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The Hidden Programme of Mahler's Seventh Symphony

Summary

The overall meaning of the Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler has consistently puzzled analysts and musicologists. While some parts have been understood and praised and others heavily criticised, much continues to hide its significance, a fact that hinders any real grasp of the whole work. The aim of the paper is to employ different critical and analytical methods and philosophies (structural analysis, investigation of imagery, narrative in music, hermeneutics, and documentary and literary evidence) to decode layers of meaning and to make a closely argued case for a convincing, integrated interpretation of the work as a whole.

One can discern examples of modified classical formal models. Images of birds and military activity indicate extra-musical thinking in these modifications and the dramatic change in character from the first movement to the last suggests a narrative dimension. By examining the development of the implied narrative of the two previous symphonies, Mahler's thought is clarified. Taking into account a concert programme proposed by the composer, in which he included this symphony and three works by Wagner, one can map these latter works on to three movements of the symphony to reveal aspects of the composer's thinking. The literary connection here suggests a Faustian interpretation, which becomes more and more plausible as all the previously mentioned threads are drawn together.

The Problem

The overall meaning of the Seventh Symphony of the Austrian composer Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) has consistently baffled analysts and musicologists. It used to be thought of as one of the weakest of the composer's symphonies. The English musicologist, Deryck Cooke, said: 'The Seventh is undoubtedly the Cinderella among Mahler's symphonies.'[1] He was particularly critical of it: 'The truth is that No.7... presents an enigmatic, inscrutable face to the world ... one which arouses suspicions as to its quality.'[2]

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[1] Deryck Cooke: *Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music* (London: Faber, 1980), 88.
[2] Cooke (1980), 88.

James L. Zychowicz noted the criticism: 'It is rare, indeed, when an international symposium is devoted to a controversial – and sometimes castigated work – such as the Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler.'[3] It was this symposium that threw much light on the nature of the work and particularly its individual parts. The symphony's overall 'meaning' is something that has troubled many commentators. Typical is the opinion of Peter Franklin: 'The Seventh Symphony (1904-5) makes use of as wide a range of allusive musical imagery as any of his works, while remaining mysteriously canny about its cumulative meaning.'[4] Henry-Louis de La Grange voiced similar thoughts: 'Non seulement elle n'est accompagné d'aucun »programme« qui permettre d'en décrypter le sens, mais elle ne semble pas, comme les autres symphonies mahlériennes, avoir de grand dessin, de propos général suseptible de justifier le plan de l'ensemble et la bizarrerie du détail.'[5] La Grange also gave extensive and sympathetic consideration to the possibility of a programme, citing the influence of the poet Eichendorff and the ideas of Peter Davison, Peter Revers, Willem Mengelberg and Alphons Diepenbrock without coming to any firm overall conclusions.[6]

It is an article of many writers' faith that while the middle movements (II, III and IV) are among the composer's most attractive creations, the first and last movements, for one reason or another, fail to convince. The second movement, entitled *Nachtmusik*, gives a vivid picture of nocturnal activities, horn calls, sinister marches with whirling counterpoints, birdcalls and even screams. The fourth movement, also entitled *Nachtmusik*, is superficially a charming serenade, complete with mandolin and guitar. It has an engaging character with its memorable melodies, simple repetitive rhythms and chamber-music like orchestral textures. The central third movement, the scherzo, is also very nocturnal in character. Its heading *Schattenhaft* (shadowy) clearly indicates this. The way that the accompaniment is built up in the bass register, with timpani, cellos and basses, bass clarinet and horns, before the violins' whirligig runs emerge, is typical. The volume, apart from a couple of violent outbursts, is kept low and the textures are mostly delicately scored. It would appear to be generally uncomplicated.

