Sleeping Pan, Groggy Zarathustra and a Mahlerian Introduction with an Attitude

Milijana Pavlović

Much has been written about Gustav Mahler's Third Symphony and there is much that remains to be said. Anyone who has spent time trying to make sense of Mahler's creative process knows the challenges involved in putting all the pieces together. Sometimes new links are established between existing pieces of evidence, and at other times an entirely new piece of evidence emerges that compels us to question much of what we thought we already knew. One such piece turns out to be the manuscript source Steinbach 1896, a bifolio containing the original opening of the Third Symphony, an opening that is somewhat different than the one we are familiar with today.[1]

In this chapter, I discuss the importance of this source for our overall understanding of the first movement of the symphony and suggest how the material in it allows us to make yet another connection between the beginning and the end of the symphony. Although the written sources—epistolary and

1 The source, a part of a private collection, was described in detail and reproduced in Milijana Pavlović, "Before Pan Awoke: A Quiet Beginning for Mahler's Third Symphony," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 147, no. 1 (May 2022): 193–220, accessed July 14, 2024, http://doi:10.1017/rma.2022.2. The content of this chapter is based on the results of the research project "Gustav Mahler's Third Symphony. Sketches and the Compositional Process" financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) through the Lise Meitner Programme (project ref. M 1494-G21). The first part of this research was published in 2022, see the aforementioned article. My gratitude goes first of all to the owner of Steinbach 1896, who was kind enough to give me unlimited access to the manuscript, thus supporting all the research that ensued. Thank you to Federico Celestini, whose precious advice, Nietzsche-related and otherwise, was very important for the research behind this chapter, as well as for the fact that it will be published, despite my very strong inclination, for many reasons, to leave it in the depths of my computer's hard drive. Thank you to the editors of the volume for their patience: I owe them both a thousand apologies. A special thank you goes to Thomas Peattie, who understood.

otherwise—related to the genesis of the Third Symphony are well-known to scholars, it is worth revisiting some of them here, as they provide an essential backdrop to what follows. I am consciously omitting a typical structural analysis, for two reasons: it has been done multiple times before[2] and the focus of the present paper is of a different kind. My vision of the first movement does not include pondering whether it is a sonata-movement with or without an introduction (this too has been done many times), especially because we would have to bend the whole concept until it is nearly unrecognisable, which hardly begins to explain the workings of the musical content. This highly complex piece of music offers various possibilities for interpretation, and none will find unanimous consent. The following pages do not represent a different take on the content of the article in which I described Steinbach 1896,[3] they are indeed its continuation, because I wanted to separate the philological part from the hermeneutical one. As it relates to the argument of this chapter, I propose that we take a leap and try to think in a non-linear manner, the reason for which will become clear later in the text. What follows offers nothing extraordinarily new per se, just a slightly different turn taken at the same crossroads at which others have stood before me.

The Contextual Prelude

The chronology of the composition of the Third Symphony is well-documented. It is widely accepted that the first known sketches for this symphonic work date back to 1893, Mahler's first summer in Steinbach am Attersee. Mahler was at that time an established conductor in Hamburg, and he dedicated work that summer to the Second Symphony. The Third Symphony began to see the light of day two years later, when the composer drafted all the movements with the exception of

2 An especially detailed analysis, both textually, thematically and otherwise, can be found in Morten Solvik Olsen, "The Awakening of Life," chap. 5 in "Culture and the Creative Imagination: The Genesis of Gustav Mahler's Third Symphony" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1992), 115–71.

3 See fn 1. See also Milijana Pavlović, "Return to Steinbach: An Unknown Sketch of Mahler's Third Symphony," *Il Saggiatore musicale* 17, no. 1 (2010): 43–52.

the first. He also sketched a few preliminary ideas for an introductory movement, but the bulk of the work on what would become the work's first movement took place in the summer of 1896. It did not go smoothly, however, as Mahler had left the sketches he needed at home in Hamburg. Once he received them, the work proceeded quickly, and Mahler could soon congratulate himself on a finished draft score of the symphony.

During the summer of 1895, Mahler's idea for the first movement of the Third Symphony was a march of summer. He wrote some scattered material and left it there. It was meant merely as a prelude to the remainder of the symphony, with a "regimental band to give the rough and crude effect' of the summer's arrival, featuring a symbolic struggle with Winter.[4] The original opening of the symphony was to be called "Was mir der Wald erzählt."[5] Mahler then changed his mind, something he often did during the symphony's genesis, and put the following at the beginning of his concept:

> Der Sommer marschiert ein.
> (Fanfare und lustiger Marsch) (Einleitung) (Nur Bläser mit konzertierenden Contrabässen).[6]

Mahler also kept changing the title of the symphony, depending on his current perception of the content: "Das glückliche Leben"[7] became "Die fröhliche Wissenschaft,"[8] which at a certain point turned into "Pan, Symphonische Dichtungen,"[9] only to become the plain "Symphonie Nr. 3" in the end. He was indecisive about the title of the prelude as well: "I - ? (Zug zu Dionysos oder

4 Herbert Killian, ed., *Gustav Mahler in den Erinnerungen von Natalie Bauer-Lechner* (Hamburg: K.D. Wagner, 1984), 35 (henceforth NBL). English translation quoted from Peter Franklin, ed., *Recollections of Gustav Mahler by Natalie Bauer-Lechner*, trans. Dika Newlin (London: Faber Music, 1980), 40–1 (henceforth NBL/en).

