theme and the accompanying contrapuntal line in the bass at bar 311 suspends tonality between two axis relatives. As Example 14-13 shows, the horn theme implies A major because it outlines that triad in its first four bars and because its second phrase also cadences on to A. Modally, the theme and its accompanying line imply C sharp minor, due to the presence of d# in the horn and both d# and b# in the lower voice. The sequence is a cycle of fifths in the dominant direction from the original A—c# complex (E[Ab]—g#[ab] follows at bar 320). The diagram of the movement (Example 14-12) shows that the sequence progresses as far as the Gb-bb complex which would, if the sequence were to continue one step further (and the music gives no real hint to the contrary), take us to Db-f. D major comes as an interruption rather than as the logical outcome and so it registers as a structural dissonance.

Example 14-13 IX-iii, 311—19.

The D major section takes over one of the counter-melodies from the previous contrapuntal section, first given by the oboe at bar 320. Deryck Cooke describes the theme in its original form as a "lewd grimace".

Suddenly the pandemonium is stilled by a visionary episode in D, which looks back to the key and near serenity of the first movement's main theme. The material of this episode is the 'lewd grimace', given a calm diatonic dignity by the trumpet, and later transformed by the violins into a passionate theme of supreme beauty.\(^\text{30}\)

It is clear that the expressive thrust of this section is utterly against the tide of the movement, as the attempt to beautify the "lewd grimace" attests. The theme in its original form taunts D major's calm serenity at bar 444 and the main theme from the preceding section tries ominously to re-establish itself. It is Mahler at both his ironic and heart-wrenching best. But the black humour and tragic incongruity strikes deeper than the obvious juxtaposition of extreme

opposites—of the freakish E flat clarinet instrumentation at bars 445 and 454 and the "supreme beauty" of the solo trumpet and solo viola above divided strings (bar 482 and following). These interruptions, by material from the main body of the movement, are a constant reminder of the unsustainable nature of this D major vision in the tonal sense as well, and that the main thrust of the movement is keen to resume its original course. The intruding material maintains a somewhat impatient and even belligerent stance towards the D major vision. The clarinets at bar 444 respond to the attempts to beautify the "lewd grimace" with utter derision, insisting on the vulgar version as the authentic one. Because the tonal reality of the work now lies more firmly than ever within the A-F-Db axis we sense that the interjecting parties have truth and reality on their side. For all that this vision is desirable (it is as if Mahler can not bear to part with it—holding the interjecting material at bay so as to turn back for one final glance at bar 484) the forces against it are irrepressible and the movement resumes its previous course at bar 522.

The subordinate status of D reflects the changing emotional disposition of the work brought about by the Rondo. In the previous movements the protagonists, the principal materials, have been diatonic major-key material. They have struggled to maintain their identity against an onslaught of antagonistic elements such as tortured chromaticism and whole-tonality that have comprised the episodes. With the Rondo the positions are reversed—the principal materials are chromatic and in the minor mode; the episode we are presently discussing is diatonic major. But whereas the recurring principal material in the earlier movements became infected by antagonistic elements, the D major episode makes no impact on the music that follows it. In fact the A minor material accumulates more vehemence as it flies inexorably to its conclusion. In this sense, the Rondo Burlesque represents the first full acknowledgement of the negative forces that the previous movements have tried to avoid. No longer is minor-key chromaticism purely the domain of episodes and something that the music retreats from. Here it is explicit and openly stated from the outset. One could even say that it is embraced despite the bitterness and anger that is the music's essential characteristic.

Almost every commentator notes the valedictory nature of the Ninth; that it is a work written under the shadow of imminent death. Kennedy plays down the autobiographical component of the Ninth and his views are to be applauded for emphasizing the universality of Mahler's works. The universality of the Ninth in particular is reinforced when we assess the chronological sequence of emotional states that the Symphony traverses across its four movements. In many ways they correspond to those Elizabeth Kübler-Ross has described as the stages that a terminal patient goes through before dying.

The dying patient has to pass through many stages in his struggle to come to grips with his illness and his ultimate death. He may deny the bad news for a while and continue to work "as if he were as well and strong as before . . . . Sooner or later he will have to to face the grim reality, and he often reacts with an angry "why me?" to his illness."\(^3\)

She continues that stages of depression, preparatory grieving and eventual acceptance follow.

I admit to being tentative about applying too rigorously the psychological analogy but it is nevertheless compelling. The first two movements have their share of denial. In a way, they show Mahler trying to carry on work as usual, evoking the Viennese musical forms that were obviously so dear to him. As already stated the Rondo is characterized by anger and bitterness. In a symphony where the composer's physical infirmity is a constant backdrop, Mahler appears in this movement to fight back with the one weapon at his disposal—defying his physical infirmity with a tour de force of his mental agility. Mahler headed the sketch of this movement with the dedication "to my brothers in Apollo"—a testament to the contrapuntal prowess it illustrates.\(^4\)

It is significant too that the Adagio centres on passages that might well be described as self-grieving. Both Greene and Cooke refer to the hymn-like qualities of the D flat major music which carries funereal associations at the same time as it "... pours out passionately Mahler's love of life . . .".\(^5\) Mahler's uninhibited embracing of the "Lebewohl" motive and its implications of finality is central to this expression of grief. The "Lebewohl" sections are interspersed with episodes of bleak depression before eventually resolving to a calm acceptance.

As Kübler-Ross suggests, anger is the first stage towards acceptance inasmuch as both these emotional responses presuppose acknowledgement. In this respect the analogy applies as much to the tonal structure as to the surface characteristics of the music, given that the Rondo expounds for the first time the probability that tonicity lies on the dominant axis relative to D. The movement intimates what the eventual tonal reality will be and in so doing confirms, with the benefit of hindsight, that D's tonicity was unreal or at least so at odds with the negative forces in operation in the first movement as to be unsustainable.

While the first movement was in progress, the fragility of D's tonicity gradually emerged—suggested more by the movement's inability to create goal-oriented tonal structures for its recurring principal theme and by that theme's subsequent inability to maintain its own identity than by the palpable existence of a clearly-defined tonal and thematic rival. The third movement brings with

\(^3\)Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, *Questions and Answers on Death and Dying*, (New York, 1974), 1.

\(^4\)Michael Kennedy, *Mahler*, 149.

\(^5\)Deryck Cooke, *Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music*, 118.
it the first manifestation of a palpable tonal rival—one which unequivocally places the original tonic in a subordinate relationship to it.