The problem seems to involve the outer movements, the first and last. In various ways they are thought not to be convincing. Let us look at these in turn. The first movement by various analysts is considered somewhat diffuse in form. The slow introduction is integrated thematically into the allegro section, a feature which should cause no problems, but the central part of the allegro appears to some to be a series of sections of episodic character. There are sections which exemplify Adorno's 'suspension of time' and frequently the music seems to lose its momentum. One can compare this movement to the equivalent one of the Sixth Symphony. The latter's fairly straightforward classical sonata structure is not difficult to follow, with the composer making his points in an orderly and traditional way, even if the content is powerful and imposing. The first

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[3] James L. Zychowicz (ed): *The Seventh Symphony of Gustav Mahler: A Symposium* (Cincinnati: University of Cincinnati, 1990), v.

[4] Peter Franklin: *The life of Mahler* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), 158–59.

[5] Henry-Louis de La Grange: 'L'énigme de la Septième', in Zychowicz (ed): op.cit., 13.

[6] Henry-Louis de La Grange: *Gustav Mahler, Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904–1907)* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 849–53.

movement of the Seventh Symphony contains themes with a family resemblance to those in the Sixth Symphony, but they are handled far less formally and much more flexibly and probably for Mahler intuitively. The finale presents even more serious problems. It is said to be untypical of the composer, especially obviously after the three very evocative night movements. The almost forced joyous character of the movement comes with something of a jolt after the delicate serenade. The main thematic material is uncommonly four-square for Mahler and has an uncanny resemblance to the prelude to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*. Rather than point an accusing finger at Mahler, we should rather try to understand what is happening.

The polarisation of favourable opinion concerning the central movements on the one hand and the critical opinion of the outer movements on the other hand suggests that Mahler's inspiration was in some way faulty or that the work itself may have been misunderstood by its audiences. Mahler himself, always his severest critic, was reportedly satisfied with the work and no less a musician than Arnold Schoenberg was very impressed by the work.[7]

It is my contention that the overall significance or meaning of the work is lost if one concentrates too closely on the individual parts, attractive though they are. It is a symphony not a suite and as such it can be expected to present a coherent and unified message. Further, the traditional methods of analysis, especially if used singly, are unlikely to illuminate the richness of the work. As Mahler's music responds to approaches from so many different angles and perspectives, surely it is sensible to take a number of different viewpoints together to see if the 'meaning' of the work can be better uncovered.

Analytical Methods

The music of Mahler is particularly rich in its features. Much more than the music of, say, the Classical period, it can be viewed in a number of different ways. Consequently it is reasonable to believe that there are many different analytical approaches which are valid for this music. Let us look at these in turn.

The traditional approach to music often uses some type of formal analysis. One can thus take a standard model of a symphony, usually from the Classical period and map this model on to the work being studied. The relationship that this reveals between the two can be considered in a number of ways: themes, keys, relative lengths of the 'standard' sections are probably the most important. This form of comparison to a notional model can of course be very revealing. On the most simplistic and obvious level, points of similarity indicate a valid contact, while differences show the divergence from tradition. The broad conclusion that one can arrive at is that one can recognise some common characteristics, even though there are very many divergences.

One feature which suggests to us that Mahler's music does not adhere strictly to classical procedures is the appearance of ideas that indicate some overt extra-musical influence. This comes in two forms. The first is basically musical in nature, involving the

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[7]   In Alma Mahler: *Gustav Mahler Memories and Letters* (ed. D.Mitchell) (London: John Murray, 1968), 325–27.

complex use of dance forms and marches. Dances are not restricted to consistent and uniform tempos and styles. They are organic features that are constantly being developed and changed. The composer's use of marches and march-like music has a similar variety in its use; it is equally liable to change its character, without any obvious internal musical explanation.

The second is the use of features that do not normally find a place in music, for example, birdsong, and the sounds of cowbells, that hint at something outside the normal range of music. This imagery is a potent feature in Mahler's music.

It is not difficult to imagine that some kind of narrative underlies the music. Although the idea of narrative in music has generated a great deal of controversy, following Adorno, it has gained a wide currency in discussions of Mahler's symphonies. The questions that one should ask are: in what way can music 'narrate' and if so does this process apply to the music of Mahler?