5 Paul Bekker, *Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1921), 106.

6 Bekker, 106

7 Bekker, 106.

8 Undated letter to Arnold Berliner, postal stamp Steinbach August 17, 1895. *Gustav Mahler. Briefe,* ed. Herta Blaukopf (Vienna: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1996), 149. (henceforth GMB).

9 NBL, 60.

Sommer marschiert ein[)]."[10] The changes kept coming concerning the entire concept of the symphony. As for the musical material, a few scribbled measures and notes were all there was of the planned prelude until the following summer. Since it was to be only an introduction, it is unsurprising that Mahler composed the other parts first and only finished up once the rest of the symphony had already been composed.

Displacement of Ideas in an Unexpected Turn of Events

On June 11, 1896, Mahler arrived with his sisters in Steinbach am Attersee, in the Austrian Salzkammergut. The plan for the summer of 1896 was to finish the Third Symphony. What was left to complete was the first movement, for which he had made some preliminary sketches in the summer of 1895. Once he realised that the pages he needed had been left behind in Hamburg, the panic-stricken composer immediately wrote to his friend Hermann Behn, asking him to collect the sketches and send them to Steinbach.[11] Behn obliged, but the sketches did not arrive immediately, thus Mahler filled the days by working on unplanned things. According to Natalie Bauer-Lechner, she not only joined Mahler and his sisters on June 14 but was a witness to the compositional process as it unfolded. During the first few days not only was Mahler without his preliminary sketches, but his piano had not yet arrived. As a result, the period of waiting was filled with "impatience and anxiety" and Mahler "sat in his summer house like a grounded eagle, with pinioned wings."[12] According to Bauer-Lechner, while waiting for the sketches, Mahler composed the Lied "Lob des hohen Verstandes" and "also drafted the introduction to the first movement of the Third."[13] The envelope from

10 Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv, Handschriftensammlung, Inv. No. 68006. The letter, written on September 3, 1895, is reproduced in NBL, 36–8.

11 Gustav Mahler, *Unbekannte Briefe*, ed. Herta Blauukopf (Vienna: Zsolnay, 1983), 26 (henceforth GMUB). No date, postal stamp June 12, 1896, original in the Mary Flagler Cary Collection, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. Translations without source indications are mine.

12 NBL, 53; NBL/en, 55.

13 NBL, 56; NBL/en, 58–59.

Hamburg finally arrived on June 19, prompting Mahler to immediately write a note of thanks to Behn, and to point out the importance of the sketches, saying that they contained "all the germs of the first movement."[14] By then he had the planned "introduction" to the first movement written down, and the content of the newly arrived pages allowed him to work on the rest, which he did in just nine days, completing the draft on June 28.[15] The orchestration was finished by the end of July.[16]

The initial prelude became a full-fledged movement with an unplanned prelude of its own, dictated not by Mahler's original intention but literally by circumstance. At the beginning of the summer of 1896, this new prelude would be considered as such, but by the end of that summer had become completely integrated into the first movement without any interruption that would indicate it had been conceived as a separate section:

> [introduction] -> [movement] -> [introduction + movement] -> [introduction merged with movement]

This particular set of circumstances (namely, the forgotten sketches and Mahler's decision to forge ahead without them) radically altered Mahler's original conception and turned a prelude into a monumental opening movement. Mahler clearly had a sense as to how he wanted the symphonic plot to unfold, that much is indisputable. Yet as Mahler himself admitted in a conversation with Natalie Bauer-Lechner in late June 1896, the final result was rather different to what he had originally imagined:

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14 GMUB, 26–27. In the article "Before Pan Awoke," I argue that these leaves are the sketches today known as Stanford 630 and 631 and that Mahler had probably simply forgotten his promise to give them to Behn and gave them to Natalie Bauer-Lechner instead.

15 There is a letter to Anna von Mildenburg, dated by the editors June 29, in which Mahler wrote that he had finished the sketches of the first movement that day—see Gustav Mahler, "Mein lieber Trotzkopf, meine süße Mohnblume." *Briefe an Anna von Mildenburg*, ed. Franz Willnauer (Vienna: Zsolnay, 2006), 133 (henceforth GMBM).