In terms of internal tonicization processes within the movements themselves A minor and eventually D flat do little more than any of the previous pretenders to secure tonicity. Neither movement is in sonata form or involves an emphatic tonic-defining chain of dominants as do the conclusions of the Second and Eighth Symphonies for example. I have suggested that, in part, D flat's claim to tonicity comes about via the gradual absorption of the D major waltz theme from the second movement into the context of the A-F-D♭ axis something akin to a tonic-affirming sonata resolution spanning the last three movements. But by and large our ability to accept the eventual tonicity of D flat is something akin to a undesirable leader arising out of a power vacuum. For all that the A minor and D flat music of the last two movements present less desirable emotional states (certainly a far cry from the life-affirming ecstasy of the climax at bar 47 in the first movement), one senses that they are embraced because they are the only admissible realities.

Part III:
Fourth Movement—Adagio.

Although this chapter has readily expounded reasons why D major's tonicity is unsustainable, the opening of the Adagio comes as something of a shock. Even though events in the Rondo allow us to accept D flat as the tonic, this in no way equates to the kind of goal-oriented processes that established the final tonality in say the Fourth or Fifth Symphonies. In those works the eventual tonic is explicitly stated and invested with goal status well before the finale. The D-flat Adagio confirms the claim of the A-F-D♭ axis established in the central movements, but we cannot escape the fact that D flat has never been heard in the role of tonic on any structural level at any time in the work. Despite the injury to D's credibility as the work's governing tonality, there is still the weight of tradition and even an emotional pull towards D—especially since the first movement contained the Symphony's only moments of unbridled joy and affirmation. For all that the first three movements have indicated the unsustainability of D's tonicity, D still exerts a residual claim.

The unison introduction provides no relief to the uncertain situation surrounding tonicity although the most likely tonal interpretations point towards the A-F-D♭ axis rather than back towards D. The theme could conceivably be an unharmonized melody in F flat (E) or perhaps less likely a phrygian melody on A flat. Coming from the A minor context of the Rondo either possibility could suggest a dominant upbeat in D flat (V+i or V). The third possible interpretation is that the theme is merely a fragment in the melodic minor of D flat. With any of these three interpretations the expected note after the step-wise
descent from $c^b$ to $g^b$ in the second bar is $f^b$. The onset of the hymn at bar 3 resolves the issue of tonality in favour of D flat major and, by displacing the expected F flat in favour of F natural, also brings about a tierce de Picardie. In so doing Mahler provides the first indication of the conflict between tonic major and minor that will dominate the movement.

Example 14-14 Symphony No. 9 (fourth movement).

\[
\begin{array}{c|c}
1-27 & Db & I \\
28-48 & c# & i \\
49-69 & Db & I \\
70-72 & G & #IV \\
73-87 & Db & I \\
88-106 & c# & i \\
107-117 & F#-B & IV-IV of IV \\
118-185 & Db & I \\
\end{array}
\]

Another quasi-sonata resolution occurs with the violin's unison opening, which assimilates the theme from the D major episode in the preceding movement into the context of the tonic key. We are reminded that, in the Rondo, D flat was the goal of the passage from bar 311 immediately preceding the D major episode and that D major was very much an interruption. The turn figure that characterized the D major theme is an integral part of the "Lebewohl" hymn throughout the rest of the movement and it is with augmented (and finally inverted) versions of this figure that Mahler brings the Symphony to a close.


Bringing the transformed "Lebewohl" motive and the turn figure into the context of D flat are immediate foreground indicators of D flat's tonicity. But it is unusual for Mahler to accomplish the resolution of long-range dissonance
and structural duality so quickly. One need only compare it with the finale of the Seventh; there the unequivocal statement of C's tonal victory—the articulation of the first movement's principal theme in C major—occurs much nearer the end. Indeed a number of Mahler's works sustain the considerable length of their finales partly because he withholds the final gesture of resolution. We know that the Fifth cannot come to an end until we hear the chorale in the context of D major functioning as the tonic. We feel that the Tenth cannot end until either D's tonicity has been qualified or, somehow, the music manages to make its way back to F sharp. Delaying the point of emphatic resolution keeps us involved right to the end. For all that Mahler reiterates his gestures of resolution in the Ninth's finale by constantly weaving the "Lebewohl" motive and the turn figure into the fabric of his D flat major music there is no escaping the fact that the business of tying up thematic loose ends is accomplished within the space of the opening three bars.

With his gestures of resolution being played out so early one is left wondering what business Mahler's finale is going to concern itself with. In the end the finale sets up and resolves its own conflicts and although the nature of these conflicts bears some resemblance to those in the first movement, the finale is in some sense self-contained.

The Ninth's finale is unusual in that, unlike those of nearly all Mahler's other symphonies, the background processes do not provide the key to interpreting the foreground. The background events—securing the transfer of tonicity away from D—has been undertaken in the central movements and there are no tonicization processes—no background per se—in the finale of the Ninth at all. What forays the movement makes into different keys count as middleground events at best. It is the examination of these and their interaction with foreground details upon which the exegesis of the movement depends.

As in the first movement, the passages permeated by the "Lebewohl" motif are separated by contrasting sections in the minor mode—C-sharp minor, in the case of the Finale. These C-sharp minor passages are as thin and numb as the "Lebewohl" theme is rich and passionate.36

What strikes the listener on a first hearing is that Mahler's customary compositional practice, of the outer movements providing the structural framework for the symphony, is again at work. In the case of the Ninth, the basis for this framework is partly the size of the movements as is the case in Symphonies 1, 2, 6 and 7. Even more so than the outer movements of the Sixth (which both employ sonata form), the relationship between the outer movements in the Ninth is compounded by their structural similarity—their shared dependence on the idea of the refrain with contrasting episodes. But in addition there is also the issue of tempo. The outer movements of the Sixth and Seventh move at a fast tempo—but this is so ingrained as the symphonic norm

36David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 276.
that we attach no special significance to it. Both the Ninth and Tenth draw even greater attention to themselves because the outer movements maintain slow tempos.\^37

In between the refrain-like entries of principal themes and tonalities in both movements comes music of an emotionally antithetical disposition. The first movement has sections that express anguish (the D minor section from bar 27 and the B flat minor section from bar 211) and also passages that seem to float in a goal-less void (the episodes beginning at bars 108, Figure 13 and bar 376). The desolate C sharp minor sections of the finale clearly relate in spirit to the goal-less passages of the first movement. As we shall see, the interjecting tragic fanfare takes over the role of expressing anguish and protest that was the domain of the first movement's chromatic theme at bar 29. On the basis of the outer movement's similarities of structure and tempo (not to mention thematic inter-relationships) it is reasonable to suppose that Mahler intended the latter to be an up-dated version of the former, addressing the same issues as its colleague but reinterpreting these issues in the light of the experience gained from the intervening movements.