We now move naturally into the area of musical hermeneutics, the study of the meaning of music, the ultimate aim of this study. Herman Kretschmar, one of the pioneers of this type of study, rejected the conception of music, deriving from purely formal considerations, of Hanslick and the so-called Formalists, but he also rejected the poetising descriptions of much music writing of his day. He tried to work out the real emotions which, he argued, were inherent in the music itself, drawing on biographical and general historical data to support his explanations.[8]

In Mahler's case there is indeed much biographical information, including the diary and notes of Natalie Bauer-Lechner, the letters and diaries of his wife, and his own letters. Detailed biographical work has been done by Donald Mitchell and especially by Henry-Louis de la Grange that reveal many important details. It is to some of these that we can turn to support what may be apparently speculative suggestions of various interpretations.

Formal Models

Despite their complexity the broad structures of Mahler's Seventh Symphony can be related to traditional symphonic forms. The first movement is a loose sonata structure with a slow introduction. That some of the introduction's material is worked into the form of the main allegro should not concern us much at the moment. The main allegro hinges around a thrusting march-like first theme and an important subsidiary section (Mit großen Schwung, bar 118) which is strongly linear, with a rich melodic chromaticism and frequent emotionally charged pauses on the second beats of the bar. It is not difficult to recognise a similarity with the comparable music from the first movement of the Sixth Symphony, a point made by numerous commentators.

Leaving aside for the moment the extended development section, we can see a certain regularity in the recapitulation. The return of the adagio introduction (bar 338) and its transformation into the Allegro come prima – maestoso (bar 373) is broadly similar

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8 Tibor Knieff: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London: Macmillan, 1980) 8, 511.

to the opening, but significantly abbreviated by the omission of the march which has played an important part in the music so far. The second theme (bar 465) charts a similar course, but now without the emotionally charged pauses found in the exposition. The aspect that has drawn most comment is the extended development section (bars 171-337) which works through numerous sub-sections of very varying tempos. In the slow sections time stands still: Meno mosso (256–265), Etwas gemessener (bars 298–316) and the subsidiary theme (bars 317–337). The last in B major forms a link to the return of the slow introduction. The later appearances of the march which was first heard in the slow introduction are most interesting: the end of the exposition in which it is very loud, then augmented as a slow chorale in the middle of the development (bars 256–265) and finally loudly in the coda. We are entitled to ask what is the significance of these changes in the character of the march, and further what is the relationship between the main themes and between them and the march itself.

The first of the *Nachtmusik* movements can be seen as a very varied sonata model, but Constantin Floros identifies a plausible quasi-arch model.[9] The fact that this rather neat plan is strangely unrecognisable in practice should alert us to the problems of interpreting the music in traditional terms. The sections that return always come in a different form, something which demands some explanation. The Scherzo leads to more difficulties of interpretation. The simple plan could look like this: scherzo with repeat, trio, scherzo with repeat, coda. By further sub-dividing the movement into many sections, it is possible to give some details of Mahler's micro-structural working, but this kind of analysis becomes pointless.[10] What is in fact a patchwork of materials that are juxtaposed in various ways is a contradiction of the simple plan. We might also ask why the first reprise is in the 'wrong' key – 'false recapitulation' is Berio's phrase.[11]

The second *Nachtmusik* movement would appear more straightforward. Floros postulates the sequence: introduction – main section – development – trio – recapitulation – coda.[12] There is a considerable rondo feel about the music, although it is impossible to connect this with traditional rondo structures.

The problematic finale in some ways is easiest to understand in traditional terms, that of a baroque ritornello. Floros identified six elements that are used for the ritornello theme. In only two of the eight appearances of the ritornello (the first and the last) do all six elements appear; in all the others only some (between one and four) elements are used, a procedure in line with Baroque practice.[13] Why did Mahler use this strangely archaic formal plan?