16 NBL, 65.

> Nothing came of the profound interrelationships between the various movements which I had originally dreamed of. Each movement stands alone, as a self-contained and independent whole: no repetitions or reminiscences. Only at the end of the "animal" movement, does there fall once more the heavy shadow of lifeless Nature, of yet uncrystallised, inorganic matter. But here, it represents a relapse into the lower forms of animal creation before the mighty leap towards consciousness in the highest earthly creature, Man.[17]

Another repercussion of the episode with the forgotten sketches is that it caused a seismic event in the philosophical background of the opening of the symphony. The summer Mahler initially had in mind stayed, but the music he composed while waiting for the forgotten pages turned it into a much less dominant force compared to the original idea. Mahler initially wanted summer to march in exuberantly right away, with only a hint of struggle. However, the final product turned out to be far more interesting.

At some point during the time that the movement as we know it was taking shape (in the second half of June 1896), Mahler introduced Pan into the concept. In scattered conversations reported by Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Mahler made a series of remarks concerning the meaning of the movement:

> The title "Summer marches in" no longer fits the shape of the things in this introduction; "Pans Zug" [Pan´s Procession] would possibly be better—not the procession of the Dionysus! It is not in Dionysian mood; on the contrary, satyrs and other such rough children of nature disport themselves in it. . . . [18]
>
> Having such a draft finished is like being a girl with her dowry in her pocket. I´ve also now found the right title for the introduction; "Pan´s Awakening," followed by "Summer marches in." I wonder how on earth it will turn out! It´s the maddest thing I have written! . . . [19]

17 NBL, 56; NBL/en, 59.
18 NBL, 56; NBL/en, 59.
19 NBL, 57; NBL/en, 60.

> I shall style the first movement "Part I," and I will then have a long pause. But now I want to call the whole thing "Pan, Symphonische Dichtungen."[20]

In another comment relevant to the movement's genesis, Mahler stated:

> Perhaps it is the ideal mood for the rigidity of the first movement. If it had gone the way I intended, I should have immediately evoked a whole summer, all sprouting and heady with life. This evidently is not how the work intends to turn out; it would probably have ruined the effect of all the following movements, and upset the balance of the whole.[21]

As is evident from these remarks, the overall meaning assigned by Mahler to the musical content evolved hand in hand with the latter, not separately and certainly not in a specific order favored by chronologically inclined minds.[22] Once the summer lost its superior position and the content of the music turned towards a more dynamic duel of two contrasting and equally powerful themes—one static and dormant, the other lively and bursting with energy, fighting for dominance throughout the movement, the interpretive possibilities only multiplied.

A Realm of Possibilities

Imagine, that the first movement doesn't begin with the mighty fanfare that sets the listener on the edge of their seat. Imagine instead that the work begins at the border between sound and silence where one struggles to hear the bass drum and even the trombones. Out of nothing, small sparks of movement, the surface of the primordial pond disturbed by barely noticeable bursts, barren rock, no life as we

20 NBL, 60; NBL/en, 63.
21 NBL, 54; NBL/en, 56.
22 Others have discussed the interdependence of music and poetic image in the Third, see for instance Solvik Olsen, "Culture and the Creative Imagination," 120, and Edward Reilly, "A Re-Examination of the Manuscripts of Mahler's Third Symphony," in *Colloque International Gustav Mahler, 25. 26. 27. Janvier 1985* (Paris: Association Gustav Mahler, 1985), 65.

know it, just endless vast space with an occasional tectonic cough. It does change everything in a way. It seems—at least according to the written evidence—that Mahler had intended to begin the symphony like that. No fanfare, no allusion to the fourth movement, just this, building slowly towards the first tentative pastoral interjections whose implications have not yet been fully realized. The proof of this is in the manuscript source Steinbach 1896, which represents the first part of the so-called introduction. The second part of this sketch bundle is housed in the Austrian National Library in Vienna and is known as ÖNB 22794. There is no content gap between the end of Steinbach 1896 and the beginning of ÖNB 22794. The two documents were separated at some point after Mahler's death by his widow, Alma Mahler, who gave them to two different people, mistakenly identifying both bifolia as the first sketches for the Third Symphony. Steinbach 1896 was given to the critic Ludwig Karpath as a Christmas gift in 1915.[23] It changed hands after Karpath died, but it is not known how many times before it came into the possession of the family of the present owner. The other was acquired by the Austrian National Library in 1941 in unclear circumstances.