The emotional responses of both movements—depression, protest and the desire to transcend adversity—are the same. But in the finale these responses take place against a backdrop of acceptance of death rather than denial. The first movement sought to avoid any confrontation with death by taking refuge in reminiscence and gestures of heroic endeavour of the kind that triumphed over adversity in the First Symphony. But the prospect of ultimate extinction brutally intrudes and in so doing rendered these gestures futile. It is only when the prospect of death is confronted and accepted that Mahler attains some degree of transcendence, of the kind that the first movement failed to achieve.

That the finale evokes acceptance rather than denial comes foremost from the way the opening theme embraces the "Lebewohl" motive at bar 3 in direct contrast to the first movement's "ewig" motive which sought to avoid the finality of melodic closure.

In the first "Lebewohl" hymn, D-flat is at once established as a goal, and the goal is realized in the first and second as well as the last bars of both periods. By moving to D-flat at the beginning and the end of each period and by keeping in force the goal of D flat throughout the period, the musical line connotes a final leave-taking; the connotation supports the conventional association of the motif with that word. Along the way to the end, chromatic harmonies appear that enrich the downward descent. Although they suggest that

\^37A comparison could be drawn with the Second and Eighth but the slow-tempos pertain only to the final sections of their finales. The finale of the Third constitutes a more solid precedent of an "Adagio-finale", but the influenced of tempo in creating an outer frame in this work is not as marked as in the Ninth. After the slow, introductory D minor music, the Third Symphony's first movement moves predominantly at a fast tempo.
the stream of life flowing to its inevitable end is full of eddies that make it interesting and worthwhile, they never weaken the tonicity of D-flat nor hide its arrival as the passage's goal nor suggest that its arrival can be put off indefinitely. The cessation of the temporal process is its future, and this future qualifies every present along the way to the future. 38

As Greene notes, every event in Mahler's finale is qualified by the inevitability of impending death. It is therefore significant that the chromatic eddies he describes never actually stray beyond the tonic axis. From the outset there is a strong axis relationship between D flat and A in the "Lebewohl" motive due to the bass-progression db—a—the progression to db—a—e—f, landing us with some force on to F major at bar 8. Within the D flat major sections at least, Mahler confines his foreground tonal excursions to tonic axis members. At no time do these axial progressions threaten to initiate any structurally significant departure from the tonic and D flat is always quick to regain control. Whatever movement they suggest takes place within a wider context of being stationary.

As we shall see the episodes strive to establish the subdominant region of F sharp. This too relates to the first movement whose episodes focussed almost exclusively on G, B and Eb, the subdominant-axis keys relative to D major. These attempts either proved inconclusive or the intrusion of antagonistic elements rendered them futile and the music collapsed or spent itself before succumbing to the gravitational pull of the tonic. The finale behaves in a similar way, though the extent to which the music is allowed to deviate from the tonic is severely limited. But whereas the first movement expresses a desire to escape or transcend reality by attempting to elevate the subdominant axis (especially B major) to tonic status, the finale denotes acceptance because none of its initial tonal excursions ever present themselves as serious tonal rivals that might transcend the D flat-C sharp reality.

From a purely technical standpoint, one can view the fact that the finale has no tonal contrasts to speak of as a necessary compositional choice to help solidify D flat's tonicity. But the tendency towards a mono-tonal structure has a telling effect on the movement's emotional disposition. It places the contradictory thematic entities, the passionate "Lebewohl" hymn and the desolate, dissociated counterpoint, on the same tonal plane. Depression and the contemplation of non-existence co-exist alongside the "Lebewohl" theme, which expresses both an "intense love of life" and an acceptance of finality. 39 In the environment of denial and avoidance that characterized the first movement the negative elements were antagonistic because they threatened the very existence of a more positive outlook. The same relationship does not exist here in the finale, as both the acceptance of death and the depressing contemplation of

38 David B. Greene, Mahler, Consciousness and Temporality, 276.
39 Deryck Cooke, Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music, 118.
non-existence are not much in opposition, but represent different perspectives on the all-pervading inevitability of death.

The most deep-seated conflict in the movement comes from the thematic opposition of the protesting tragic fanfare. It first appears at bar 13 in response to the precursory statement of the bare, linear writing that will later form the substance of the minor mode episodes. The fanfare's protests are not directed exclusively at the music in the minor mode—later it appears in opposition to the "Lebewohl" hymn as well (see bar 60). As Greene notes the target of its protest extends back into the middle movements.

The tragic fanfare also sets the Finale against the second and third movements: the use of the "Lebewohl" motif in the middle movements suggests that, however much the Ländler may affirm life, ultimately human existence is unavoidably empty, futile, stupid and diabolically comical, while the tragic fanfare in the Finale urges us to believe that somehow life ought not to be so devoid of meaning.  

But while the tragic fanfare protests against the "Lebewohl" hymn's calm acceptance and, in a wider context, protests against the futility of the inner movements, it is powerless to bring about any fundamental change in direction. Although in its first appearance it tries to establish A flat, it succumbs to the gravitational pull of D flat in the space of four bars, revealing the gesture of protest to be inherently futile.

The bearing that this has on the movement's emotional content can be seen by comparing it to other works. The conflict between A minor and D in the Sixth Symphony for example, has implications above and beyond thematic opposition. We are aware as we listen that if A minor triumphs it will create a concentric tonal (and modal) scheme that will suggest tragedy, defeat and the submission to fate. If D is to carry the day it would create a progressive tonal (and modal) scheme and some form of salvation. At different points in the work we are acutely aware of two diametrically opposed futures striving to materialize and it is the ascendancy of one at the expense of the other that constitutes the Symphony's dramaturgy. Because the thematic opposition of the tragic fanfare makes no impact on the mono-tonal structure of the Ninth's finale, we do not entertain the possibility that this thematic opposition will be able to bring about a new future. The future, death and "the cessation of the temporal process" remains certain, it is only the emotional response to that inevitability that changes.

The first episode elaborates on the first C sharp minor section from bar 11. Christopher Orlo Lewis bases a great deal of his chapter on the presence of D as a tonal force in the final movement particularly in the episodes, but it is

---

42 Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, 104—117.
difficult to support his line of reasoning. C sharp minor remains the dominating force and the accidentals that appear, namely D and G-natural, primarily effect changes in mode with the farthest extent of any modulation being to F sharp.