In all five movements one can recognise some vestiges of traditional formal structures. However, in all cases, there are good reasons to believe that there is much more to the music than mapping his music on to an earlier model.

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[9] Constantin Floros: *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1994), 198–99.
[10] See my investigation in Niall O'Loughlin: 'The Rondo in Mahler's Middle Period Symphonies: Valid Model or Useful Abstraction', *Muzikološki zbornik* 35 (1999), 138.
[11] Talia Pecker Berio: 'Perspectives of a Scherzo', in Zychowicz (ed): op.cit., 88.
[12] Floros: op.cit., 204.
[13] Floros: op.cit., 206–11; Martin Scherzinger: 'The Finale of Mahler's Seventh Symphony: A Deconstructive Reading', *Music Analysis* 14 (1995) 1, 69–88.

Musical Imagery

We now can look at one of the richest sources of clues in this symphony: the composer's use of musical imagery. This can take a number of forms: birdsong, country sounds, military rhythms, dance-like passages, references to other works of his own, melodies and melodic fragments previously set by Mahler to words of some significance and quotations or quasi-quotations from other composers' works.

The opening movement seems to be carrying on the drama of the first movement of the Sixth Symphony – the melodic shapes of the main themes are clearly related. The first *Nachtmusik* shows this in a particularly vivid form. An early passage (bars 9–27) was said by Alma Mahler, the composer's wife, to represent birdsong in its triplet woodwind figures. There are numerous military features that take their inspiration from the Wunderhorn song *Revelge*, composed in 1899. Note especially the rhythm: quaver, 2 semiquavers, 2 quavers, crotchet. The three references in this movement (bars 28–29, 187–88, 337–38) to the motto of the Sixth Symphony (major to minor chord shift) must hold some significance. The appearance of cowbells as part of an episode that recalls the echoing horn calls of the introduction must have some possibly pastoral significance. Peter Davison wrote: 'The presence of cowbells, echoing horns, march music and exotic dance rhythms could initially seem to convey a[n] unconnected sequence of extramusical significance'.[14] We can listen to the spectral whirligig music of the scherzo and imagine all kinds of nocturnal activity, some of it very sinister. The second *Nachtmusik*, a movement that has caused no end of problems for analysts using traditional criteria, is also full of evocative ideas that conjure up the image of a beautiful serenade, loving played by the wind instruments with gurgling accompaniments from the clarinets and gentle plucking from the guitar and mandolin. But perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the work is the way that the finale seems to derive its main theme from the prelude to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*. Even the appearance of a derivative of Franz Lehár's *Die lustige Witwe* ('The Merry Widow') would seem to have some hidden significance.[15]

The polarity between traditional forms which Mahler superficially follows and explicit programme music (which Mahler rarely uses) is put very forcibly by Peter Davison: 'Complications arise from the need to explain anomalous formal characteristics within the framework of traditional formal concepts, instead of within a common-sense approach to the musical narrative.'[16]

Musical Narrative

Other clues to a narrative interpretation are readily forthcoming. The main thematic material of the opening movement interacts in a very interesting way. The main allegro section has two groups of materials that have something in common with the first move-

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[14] Peter Davison: 'Nachtmusik I: Sound and Symbol', in Zychowicz (ed): op.cit., 68.
[15] Henry-Louis de La Grange: 'Music about music in Mahler: reminiscences, allusions or quotations?', in Stephen E. Hefling: *Mahler Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), 166.
[16] Peter Davison: 'Nachtmusik I: Sound and Symbol', in Zychowicz (ed): op.cit., 68.

ment of the Sixth Symphony. What is interesting is the brief and innocent sounding march that first appears in the introduction (bar 19) which shows dramatic transformations in its reappearances. What is being indicated by these changes? John Williamson noted: 'In Mahler, sonata form and march are frequently equated with motivic struggle, even motivic disorder.'[17] There is indeed some conflict between the main allegro's processes and this march. It appears fast (Flott) in bars 136–44 and bar 238, but very slowly and quietly in the central development section (Meno mosso) at bars 258–65 and (Sehr gehalten) at bars 304–11. Its final appearance (Frisch) at 487–94 is very powerful. It seems to infiltrate itself into the other thematic material.