Steinbach 1896 has indications of instrumentation and key, something that ÖNB 22794 does not.[24] This bifolio also contains all the important building blocks of the final version, including the violin solo on the last page of the manuscript (fol. 2v). Something that appears in both manuscripts is an indication that material should be inserted, without specifying more than a note or two, clearly a reminder to Mahler himself, accompanied by the words "Pan schläft." In Steinbach 1896 it is written in pencil at the end of the last system of fol. 2v (side d of the manuscript) and crossed out. In ÖNB 22794, however, it appears at the last system on side b, fol. 1v, at the end of the sequence of measure identical to the one that ends Steinbach 1896, this time not crossed out. On side a, fol. 1r, above the last six measures (corresponding to mm. 219–224 of the final score) Mahler wrote "Pan schläft!" in ink and the same insertion symbol "V" but crossed it all out later in blue pencil. I argue that these interventions all took place after the main content of both manuscripts was written, because Mahler kept coming back

23 Pavlović, "Before Pan Awoke," 197, 200.
24 Reproduction in Pavlović, 198–99.

to the sketches, with different colors, in what for him was normal practice. In the fair copy, Mahler introduced thematic titles for certain sections throughout the movement[25], with "Pan schläft" assigned to the passage beginning with measure 132 of the final score and measure 81 of Steinbach 1896, where it is not marked.[26]

At the bottom of the page, separated from the rest of the sketch, the famous "oscillation" from the fourth movement, hastily written. It is unclear when Mahler introduced this into the manuscript, but it seems likely that it was written after the main content of the sketch. With what intention, it is difficult to say, but what we do know is that it eventually became the binding agent between the mighty fanfare from the final version and the original beginning as seen in Steinbach 1896. Even without the fanfare, the change in content compared to the original conception of 1895 is clear and noteworthy, which brings us to the core of this paper.

The appearance of Steinbach 1896 changed the role of ÖNB 22794, in most accounts considered an isolated sketch and dated to various stages of the compositional process, giving way to many a wrong assumption.[27] Interpretations aside, the fact that these two manuscripts form an inseparable unit of musical material speaks for their shared role in the genesis of the opening part of the first movement and the flow of musical and extra-musical ideas (in whatever order they came) that accompanied that role, giving us firm reasons to think that they were both written within a short span of time. This fact tells us that their content (here meaning the original first wave of writing, not the other times Mahler came back to both bifolia afterwards) was not wildly scattered along the timeline but came to be as a compact cluster showing intent, thus excluding a random appearance of an idea that only later became developed into the thematic material that would come to form the first group. All important elements of the first half of the opening movement are there and the major contribution of Steinbach 1896 is to show this and prove it beyond any doubt. Had we remained with only ÖNB 22794 to discuss, it would not have been so clear.

25 Full list in Pavlović, 205, and, with more detail in Solvik Olsen, "Culture and the Creative Imagination," 122.

26 For a more elaborate description of these elements see Pavlović, "Before Pan Awoke," 205–6.

27 For an overview see Pavlović, "Before Pan Awoke," 207–8.

In its final form, the first movement comprises two thematic groups that are equally strong and that interact with one another with fluctuating dynamics and intensity. One is dominant in the first half of the movement, the other gradually asserts itself over the course of the second half. Once Mahler transformed the introduction into an integral part of the movement and connected it by way of direct reference to the fourth, the content reached another level. The connection that was made and the new structure of the movement lead us to the world of Pan and Zarathustra, at that noon lull in the hot summer day Mahler had in mind. In the protracted, complex evolution of the symphony title, the word *Traum*, i.e. sleep, shows up often, but the time of day it is supposed to take place varies:

Summer 1895—"Ein Sommernachtstraum"[28]
Mid-August 1895—"Ein Sommermorgentraum"[29]
August 6, 1896—"Ein Sommermittagstraum"[30]
Fair copy—"Ein Sommermorgentraum"

As mentioned above, Mahler initially had Dionysus in mind, only to dismiss this idea later, suggesting that the music corresponded more to Pan's procession, rather than to the one of Dionysus. Since according to the relevant myths Dionysus belonged to Pan's entourage, however, the distinction Mahler was making here is not entirely clear. In August 1896, the word/phrase "Bacchuszug" (Procession of Bacchus) was added to the title of the first movement, "Der Sommer marschiert ein."[31] Dionysus and Bacchus being, respectively, Greek and Roman versions of the same deity, Mahler´s perception of that part of the symphony (keeping in mind that it was still separate from the "introduction") went back to Dionysus, so now we had both him and Pan. All of these elements can be connected to Nietzsche's Zarathustra as well, whether intentionally planned by Mahler or as an unexpected side effect.

28 Bekker, *Gustav Mahlers Symphonien*, 106.
29 Letter to Arnold Berliner, see fn 7.
30 Letter to Max Marschalk, August 6, 1896, GMB, 196.
31 See fn 32.