The D naturals from bar 30 bend the music towards F sharp minor. But the *finalis* of the violin's melody at bar 32 remains C#3 maintaining the possibility that D natural is a phrygian, flattened second. This is confirmed when C sharp minor recommences after a conventional phrygian cadence two bars later. For the meantime at least, this designates F sharp minor as being a subdominant adjunct to C sharp, more the property of tonal fluidity inherent in modal counterpoint than a full-blooded modulation.

The second statement at bar 34 undergoes a similar process. At bar 37 both D and G natural appear; the D natural turns the music towards F sharp once more, while the G natural brings about a phrygian inflection within the context of F sharp. Bars 38-9 outline an E minor triad which, right up to bar 40, brings the expectation of another conventional phrygian cadence—this time on to F sharp. Mahler's resolution is not so much an interrupted cadence but a reinterpretation of the E minor chord. Instead of the expected phrygian cadence to F sharp Mahler regains C sharp via a V-T-I cadence.

Like the first "Lebewohl" hymn-section the second falls into two parts from bars 49-63 and 64-87. The first contains only limited tonal excursions. Another protesting interjection from the tragic fanfare at bar 60 shifts us abruptly to F. After a sequential repetition in the bass the emphasis is shifted to E before the harmony stalls on a diminished seventh half way through bar 61. Functioning as a rootless dominant minor ninth this has the potential to lead us in four different directions—the tonic D flat among them. But the modality of the second violin's turn figure at bar 62 still suggests E (Fb)—the C flat on the third beat creating a V15b9 harmony in that key. With the shift to D7 at bar 63 the possibility of a cadence into E subsides. But the second violin's C flat persists and then imitates the downward descent of the introductory violins' theme from bar 2. The progression lands us back in D flat major as at the movement's opening though here it is harmonically supported by a bII—I cadence.

Like the first movement, the gravitational pull back to the tonic is symptomatic of an inability to secure new tonal areas. Resignation or acceptance is again the primary emotion as the music fails to establish an alternative to the D flat reality. Not only does the attempt to break away from the tonic's influence fail (it brings about the tonic's resumption after only four bars), but it also returns us to the point of origin—the introduction. Just as at bar 13, the tragic fanfare's protest at bar 60 is powerless to bring about a new future.

The second statement from bar 64 attains much more tonal freedom. Both statements of the "Lebewohl" theme exhibit a tendency to drift away from the
tonic—cadencing on F sharp at bar 65 and landing on F, again by extending the sequential bass progression, at bar 69. But this chord of F resolves to the dominant of G and we cadence into G major at bar 70. Over the ensuing three bars there is a surge of confidence and the sense that the oppressive grip of D flat is about to be broken. It is a surge of confidence whose only precedent in this work is the passages that tried to establish G and B major in the first movement (Figure 10 and bar 285 respectively). G major grows in strength as the passage continues. We arrive on the dominant of G again at bar 71 and only an interrupted cadence prevents a second cadential ratification of G major. The harmonies of bar 72 coalesce on A7, (V of V of G) and we expect a 6-4 chord on D to follow which would instigate a conventional cadence pattern confirming G major.

This is not to be, and the A7 chord functions instead as a German sixth resolving directly to D flat major. As a frustrated attempt to reach a programmatic breakthrough and a new tonal goal, the passage recalls those same events from the first movement referred to in the previous paragraph. In the first movement the confident G major passage and the aborted E flat major climax that followed it (bars 182—198) presaged the movement's central climax—the similarly unsuccessful attempt to bestow tonic status on B major (bars 285—314). The G major climax here in the finale functions in the same capacity. It too is precursory—presaging a more emphatic climax that comes in the second episode.

Example 14-16 IX-iv, 70—4.

The similarities are not confined to structural issues. The hymn consistently maintains a dense poly-rhythmic texture, but with the appearance of triplets and the quintuplet turn figure (bars 69 and 70) we encounter cross-rhythms for the first time in this movement. Cross-rhythms, and the quintuplet turn figure specifically, vividly characterize Mahler's ecstatic flights of affirmation in the first movement (see the central B major climax from bar 285). There is a strong thematic reference also which will be discussed later. These references
to the first movement are even more evident when we experience the movement's crowning climax in the second half of the second episode.

The second episode (beginning at bar 88) forges more links with the first movement through the pronounced use of an ostinato, whose sole interval (the minor third), recalls the minor-third-plus-whole-tone harp figure that formed the introduction to the first movement. There the figure had a martial emphasis that eventually gave the episode at bar 317 its funereal tread. In terms of the physical implications of its rhythm, the corresponding figure here is the polar opposite of its predecessor. It is a rhythmic palindrome and the ostinato rocks back and forth in a cradle-motion (see example 14-17). Not for the first time has a musical event in this finale suggested movement confined within the wider context of being stationary—of existing in a state where the pursuit of long-term goals is not feasible. One is reminded of the expressive content of the opening hymn, and how the limited range of its tonal eddies also implied that only short-term goals were obtainable.

Example 14-17 IX-iv, 88—92.

The minor third ostinato with clarinet and harp orchestration also occurs in Das Lied, in "Der Abschied" between Figures 7 and 22 and again at Figure 55. At Figure 13 in that work Mahler uses this material as a textural back-drop against which appears the text dealing with twilight and the world falling asleep. The daily ritual of weary mankind turning homewards to recapture forgotten joy and youth in sleep is a symbol for the larger cycle of life and death. As Mitchell points out:

Surely these 'weary mortals' are not just weary men and women, but weary
mankind, weary of life rather than work? 43

In Das Lied, Mahler maintains both his literal and symbolic meanings, as the music evokes the world closing down for the night, with various repuscular murmuring and bird-song. But the corresponding passage in the Ninth contains none of the musical characteristics upon which the literal interpretation of

43Donald Mitchell, Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death, 353.
twilight in the earlier work depended. Just as the movement as a whole shies away from earthly associations—the dance evocations that were so prominent in the first two movements—so Mahler abstains from the earthly associations of bird-song in his allusion to Das Lied.

Tonally the second episode closely resembles the first. It returns to C sharp minor and again accidentals appear that might suggest modulation. G natural occurs at the beginning of the third bar but the context of C sharp is so stable that it can only imply a shift to the locrian mode. It is only when the flute enters with the descending theme at bar 91 that F sharp minor stakes its claim explicitly. G naturals appear at bar 93-4 but again this does not cause a modulation only a shift from the aeolian to the phrygian mode. F sharp remains in force as the tonal centre from bar 95 with both the ascending and descending themes taking F sharp as their point of departure.