The *Nachtmusik* movements have strong connections to traditional forms in their reprises and symmetries. One can sense that they are probably more descriptive than narrative in their nature. The scherzo that separates them is different. It is the third of a series of developmental scherzos that Mahler composed for these middle period symphonies. Its complex structure relates clearly to the traditional scherzo in its overall plan: scherzo with repeat, trio, scherzo with repeat, coda. This simple plan conceals the constant changes to the thematic material at each appearance. Very notable is the reprise, part of which appears a semitone higher, in E flat minor rather than D minor. Also of some significance must be the section marked 'Wild' (bars 416–20) in which there is a violent outburst from the trombones and tuba. The sinister element in this movement disrupts the generally peaceful mood of the two *Nachtmusik* movements.

The finale presents the conflict between form and content dramatically. The most plausible model seems to be a Baroque ritornello with the complete version of the opening part (all six elements) heard only in the first and last of eight appearances. In the other reprises only between one and four elements are used. The tonic key of C major is used in only the first three appearances and the last. Unlike in the first movement, the music barely stops for breath. There are no slow episodes. Is there any narrative significance in this plan? The return of the allegro music from the first movement must also surely have some, probably narrative, significance. This type of reference to an earlier movement is, of course, a very common procedure in Romantic symphonies.

So far we have only a disconnected group of suggestions about narrativity in this music. It does appear to have the clear sense of direction found in its two predecessors. The Fifth Symphony presents in its first two movements a conflict that ends in an attempt at a triumph (the D major chorale) which collapses into fragments and a return to A minor. After an invigorating developmental scherzo and a beautiful intermezzo (the Adagietto), Mahler takes us through a rondo that again rises to the D major chorale found in the second movement, but this time it sustains its tonality and key right up to a final triumph.

In the Sixth Symphony, the process is turned on its head, or nearly so. The first movement contrasts a vigorous minor-key march section with exultant major-key material (the composer referred to this as his 'Alma' music, referring to his wife). Taking the order of the movements that Mahler adhered to in his lifetime (Andante moderato second, Scherzo third), this is followed by the calm idyll of the Andante moderato. The parodistic scherzo shatters this calm and mocks the music and tonalities of the first move-

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[17]   John Williamson: 'Mahler and Episodic Structure: The First Movement of the Seventh Symphony', in Zychowicz (ed): op.cit., 34.

ment. It propels the narrative with progressively compressed appearances of the main scherzo to a collapse whose tonalities link directly with the finale. This mammoth movement with its rondo-like introduction superimposed on an extended sonata structure leads us through great striving for the same goal as the Fifth Symphony. It is the three hammer blows, placed in somewhat unpredictable places, that make the narrative convincing, with the final collapse horribly inevitable. Mahler's removal of the third hammer blow seems to have been the result of a superstition about his own fate. Nothing so obvious can be related to the Seventh Symphony, so are we asking the wrong questions?

Biographical Evidence

An intriguing piece of biographical information has a bearing on the Seventh Symphony. In 1908 (or possibly 1909) Mahler conducted in Amsterdam a performance of this symphony, which was prefaced by three works by Wagner: *Eine Faust-Ouvertüre*, *Siegfried Idyll* and the prelude to the opera *Die Meistersinger*. This is contained in a letter from Amsterdam to his wife.[18] This may be an example of Mahler's imaginative programme planning, but it could also be a clue to the inspiration for the symphony. There is a considerable amount of evidence that Mahler used ideas from his own and other composer's music in his own works. Inevitably these ideas are modified, sometimes nearly out of recognition. They occur with such frequency that they can hardly be considered incidental. In his article on the phenomenon, Henry-Louis de La Grange presents a large number of reasons for the composer doing this.[19]

A Faust Symphony?