Pan and Zarathustra

That Nietzsche's philosophy exerted a considerable influence on Mahler and the Third Symphony is abundantly clear, not only through various temporary titles for the symphony and its parts, but also through the direct reference in the fourth movement. The Pan/Dionysus contrast is another indication of this connection, and all this has been discussed in the literature. However, there is one aspect that has until now been overlooked: namely, the presence of Zarathustra beyond the fourth movement. The figure of Zarathustra comes up in the fourth movement, with the setting of Nietzsche's "O Mensch gibt Acht." In Mahler's conception, Pan was understood not only as the specific deity, but also through the meaning of his name, Πάν (Greek for "all," "of everything"). Pan's noontide sleep is an important element in the construction of the meaning Mahler inscribed in the opening of the symphony. According to the related mythology, Pan liked to sleep at that time of the day, in the summer heat, and if it happened that someone disturbed that sleep, he would make it a point to get his revenge by sneaking on the unsuspecting victim who woke him up and frightened them out of their wits by a sudden appearance or a cry, causing deliberate panic. Along with the sleeping Pan in the heat of a summer´s day, when, as Mahler said, "not a breath stirs," there is another element that has deep meaning. The noontide is the most *perfect* moment of the day, when the sun stands vertically above us and therefore creates no shadow. It is when the sun reaches the highest point of its trajectory on the horizon, the peak of its journey, and from that moment on it slowly sinks toward the west and the setting hour. That magical instant has the effect of a total standstill and nearly emulates timelessness. That said, it has its counterpart in midnight, itself perceived as a point in the cycle of the day in which perception is elevated and deepest reflection and contemplation are possible. Throughout Antiquity the noon hour was a matter of interest and fascination. As Karl Schlechta has observed:

> Shadows come during the day, and when the sun is in zenith, the look penetrates into the underworld to the throne of Pluto and Persephone. At noon fall the barriers between the above and the under, the living and the dead; past becomes

> present, hidden becomes apparent—during the mortal daily existence it sinks in the scorching wind into the deep, deathlike sleep.[32]

In his own writings, Nietzsche directly mentions Pan only once: specifically, in the second part of his *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches. Ein Buch für freie Geister* (1878), entitled *Der Wanderer und sein Schatten*. In section 308, marked *Am Mittag*, Nietzsche writes:

> Upon a concealed woodland meadow he sees great Pan sleeping; all things of nature have fallen asleep with him, an expression of eternity on their face—that is how it seems to him. He wants nothing, he is troubled by nothing, his heart stands still, only his eyes are alive— it is a death with open eyes. . . . —Then at length, the wind rises in the trees, noon has gone by, life again draws him to it.[33]

Although this passage depicts the very kind of *Stimmung* Mahler himself described in his remarks that concern the opening of the symphony, in *Thus spoke Zarathustra* there is a series of allusions not only to Pan, as well as to Dionysus, but without any explicit mention of either of them. This work has been connected almost exclusively to the fourth movement of the Third Symphony, given the text used by Mahler, which in the book appears in three instances. Mahler gave this text his own touch by versifying it in such a way that the word *tief* (deep) is repeated twelve times, compared to Nietzsche´s eight. Whereas the song has been analyzed extensively, little has been said of the chapter *Mittags* in connection with the Third Symphony, and the first movement in particular. Claudia Mauer-Zenck has written about the relationship of Pan's sleep at noon and the midnight one in Mahler, arguing that Pan not only sleeps, but also dreams "a dream of

32 Karl Schlechta, *Nietzsches grosser Mittag* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1954), 36. Schlechta gives a thorough overview of the topic of noon in Antiquity.

33 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 387; German language edition referenced is Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, eds., *Friedrich Nietzsche Sämtliche Werke. Kritische Studienausgabe in 15 Bände* (Munich: Dt. Taschenbuch-Verl.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 2, 690 (henceforth KSA). This excerpt is also mentioned by Eveline Nikkels, see *'O Mensch! Gib Acht!': Friedrich Nietzsche's Bedeutung für Gustav Mahler* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1989), 80.

weightless walk [*schwerenlose Gehen*] of an individual," which then escalates "in the episode of vision," and after the vision fades, "the *Bacchuszug* distorts itself to excesses of the common Dionysian state."[34] Although Maurer-Zenk neither mentions Zarathustra nor makes any explicit connection to Nietzsche's work, what she describes is not so different from the content of the *Noon* chapter in part IV. In Nietzsche's setting, it is Zarathustra who we find alone in the woods at noon:

> And Zarathustra ran and ran and found no one anymore, and he was alone and found himself again and again, and he enjoyed and sipped his solitude and thought about good things—for hours. At the hour of noon, however, as the sun stood directly over Zarathustra's head, he passed by an old crooked and knotty tree, embraced by the luxurious love of a grapevine and hidden away from itself; from it hung abundant yellow grapes, trailing toward the wanderer. Then he got a craving to quench a slight thirst and to pluck himself a grape; but when he had already stretched out his arm to do so, then he got an even stronger craving to do something else, namely to lie down beside the tree, at the hour of perfect noon, and to sleep.[35]

Not only is this a strikingly obvious reference to Pan's sleep, but Dionysus is also present, alluded to by the grapes and by the tree, as among his various titles/epithets, there were also Σταφυλιτης (of the Grape) and Δενδρίτης (of the tree). Certainly not by chance, Nietzsche had Zarathustra fall asleep "at the hour of the perfect noon." Overwhelmed by that magical moment when all is perfectly still,

> Zarathustra spoke thus to his heart:
> Still! Still! Didn't the world become perfect just now? What's happening to me?