C sharp resurfaces at bar 101, though its reappearance is something more of an interruption, ignoring the implied phrygian cadence into F sharp. It appears as if it will stay in control and it is only in the latter half of bar 106 that D natural resurfaces directing us back towards F sharp. It could conceivably be just another phrygian inflection but the voice-leading of the oboe implies the third of F sharp major as its goal due to a step-wise ascent through $f^\#$—$g^\#$. The second violin's tragic fanfare at bar 107 makes good the oboes' voice-leading implication and now for the first time the music makes a concerted effort to establish F sharp as a tonality in its own right instead of it being little more than a subdominant adjunct to C sharp minor.

The passage that follows brings the movement to a climax. It begins with a violent confrontation of theme and texture. Unlike the first episode the disassociated linear writing does not hold the stage to itself before the "Lebewohl" hymn returns. The tragic fanfare bursting in at bar 107 brings the tightly-packed passionate textures of the D-flat major music back into play in direct contrast to what has preceded it. What we hear is a magnification of the events from bars 11—15 where the tragic fanfare first voiced its anguished protest against the numb emptiness of the minor-key music.

For the first time in the movement the tragic fanfare's gesture of protest actually succeeds in liberating the music from the control of D flat. From bar 110 F sharp major becomes more solid and the slight increase in tempo raises our anticipation of a significant climax. It is as if the possibility for a breakthrough, first suggested by the brief G major passage at bar 70, might now come to fruition.

By bar 114, F sharp functions as the dominant of B. The mere suggestion of a cycle of dominants and the pursuit of goals that this implies is very conspicuous in a movement where tonal excursions have been confined almost exclusively to tonic axis members. Furthermore, each instance of a modulation within the tonic-axis has succumbed to the gravitational pull of D flat after only a few bars. All other modulation has been the product of modal fluidity
which has never been substantial enough to seriously oppose the tonic. With
the onset of B major at bar 113, the music begins to replicate the G major cli­
max from bar 70. Once again cross-rhythms abound with the appearance of
triplets and quintuplets, which again suggests the ecstatic character of the first
movement's climactic passages.

One could be optimistic for a positive breakthrough were it not for the pre­
cedent of the events at bar 314 in the first movement. Even more than the G
major climax at bar 70 this intensified version of it in B major is more con­
spicuously littered with first movement references. Chief among them is the
quintuplet turn figure which, in both its original form and in augmentation, is
a feature of every bar. Like the first-movement climax, the intended goal lies
in the subdominant direction (IV of IV relative to C#). The reference to B ma­
jor itself may have been intended to remind us that it was that key that tried to
establish itself as an alternative tonic to D in the first movement, that carried
with it the prospect of a triumph over adversity.

The tonal direction after bar 114 seems uncertain at first glance. The har­
mony can still be interpreted as being in a B major context (I$^{\text{653}}$–III$^{\text{3}}$–
bVII$^{6–5}$). A diminished seventh governs bar 117 but some of the accented
notes in the sprawling counterpoint do their utmost to cloud the issue of its
tonal direction. The C natural in the upper division of the cellos implies that
the harmony is a dominant minor ninth of F in the fourth inversion which
might imply B flat as the eventual goal. One could project E as the eventual
goal by extending the cycle of dominants that began with F sharp and B in the
preceding ten bars. But the accented D sharp on the fourth beat in the upper
cello division turns the harmony to a dominant minor ninth of A flat (G#) and
the second half of the fourth beat sees the bass descend from A sharp to A
natural. This carries considerable impetus to move to A flat and thereby articu­
late the chromatic three-note descent of the tragic fanfare. Meanwhile the turn
figure in the violins also emphasizes D sharp and in so doing implies a step­
wise ascent c#–d#–e# (f) whose goal is supplied by the trumpet's entry
with the tragic fanfare in the following bar.

Such extreme cross-rhythm activity is a prominent feature of the music im­
mediately prior to the hammer-blows in the finale of the Sixth Symphony as
well. In both finales, the passages immediately prior to the point of climax
strive to reach a redeeming tonal goal in the subdominant direction, in this
case, IV of IV. But it is how this climax relates to the first movement's at­
temt to establish B major that is particularly compelling. Not only does it ini­
tially express the same desire to tonicize a key in the subdominant direction
but its failure to do so is accompanied by evocations of the same spirit of he­
roism and ecstatic striving, not only in the dense poly-rhythmic counterpoint
but in terms of crucial thematic gestures.
The most important reference to the first movement also provides the upper voice's driving force towards attaining the third of C sharp major and the tragic fanfare at bar 118. The upper voice from bar 114 outlines the diatonic version of the tragic fanfare which was so prominent in the first movement at the B major climax (bar 294–9) and which returned as a resignation-filled backward glance at the beginning of the coda (see example 14-18, above). The most compelling aspect of the theme as it appears both here and at bar 70 and at bar 408 in the first movement is its sequential motion comprising two stepwise descents through a fourth separated by upward leaps of a third. The goal-orientation of this melodic sequence (g#-d#-f#-c#) implies e#(f) as its logical continuation, overwhelming the harmonic ambiguity prior to bar 118.

Bar 117 also provides a specific thematic cross-references to the first movement. The first violin's turn figure is taken from bars 307-8—the very point where B major was about to consummate its tonicity.

Example 14-19 IX-i, 307-8 and IX-iv, 117.
But by beginning the figure on the first beat of the bar Mahler reveals more directly its association with the trombones' interrupting octave C naturals at bar 314—the Ninth Symphony's fate motive if you will. The violins' emphatic unison C flats at bar 122 evokes the fate-rhythm for a second time. Example 14-20 IX-i, 314—16 and IX-iv, 122—5.

While the reference to the first movement's climax is not as overt as that in the Finale of the Tenth, where the first movement's dissonance climax is literally re-enacted, it is substantial enough to claim our attention and demands some kind of programmatic exegesis. In the first movement the music never reaches the goal that it strives for and at the point of climax and the calamity of the interruption is so total that it dismisses the validity of such goals altogether. The same applies to the hammer-blow climaxes in the finale of the Sixth. In this sense both events are nihilistic and the music that follows reflects the force of their impact. The shock of their respective intrusions of fate transforms the atmosphere of exhilaration and confidence that comes with clearly-defined goals and a sense of purpose into a kind of emotional chaos. In the Sixth we feel the protagonist reeling in a state of shock—in the Ninth's first movement the protagonist is plunged into a goal-less void with the distorted funereal elements celebrating the victory of the destructive forces.