The first suspicion of some underlying idea in the choice of works might be the presence of the name of Faust. Mahler was very familiar with Goethe's *Faust*, as his setting of the last section of part 2 in his Eighth Symphony was to show. The *Faust Overture* might also be the catalyst for the structure of the first movement of the Seventh Symphony. The overture itself is a single-movement allegro (Sehr bewegt) with a slow introduction (Sehr gemessen). Despite the fact that it lasts only ten minutes and its internal construction is relatively straightforward, it could have acted as a distant model for the first movement of the Seventh Symphony. It was originally intended in 1840 as an overture to Goethe's *Faust* Part 1. Is the connection with this idea just a coincidence or are we looking at a Faust symphony? If one does follow the Faust theory, a great many apparently disconnected features fall into place (see Table 1).

The plan of the first movement presents less of a problem than has been suggested. The two main groups of the allegro are clearly differentiated in character. It is possible to imagine that the thrusting first theme stands for Faust himself and the more romantic and slightly sentimental for Gretchen. The fact that the latter corresponds with the section in

[18] Alma Mahler: *Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters*, ed. Donald Mitchell (London: John Murray, 1968), 308–9.
[19] See in particular: Henry-Louis de La Grange: 'Music about music in Mahler: reminiscences, allusions or quotations?', in Stephen E. Hefling: *Mahler Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), 122–68.

the Sixth Symphony that Mahler said represented his wife, Alma, adds further corroboration to this idea. The march that appears briefly in the introduction of the Seventh Symphony can be seen as a disruptive element, as a sinister and slightly threatening element at first and a much more powerful one at the end of the exposition. Its appearance, now as a quiet chorale slowed down so that it is almost unrecognisable, in the slow episodes of the middle of the movement, is calm and restrained. In the recapitulation it does not return at first, presumably because it was held back until the end of the movement where it makes an aggressive reappearance. If we follow this, the three elements are seen to be in some kind of unresolved conflict.

The vivid and picturesque first *Nachtmusik* seems to be the dreamy Faust himself. There are recollections of the countryside and memories, some slightly threatening. The setting of night is entirely in character with what we find in Goethe's *Faust*; scene after scene has a nocturnal setting. The sub-plot of the nature poetry of Eichendorff fits in perfectly with this. The sinister element which casts its shadow on the scene is the three appearances of major-minor chord shift that acted as the motto for the terror in the Sixth Symphony. They are almost like the three hammer blows in the finale of the latter. This should prepare us for the terrifying experience of the scherzo.

Without using a Wagnerian point of reference, the scherzo can be seen as a sinister night ceremony, perhaps even an encounter with Mephistopheles. There are screams, 'things that go bump in the night', and eerie rustlings. The reprise that is in the 'wrong' key can be thought of as a bad omen. Then there is at bar 146 a savage outburst, from the trombones and tuba, marked Wild, that seems to be the final waltz of the devil. What follows is a typically Mahlerian collapse, with disjointed fragments that disappear into nothing just as in the scherzo of the Sixth Symphony. What can be the significance or meaning of this movement? One possibility can be found toward the end of part 1 of Goethe's *Faust*. The scene called 'Walpurgisnacht' concerns a nocturnal meeting in the Harz mountains between Faust and the devil, Mephistopheles. The *Nachtmusik* that follows seems to know nothing of what has taken place. The delightful serenade that Peter Davison maps on to Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*, the latter composer's song of love for his wife, appears as a way of obliterating the memories of the scherzo. It is not implausible to think of this as a Gretchen movement.