34 Claudia Maurer-Zenck, "Die Dritte Symphonie," in *Gustav Mahler. Interpretationen seiner Werke,* eds. Peter Revers and Oliver Korte (Lilienthal: Laaber, 2011), 1: 308.

35 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, ed. Adrian del Caro and Robert B. Pippin, trans. Adrian del Caro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 223 (henceforth NZe) accessed July 14, 2024, https://assets.cambridge.org/97805216/02617/frontmatter/9780521602617_frontmatter.pdf. Solvik mentions this particular passage in the context of the noontide sleep, albeit without delving further into the rest of Nietzsche's chapter, see Solvik, "Culture and the Creative Imagination," 143–44.

> Like a delicate wind, unseen, dancing on a panelled sea, light, feather light—thus sleep dances on me . . .
> —how she grows long and weary, my strange soul! Did a seventh day's evening come to her precisely at noon? Did she wander blissfully too long already between good and ripe things?[36]

The perfection of the moment is not, however, where the parallel stops. Indeed, it is even more explicit in what follows:

> Like such a weary ship in the stillest bay, thus I too rest now close to the earth, faithfully, trusting, waiting, bound to it with the lightest threads.
> Oh happiness, oh happiness! Do you want to sing, oh my soul? You lie in the grass. But this is the secret solemn hour when no shepherd plays his flute.
> Stand back! Hot noon sleeps on the meadows. Do not sing! Still! The world is perfect. Do not sing, you winged bug in the grass, oh my soul! Do not even whisper! Look here—still! Old noon is sleeping, he's moving his mouth: didn't he just drink a drop of happiness—
> —an old brown drop of golden happiness, golden wine? It flits over him, his happiness is laughing. Thus laughs—a god. Still![37]

This excerpt calls to mind both Pan and Dionysus and the repetition of "still" is not unlike "deep" (*tief*) in "*O Mensch! Gib Acht!*" The "secret solemn hour," the "hot noon," "golden wine" and the world that is perfect. Following another remark about the world having attained perfection, as well as becoming "round and ripe" (we might interpret this as yet another reference to Dionysus), Zarathustra utters "still" once again and then feels he is asleep. However, the fact that he sleeps at noon is not necessarily the main reason why I insist on the relevance of this chapter in Nietzsche's work for the opening movement of Mahler's symphony, it is only the framework. The focal point of my attention here is the *nature* of

36 NZe, 223; KSA 4, 342.
37 NZe, 224; KSA 4, 343.

Zarathustra's (non)sleep, namely that there is *struggle* in him between falling asleep and remaining awake:

> "Get up!" he said to himself, "you sleeper! You noon sleeper! Well then, well now, you old legs! It's time and overtime, many a good piece of road is still waiting for you—
> Now you've slept yourself out, for how long? Half an eternity! Well then, well now, my old heart! How long after such a sleep will it take you to wake yourself out?
> (But then he fell asleep anew, and his soul spoke against him and resisted and laid itself down again)—"Let me be! Still! Didn't the world become perfect just now? Oh the golden round ball!"—[38]

Nietzsche's chapter ends with Zarathustra talking to himself once again, asking the heaven when it would drink his soul back to itself and calling it "you cheerful, dreadful noon abyss"[39]. Zarathustra then stands up from the tree, "as if from a strange drunkenness," and seeing the sun still over his head, realizes that he has slept for a short interval of time.

Here Zarathustra is aware both that he is sleeping, but also that he shouldn't be. Before falling asleep, he craved the grapes, but the craving for sleep was stronger, and it was to this he succumbed. Now, aware that he fell asleep, an inner struggle ensues between the two opposing states. He is torn between the stillness of his body and the song of his soul, completely taken over by the magical noon hour. He manages to talk to himself in order to stay awake, but the sleep prevails once again. The conscious tries to reason, but in this instance the subconscious wins again. The two sides of human nature in endless struggle to overpower one another, not trying to form a whole, as they already stem from a whole, they are simply fighting for dominance - the Self and the Otherness. As Federico Celestini has observed in connection with Nietzsche´s view of Dionysus:

38 NZe, 224–225; KSA 4, 344.
39 See the comment by Karl Schlechta referenced in fn 34.

> Rather, as the god of pre-individualised world and of plurality, Dionysus represents a type of human existence, which is completely different to that of the Self. The Dionysian is not merely a different Self, but represents the Otherness of the Self, and as such, a paradigmatic principle of Otherness.[40]