The corresponding climax in the finale of the Ninth, for all that it involves the most impassioned utterance of the tragic fanfare, is far from nihilistic. Despite the fact that right up to bar 117 different tonal directions were still possible, the resolution to D flat major and the tragic fanfare is a logical outcome particularly because of the sequential progression of the melody. As such it represents the arrival at a goal and not merely the nullification of all previous goals. By making the tragic fanfare the goal of the climax, Mahler irreversibly transforms the expressive content of the theme itself. It is an event that signals a radical change in the movement's emotional disposition.

Up until this point in the movement, the tragic fanfare has always appeared in (or at least on) a key other than the tonic. At bar 13 it was in A flat, at bar 60 in F and at bar 107 in F sharp. At each appearance it comes unprepared and unwarranted by the music that precedes it, which is why Greene interpreted it as a "shriek of protest." Not only does it protest but it appears to recoil from the reality projected by the music around it. But in hearing it for the first time in the tonic key it becomes, in spite of its sense of dread and tragedy, the mouthpiece that proclaims D flat's undisputed tonicity and all the programmatic ideas of death and acceptance associated with it.
By giving the tragic fanfare this role, Mahler restores some of the heroism with which the theme was associated in parts of the first movement. But it is a different kind of heroism. In the first movement heroism tends towards the Don Quixote variety. Like the finale of the Sixth, we can liken these climaxes to the merciless suppression of a champion of a hopeless cause. They offer the decidedly ugly spectacle of the protagonist being cut down in full flight. By comparison the finale's climax offers the spectacle of the protagonist embracing an inexorable fate. The tragic fanfare is transfigured simply by the context in which it now appears. No longer the anguished shriek of protest—now it celebrates the bravery of one who submits.

Programmatically this action encapsulates the entire tonal process of the symphony. With the first movement's D major refrains and the dance evocations so eloquently expressing an attachment to life in the face of death, we feel the composer stating "I don't want this to happen". The emotional sustenance of taking refuge in reminiscences, thereby avoiding a confrontation with mortality, loses ground before the first movement is completed and with the Ländler we witness grotesque pointlessness encroaching almost against the composer's will. With the Rondo Burlesque, there is bitterness and also a measure of defiance (marked sehr trotzig)—a statement of "I won't let this happen". Such efforts to hold mortality at bay ultimately prove unsustainable and, like the influence of the tonalities that initially supported them, must yield to the inevitable. D flat and the fully-embraced "Lebewohl" motive embodies the acceptance of this inevitability as does the tonic statement of the tragic fanfare at bar 118. Mahler is irrefutably saying, "this is happening".

The climax as the ultimate gesture of acceptance creates a sense of liberation in the ensuing refrain. The tonal eddies that Greene described become more solid. If we accept his interpretation that these eddies represent the pursuit of meaningful (though necessarily finite) goals then it follows that these goals have become more valid. One might suppose this to be a logical development given that the events of bar 118 have effectively liberated the protagonist from the burdens of struggle and anguish by accepting fate. In the wake of the unequivocal articulation of D flat's tonicity that has come via the assimilation of the tragic fanfare into the context of the tonic, the tonal excursions appear to be enjoyed for their own sake, without being stigmatized as futile attempts at escapism.

We feel the influence of this new freedom in both the first two appearances of the "Lebewohl" theme. Mahler exploits the inherent axial mobility within the theme's opening phrase to the point where other axis members are cadentially confirmed. The theme at bar 126 and 138 both begin their first phrases on D flat but close on A major via plagal cadences.

Greene discusses at some length how the contrapuntal strands at a middle-ground level converge on A flat in the third hymn section. There is little point in reviewing his arguments here, but I should like to observe that A flat as a
The melodic goal is no less apparent at a foreground level. D flat remains the melodic goal of the first statement of the head motive at bar 126 but it carries none of its usual sense of finality because of the cadence on to A major that underscores it. Because the D flat finalis of the first phrase (spelled as C sharp) constitutes the third of the A major chord, it suggests the possibility of a more stable closure on A natural beneath it. It is the first of several steps Mahler takes to undermine the influence of the finality of the 3-2-1 melodic progression in D flat that characterizes the "Lebewohl" motive.

The second rendition of the motive at bar 130 takes A flat as its point of departure (after a falling fourth off D flat). As a result of the whole-tone scale component of the theme, the melodic descent beginning on A flat by-passes D flat altogether.

Example 14-21 XI,iv 130-1.

Likewise in the third rendition of the motive at bar 138, the second violins' counter-melody again takes A flat as its point of departure and dominates the literal version of the "Lebewohl" theme in the cellos. Again the descending whole-tone scale off A flat by-passes the D flat finalis and the melody comes to rest on Fb (E) supported by A major harmony.


At bar 142, Mahler takes the unprecedented step of giving the "Lebewohl" theme in a key other than the tonic. The theme begins in the key of F taking c" as its melodic point of departure. Taking into account the precedent of the earlier versions of the "Lebewohl" theme, the finalis implied by this version
of the theme is likely to be either A flat or F.

Example 14-23 IX-iv 142—3.

As Greene points out the F major rendition of the "Lebewohl" theme sets in motion a melodic ascent from $f^\flat$ (bar 143) culminating in an unharmonized $c^\flat$ at bar 147. This C natural then provides the point of departure in a melodic descent to $a^\flat$ over the ensuing six bars which stands poised to fall one step further to an A flat finalis. The middle and lower voices from bar 155—8 also converge on this note.

However, A flat is not the sole note of melodic closure. This does not alter the substance of Greene's argument—that the most important component in effecting the transfiguration of the "Lebewohl" hymn is the circumvention of the unequivocal finality inherent in the 3-2-1 melodic descent to D flat. The melodic ascent to the initial $f^\flat$ of the tragic fanfare at bar 160 and subsequent events place considerable emphasis on F as a potential final note as well. The upper voice realizes the earlier implication of an A flat finalis at bar 171 after the melodic descent from $e^b^\flat$. From this point Mahler transfers the articulation of the A flat finalis to the inner voice, that of the viola, while the upper voice fluctuates between A flat and F finally settling on the latter at bar 183.

The other important component in the transfiguration of the final "Lebewohl" hymn is the process of absorbing the tragic fanfare.