This brings us to the finale. Mahler clearly wants some sort of redemption. In the Fifth Symphony, he achieved it on the second attempt. In the Sixth Symphony, he failed heroically, despite a moment of tranquillity early on. That work's Mephistophelean scherzo destroyed that peace. In the Seventh Symphony's finale Mahler must have wanted to purge the overwhelming experience of the Sixth's finale. What emerges then is a headlong and joyous affirmation of his belief in love. The quasi-quotation from the prelude to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* must surely confirm this – the story of Walter in the opera vindicates his belief in love, something that will triumph over everything. Mahler did not want the idea to be lost, so he hardly lingered at all in this finale. There are no slow episodes and the second main material is specifically marked to be played at the same speed as the first. Just in case the music did not convince his audience, Mahler made a second attempt to represent the redemption of love by a woman, in the finale of the Eighth Symphony. This time he made no mistake: by setting Goethe's words, it was explicit and in the open.

There is one question that remains to be answered and that is, if one accepts this Faustian interpretation of the Seventh Symphony (and there will be many who find it impossible to agree with the points presented here), are we talking about Faust, the mythical hero, or are we really talking about Gustav Mahler, the composer himself. Because some of the earlier symphonies, particularly the First and Sixth, do seem to be concerned with a hero who can easily be identified with Mahler, it is not unreasonable also to connect the alleged Faust figure of Seventh Symphony with the composer. In that case we are now dealing with another 'biographical' work whose secret has been for so long been hidden in the felicities of the quite remarkable nocturnal central movements and the confusing controversies of the outer ones.

Table 1
Mahler: Seventh Symphony
Proposed Programme

	Main Tempos	Title	Possible Model	Possible Programme
1	Adagio-Allegro		Wagner's *Eine Faust-Ouvertüre*	Faust (Allegro risoluto, bars 50 and following) and Gretchen (l'istesso tempo, bars 118-134) conflicting with Mephistopheles (march, bars 19-25)
2	Allegro moderato-molto moderato (Andante)	Nachtmusik		Faust wandering in the countryside at night, with three appearances of the major-minor 'fate' motive
3	Schattenhaft	Scherzo		Walpurgisnacht – the nocturnal meeting of Faust and Mephistopheles as in Goethe's *Faust* Part 1
4	Andante amoroso	Nachtmusik	Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*	'Love, love, love' based on Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*
5	Allegro ordinario	Rondo-Finale	Wagner: Prelude to *Die Meistersinger* and Lehár's *Die lustige Witwe*	The triumph of love over the devil, Mephistopheles.

Skriti program Mahlerjeve Sedme simfonije

Povzetek

Zaokrožen pomen 7. simfonije Gustava Mahlerja še vedno bega analitike in muzikologe. Medtem ko so nekateri njegovi deli doživeli razumevanje in hvalo, ostale še vedno kritizirajo; marsikaj ostaja zakrito, tako da je še vedno težko doumeti celotno delo. Zato se pričujoči sestavek loteva vrste kritičnih in analitičnih metod in filozofij (strukturalne analize, raziskav metaforike, pripovedi v glasbi, hermenevtike ter dokumentarnih in literarnih dokazov) z namenom, da bi se dekodirale pomenske plasti in da bi se dokopali do natančno argumentirane in prepričljivo integrirane interpretacije dela kot celote.

Vsekakor je zaznati primere modificiranih klasičnih oblikovnih modelov. Podobe ptic in vojaške aktivnosti nakazujejo izvenglasbeno mišljenje teh modifikacij, pri čemer dramatske spremembe značaja – od prvega do zadnjega stavka – kažejo na pripovedne razsežnosti. Ob upoštevanju razvoja implicirane pripovednosti dveh prejšnjih Mahlerjevih simfonij se razbistri skladateljeva misel. Če se upošteva koncertni program, kakor ga je predložil skladatelj in v katerega je vključil to simfonijo ter tri Wagnerjeva dela, nam palimpsestno prekrivanje teh skladb s tremi stavki simfonije razkriva vidike skladateljevega mišljenja. Literarna zveza kaže na faustovsko interpretacijo, ki postaja toliko bolj (in bolj) verjetna, v kolikor se sklenejo prej omenjene niti.