The relationship between these two seemingly opposing, but inseparable elements, is at the heart of the first movement of the Third Symphony. The movement's colossal opening is based on the interaction of two thematic groups, the musical stillness and the march, neither of which dominate the other throughout the movement. The possibilities created by the introduction of the thematic material that would go on to form the first thematic cluster—here meaning the building blocks of Steinbach 1896 and ÖNB 22794—were so powerful that Mahler himself kept discovering their potential long after the completion of the draft, as that "third" realm, shaped into blended space,[41] gave a whole other life to the work, quite independent and susceptible only to itself. Indeed, the opening gave rise to a rich exchange of the two elements whose beginning belonged to one and ending to the other. They are practically two faces of the same coin, like those of Nature—the unstoppable, destructive power that sweeps away everything it encounters, the one able to have mountains rise from flat soil, and then also its counterpart, the power that breathes life into solid rock and covers it with grass, trees and animals, the one that goes deep towards the consciousness of a human being. As Peter Franklin has noted, these two faces are "crudely and dualistically pitted against, not evolved from, its 'other' image."[42]

40 Federico Celestini, "Gustav Mahler and the Aesthetic of De-Identification," in *Rethinking Mahler*, ed. by Jeremy Barham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 239.

41 Here I am referring to Nicholas Cook's essay "Theorising Musical Meaning," chap. 10 in his book *Music, Performance, Meaning* (London: Routledge, 2007).

42 Peter Franklin, "A Stranger's Story: Programmes, Politics, and Mahler's Third Symphony," in *The Mahler Companion*, eds. Donald Mitchell and Andrew Nicholson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 179.

The Whole and the Stubborn Parts

In considering the roles played by the two strongest elements of the movement, the issue of the part and the whole reveals yet another layer in which these factors figure prominently. The thematic interplay in the movement, against the background of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, strengthens the impression of an interaction in which the most important element is that these two characters do not communicate in order to create a whole—they are *already* a part of a whole (i.e. they are themselves derivatives, the mentioned proverbial two faces of a coin). They could be compared to tree branches: the trunk comes first, then branches differentiate from it and not the other way round. The one does not strive to find similarities in the other—the power that arises from their continuous alternation and the strength of their bond is not at all in their similarities, rather the contrary. Discussing the dissolution of traditional form categories, Arno Forchert has noted that "the emphasis on always new compositional-technical dimensions in Mahler's main characters shows that their meaning for the whole is of another kind[43]: they do not connect through similarity but structure it through otherness."[44] This is particularly true of the first movement of the Third Symphony, with its two contrasting elements articulating meaning through their striving for dominance over the other and their clashing characteristics. Apart from the usual minor-major contrast, these two elements differ in many other ways as well. The massive march is most of what every such march is supposed to be: namely, its full orchestral "artillery," loud, rhythmic and powerful. Its counterpart sits in a lower register and includes, timbral nuances, unfolds at a funereal pace, and features occasional melodic breakthroughs. The form of the movement practically rests on the alternation of the two major components, both being complex units that aren't just *any* parts of the whole but are its crucial characteristics that cannot be replaced or eliminated. Forchert maintains:

43 Compared to the process in which two contrasting elements are eventually linked through common features.

44 Arno Forchert, "Zur Auflosung Traditioneller Formkategorien in der Musik um 1900. Probleme Formaler Organisation bei Mahler und Strauss," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 32, no. 2 (1975): 87, accessed July 14, 2024, https://doi.org/10.2307/930402.

> Mahler's idea of form, which finds its expression in the absence of syntactic connection between the two sections, brings the successive characters into ideal simultaneity. Music no longer tells stories, but becomes an image, unfolded in time, of a state [condition].[45]

The first movement of the Third Symphony possesses two elements that stem from the one that unifies them. But their interaction is such that we can assume that it is something that goes on and on, only with different outcomes at the end of each cycle. Following Forchert´s terminology, it doesn´t end, as it is not a story: it is a *condition* that manifests itself in one way or the other, with varying intensity. We are given a possibility to see a partial image—an insight perhaps—in which the march eventually overpowers its quiet counterpart, or, if we remember Zarathustra, the waking state overpowers the sleep. Since for most of us time has linear character (or better, that is the only dimension of it that most are able to grasp), what we see or hear follows the same principle and we perceive it as a narrative. We can invent a story, or draw out different narrative elements, but that is mainly because of our perception of time and the necessity to explain everything using linear sequence. The pompous opening suddenly collapses into an oscillating rhythm that fades from *p* to *ppp, morendo*. At measure 24 the music practically comes to a standstill, with the *pp* tremolo of the bass drum. What follows is a seemingly fragmented mixture of short motifs, gestures and signals that characterizes the movement as a whole—unpredictable, disjointed, and at times chaotic. The existing analyses of the movement have attempted to find language to describe the characteristics mentioned in the last sentence: failure, discontinuity, dissolution, disruption, dysfunction, contrast, obstruction, irreconcilability, conflict, distortion. If nothing else, the scholars using these terms agree at least that the movement is simply anomalous. Apart from its general "disjointedness," this extraordinary construction creates problems as it relates to the interpretation and analysis of its tonal structure. However, if we look at the larger picture, the non-linearity and the complexity of the interaction of the two driving forces in the movement are indeed what makes this half hour of music