The transformed fanfare enters not as an interruption (as does its prototype in bars 13—14 and 107—108) but as part of the same fabric as the transfigured "Lebewohl." Clearly the process of integrating the tragic fanfare began at the movement's climax where the theme was used to acknowledge D flat's undisputed hold on tonicity. It appears once more in its interjecting role at bar 136 but its protesting disposition is markedly reduced. The tonal context of D flat is secure and the mezzo forte dynamic of the theme attenuates its usual vehemence.

This process of exorcising all vehemence from the tragic fanfare goes a step...
further at bar 155. Its instrumentation at this point (solo cello) and the dynamic (ppp) renders it far removed from its former protesting self (Mahler marks it sehr zart aber ausdrucksvoll). It has also lost its anguished upper neighbour note that has characterized it throughout this movement (here the theme more closely resembles its first-movement form). Harmonically the theme articulates a German sixth chord which sets the stage for the closing hymn-section and the A flat finalis.

The tragic fanfare also opens the final hymn statement. Its anguished upper neighbour note is reinstated but its expressive character here is one of grieving rather than protest. Once again, the context in which it appears defines its expressive quality. The fanfare is conclusively assimilated into the context of D flat major and instead of voicing opposition it is now integrated into the fabric of the hymn. Increasingly augmented versions of this theme and the turn figure bring the movement to a close.

The openness of the A flat finalis, in sharp contrast to the unequivocal closure of the 'Lebewohl' motive, brings with it the suggestion that death might not entail total extinction.

But this A-flat sounds both complete and incomplete. It seems complete in that to a certain extent it sounds final and one certainly does not expect a subsequent musical event that would project a greater finality; it sounds incomplete in that one continues to be aware that closing the melody on D-flat would project a more final closure, even though one is also aware that a D-flat closure is not going to take place. Rejecting death as numb peace (the C-sharp minor sections), the last passage ends with an open finalis, an ending that carries an implied and eternally unfulfilled future along with it.46

Michael Kennedy notes that Mahler also implies some form of future, a non-specific after-life, through a thematic allusion to an earlier work.

... but the most significant cross-reference occurs just before the lingering fade-out when the strings quote, from the fourth of the Kindertotenlieder, the phrase associated with the children's imagined dwelling-place 'in the sunshine on those heights';47

The allusion is hardly surprising given the psychological basis for the two works—both deal with a process of grieving. The Kindertotenlieder are of course far more explicit and straightforward. It is the kind of grief, the aftermath of death, that most of us (certainly Mahler himself) have a first-hand knowledge of. The grieving process in the Ninth is, as I have suggested, a preparatory, self-grieving one—the prelude to death. But it is no less true that the quotation indicates an emotional upward turn at the end of the movement consistent with the transfiguration of the tragic fanfare and the optimism that comes with the open-ended A flat finalis.

The late works—Das Lied, the Ninth and the Tenth—are universally held,
by commentators from Bruno Walter to Redlich to Cooke, to be among the most intensely personal statements of Mahler's career, reflecting his difficult circumstances at the time. The succession of misfortunes that befell Mahler from 1907, the death of his daughter, the severing of ties with the Vienna Opera, the growing instability in his marriage and the diagnosis of his mortal heart disease, brought about, in Cooke's summation, something of a crisis for Mahler the man and composer.

The affirmation of vitality of the First and Fifth Symphonies was impossible; the faith of the Second, Third and Fourth ungraspable; and the nihilism of the Sixth unthinkable. Spiritual defeat stared Mahler in the face. He was forced back on his one indestructible possession—his intense love of living. In his last period, he refused to allow his belief in the beauty and joy of life to be destroyed by his physically depressing illness, his own tormented and tormenting spirit, or even by the grinning horror of death itself.\(^{48}\)

Indeed, the Ninth embodies a process whereby beauty is destroyed. In the first movement, the evocations of Mahler's Viennese heritage—the passionate, ecstatic counterpoint and the D major tonality with which these were associated—are all gradually poisoned. Yet out of the ashes of annihilation (and Mahler's heart condition annihilated such a vital part of his existence), he managed to achieve a victory of sorts, salvaging a life-affirming stance despite the erosion of his physical health and the tendency for death to despoil and undermine the joys of life rendering existence devoid of any meaning.

For all that Mahler's last three works all have an element of valediction, the focus of each is slightly different. In _Das Lied_ it is his beloved nature that Mahler farewells. If the marginalia in the sketches of the Tenth is anything to go by, Mahler's relationship with Alma seems to be the central focus. Indeed, one can easily see the D major theme at bar 30 in the Tenth's finale representing (especially in Cooke's conjectural orchestration of strings and harp accompanying a solo flute) a kind of transfiguration of the Fifth Symphony's Adagietto, Mahler's musical love letter to Alma.\(^{49}\) The Ninth, for reasons I hope this chapter has outlined, focuses more on Mahler's personal struggle with the concept of his own imminent extinction. Mahler's progressive tonal scheme of the falling semitone underlines a spiritual growth where a multitude of responses to the underlying threat of death—such as refuge-seeking, evasion, panic, horror, and defiance—all subside in the latter stages of the finale to be replaced by acceptance. As one would expect, Mahler's acceptance is tainted with profound sadness. But at the same time we sense that his passion for living remained undiminished. As Mahler himself wrote to Walter early in 1909:

\(^{48}\)Deryck Cooke, _Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music_, 103.

I am thirstier for life than ever before and find the 'habit of existence' sweeter than ever.\(^{50}\)

Is the Ninth a valedictory work in the wider context of the decline of the romantic era? There is no evidence from letters or recollections that Mahler felt undue anxiety at the prospect of a musical future where the principal proponents would hold values radically different to his own. This is in marked contrast to some of his contemporaries who outlived him beyond the First World War.

It is easy to sense Strauss's restlessness in these years, his feeling that, despite the completion at last of \textit{Die Frau ohne Schatten}, nothing engaged his wholehearted interest \ldots \text{[One]} cause was Strauss's growing awareness that he and his music were becoming almost grotesquely out of tune with the times. In this respect he is a parallel with Elgar, whose letters at this time betray a despondency about the future of music, and of his own music, which resulted in his almost total silence for fifteen years after the composition of his last masterpiece, the Cello Concerto, in 1919. Strauss was a less hypersensitive and depressive case than Elgar but he felt equally keenly that the post-war world was alien to him. He had no curiosity about the music of the younger generation, no interest in Stravinsky, Berg, Bartók, Schoenberg, Hindemith, Prokofiev and others.\(^{51}\)

Mahler, on the other hand, did not live long enough to see the full flowering of the new artistic creed of the second Viennese school. But one would expect him to have felt less alienated than Strauss had he lived to witness it. He had already championed Schoenberg's music. Alma's memoirs attest to Mahler's tolerance and support for Schoenberg despite being unable to fully understand the new path in music. One wonders what Mahler would have made of Webern and Berg, whether Mahler the opera conductor would have taken to performing a work like \textit{Wozzeck} and how, if he had lived to Strauss's age, would he have reacted to the symphonies of Shostakovich composed very much under the influence of Mahler's own music. Indeed the degree to which Mahler was held in reverence by all these composers mentioned suggests that he might have enjoyed the status of a celebrated elder statesman among the avant-garde in the early part of the twentieth century.