45 Forchert, "Zur Auflosung Traditioneller Formkategorien," 91–92.

stand out in such a particular way and its most remarkable show of strength, in which Mahler, by using musical means at his disposal, manages to accomplish something that a regular narrative would struggle to produce. As Jeremy Barham, who, in his overview of the critical response to the form in the first movement of the Third, puts it in the introduction to his analysis:

> Literary narrative is able, through the use of tense and other procedures such as intercutting (an archetypal cinematic and television procedure), to misalign sequential presentation and chronology of plot (the episodic and configurational dimensions), creating complex and illusory forms of continuity. By exploiting and opposing episodic and configurational procedures, Mahler's movement not only exposes the problematic dialectic between universalism and nominalism or whole and part, but also operates dialectically between creating the illusion of continuity and reifying discontinuity. In Lawrence Kramer's terms, the narrative effects may be said to "constitute a critical or disruptive process" whose oppositions of force and structure reveal narrative as a "strategy of deconstruction."[46]

Mahler's *Großer Mittag*

Seen through the lens of the parts that stem from a whole and Zarathustra's noon struggle, not least through that of Pan and all the disturbances of his sleep, the concept of the movement, as disjointed as it seems to be, presents a less chaotic layout. If we consider the movement not as a conventional narrative, but as a state, a condition, the picture that emerges is that of an episode in a cycle, leading to a series of clashes of varying intensity and to a struggle to prevail. As is the case with every condition, the set of circumstances in a given moment, combined with inner factors and characteristics of the partaking elements of the whole influence the outcome. At one point one of the elements will overpower

46 Jeremy Barham, "Mahler's Third Symphony and the philosophy of Gustav Fechner: interdisciplinary approaches to criticisms, analysis and interpretation" (PhD diss., University of Surrey, 1998), 268–69.

the other or vice versa, but that doesn't change the essence of the whole. Applied to the first movement of the Third Symphony, this logic uncovers Pan's sleep and attached disturbances of the waking world as an episode, which on all its levels, leads to a possible outcome—in this case, it is shown in the five subsequent movements.

If the first part of the symphony had remained as initially intended, with the focus on the powerful march and with only the slight opposition of the winter theme, it wouldn´t have had the weight on all fronts which it eventually acquired. What was supposed to be an introduction turned into a major element and determined the course of the entire movement, the results of which are manifested in a deep connection with the rest of the symphony, reaching a climax in the last movement and confirming Zarathustra's place, strong from the very beginning, not only because of the "O Mensch" material. Looking at the bigger picture, the connection between Pan myth and Zarathustra's noon gains in significance, especially in the context of the final parts of Nietzsche´s book and Mahler´s symphony respectively. Whereas noontide is an event that takes place every day and is possible to experience repeatedly, the great noon, the *großer Mittag*, is a different concept in that it takes many regular noontides to reach. It is a goal of a life path, not one of a single day, and it happens only once. One reaches it or one doesn´t. Once reached, it characterizes the remainder of one´s life by sending it to another level, which would not have been possible without that peak moment. In his final address in the book, Zarathustra says, "This is *my* morning, *my day* is beginning: *up now, up, you great noon!*."[47] In Mahler's work, the "tiefe Mitternacht' also precedes the great climax, which happens to be the breathtaking last movement, as he explained in the famous letter to his then-lover Anna von Mildenburg, who wanted to know what the final movement, at that time still entitled "What love tells me" was about:

> Do you understand therefore, dear heart, what it is about? It should mark the peak and the highest level, from which it will be possible to see the world. I could have

47 NZe, 266; KSA 4, 408.

> also called the movement roughly "What God tells me!" And that is to say precisely in the sense that God can indeed be only described as "Love." [48]

In Mahler's version of the *großer Mittag*, a gradual awakening of the world keeps moving towards the heights, until it reaches the highest possible point, which then eliminates the necessity to climb, but widens the horizon and offers a perspective that encompasses everything. From that point forward, it finally becomes possible to understand everything, further enriching the existence of a single individual's consciousness, significantly called to attention in the fourth movement, through Zarathustra´s song, and shown the depths of thought and pain, as well as a way towards another plane of existence. Like the glowing Zarathustra, who left his cave "like a morning sun that emerges from the dark mountains," [49] Mahler´s human is soaked in the light of awakened awareness.

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48 GMBM, letter 181, 189.
49 NZe, 266; KSA 4, 408.

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