Certainly Mahler did not live long enough to witness the demise of the society that nurtured his own artistic values nor the physical destruction of so many celebrated vestiges of that culture. Again the obvious comparison is with Richard Strauss, who in living to the age of 85 saw all these things come to pass. He was very much aware of having out-lived his time and, in response to the mass destruction of German cities and their opera houses in the Second World War, became both a self-appointed eulogist and active advocate


for regenerating and rebuilding the German operatic heritage. No matter how valedictory Mahler appears in the Ninth, he was not a self-appointed spokesman for his age. The Ninth is a personal work rather than a cultural threnody in the manner of Strauss's *Metamorphosen*. 
Conclusion

From the early planning stages of this thesis my aim was to gain a more thorough insight into Mahler's use of progressive tonality—to examine the factors that enabled him this structural freedom. From the beginning the term, coined by Dika Newlin, was shrouded in mystery and ambiguity, which gave rise to numerous attempts (with varying degrees of success) to elucidate her meaning, modify the term or in some cases to replace it altogether. As a result of this thesis I hope that the term can be use with greater assurance, having provided a more consolidated view of the musical processes the term represents.

In the final analysis, progressive tonality is difficult to define as a set procedure because the path taken by each work involving it is unique. This is one of the great testaments to Mahler's genius, that he found for each new symphonic creation a highly individualized form—a unique dramatization of the tonicization process able to express the work's underlying programme. Indeed this individualization of symphonic form can be perceived as a further example of Dahlhaus's concept of the "doctrine of originality.1 By the end of the nineteenth century, a composer like Mahler had extended this outlook to every parameter, including the background structure itself. Clearly with Mahler's music, tonality at the deepest structural level has advanced to become an expressive language in itself instead of being limited to providing the structural scaffolding supporting the expressive content on the surface levels. The axis system outlined in this thesis and its application to Mahler's symphonies gives us the key to understanding how this language of tonality works.

Yet despite the manifold variety of structures that we find in Mahler's symphonies, most of these works have some basic procedures in common. Chief among these is the avoidance of tonicization processes in the early stages of the work. But as Chapters 3 and 4 show, this is not a compositional tactic exclusive to Mahler. Where I hope this thesis has succeeded most is in defining the relationship between Mahler's use of progressive tonality and the practices of his nineteenth-century predecessors. I cannot stress enough that progressive tonality represents, not so much an advance in the evolution of tonal techniques but an advanced solution to a persistent nineteenth-century compositional aim—to create finale-oriented structures rather than following classical models which concentrate symphonic weight in the first movement.

It is this investigation of the de-emphasis of tonicization in sonata form, beginning with the late works of Beethoven, that provides the key to the evolution of progressive tonality. Beethoven achieved non-tonicizing forms by using subdominant and tonic axis modulation in sonata form, or by avoiding

---

sonata form altogether in some cases—delaying unequivocal statements of tonicity until much later in the work. The displacement of tonicization processes in this way naturally tended to emphasize the latter stages of the work, especially the finale. In retrospect, it was a matter of time before the background instability that this compositional tactic induces, would be utilized to allow an entirely different key to assume tonicity—creating a progressive tonal scheme. It appears all the more inevitable when we remember that the principle of progressive modality was a stock-in-trade device after Beethoven’s Fifth and was achieved by creating the same environment of ambiguity in a different parameter. It is also clear that the motive for employing such a tactic was to focus more attention on the finale in the hope that it would balance the emphatic tonicization processes of the first-movement sonata form.

The difference between the symphonic ideal involving finale-oriented symphonic form and concentric tonality (as discussed in chapter 4), and Mahler’s finale-oriented form involving progressive tonality amounts to little more than an advanced solution to achieve the same compositional end. Parallels can be drawn between the tonal processes of the first movements of Beethoven’s C sharp Minor Quartet and Mahler’s Fifth or the first movements of the Hammerklavier and Mahler’s Ninth in terms of their primary function. In some cases, as between Mahler’s Ninth and the Beethoven sonata, the methods are practically identical (using the subdominant axis). The essential difference between the two composers at opposite ends of an era is that the later one has the freedom to determine a new tonal outcome. But it is the preparation in the early stages of a work that creates the form-generating tension whereby a progressive tonal scheme is made possible. Having laid the ground work, Mahler can either pursue a new tonal option or confirm the original candidate depending on the work’s programme (explicit or implicit). Consequently Mahler’s concentric works such as the First, Sixth or Tenth symphonies do not represent a fundamental departure in compositional tactics or a regression into the realms of classical normality. The fact that the issue of tonicity is left unresolved until the latter stages of the work means that these works are as dramatic, and therefore finale-oriented, as his progressive tonality works.

From this point, further applications of the axis system contained in this thesis are certainly warranted. It is likely that the major-third neutrality, being based on an irrefutable law of tonality (the inability of whole-tone relationships to effect tonicization), will apply to those twentieth-century composers who continued in the tonal tradition. Investigations by Josef Straus of double-tonic sonorities in the music of Stravinsky were briefly discussed in Chapter 1 and my own brief examinations of works by Shostakovich suggests some comparative study with Mahler’s tonal procedures may be rewarding. I am sure that the music of other Mahler devotees such as Benjamin Britten would also reveal the influence of more than just surface characteristics of thematic
processes and orchestration. Mahler's influence on the twentieth century has always been acknowledged, but the full extent of it in terms of his tonal procedures is perhaps still to be investigated.
Bibliography


Hamburger, Povl. "Orchestral Works and Chamber Music" in Balzer (see earlier entry).


*Gustav Mahler, Chronique d’une Vie, II, L’age d’or de Vienne (1900—1907)*, (Paris, 1983).


"Mahler's Impact on the Crisis of Tonality", *Music Review*, 12 (1951), 113—21


Tovey, Donald Francis. *A Companion to Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas*, (London, 1931).


"Mahler and 'Veni Creator Spiritus',' *Music Review*, 44:1 (February 1983).