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GUSTAV MAHLER'S SYMPHONY NO. 8  
"A GIFT TO THE NATION"  
(1906-1910)

By

Thomas Richard Elliott

A THESIS

Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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## ABSTRACT

### GUSTAV MAHLER'S SYMPHONY NO. 8 "A GIFT TO THE NATION" (1906-1910)

By

Thomas Richard Elliott

The sources of inspiration for Mahler's Eighth Symphony were *Veni creator spiritus* and Part II of Goethe's *Faust*. These literary sources are discussed in detail along with Mahler's approach to them. Further evidence concerning his use of these sources is presented through descriptions of the work made by his contemporaries: Bruno Walter, Alma Mahler, Richard Specht and Ernest Decsey.

Mahler's construction of both movements is discussed along with a harmonic analysis of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> movements with comparable historical analysis by Greene, Specht, and Landmann. Mahler's identification with the characters in Goethe's *Faust* is explored along with the way they reflected his own relationship to his wife Alma.

Finally, Mahler's ultimate conception of the work is presented through a description of the work's première in Munich on 12,13 September 1910.

Two appendices are included:

Appendix A—Comparison of the texts Hrabanus Maurus/Liturgical tradition/Gustav Mahler/English translation/Score.

Appendix B – Mahler's handwritten text of *Veni creator spiritus*.

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Mahler's Symphony No.8 is undoubtedly his most personal creative statement. It is an exploration of his own spirituality and the spirituality of mankind. Following the evolution of Mahler's Symphony No.8 from its original literary inspiration in the summer of 1906 to its première in 1910, this study explores how the work changed in the mind of the composer from being an intellectually motivated experiment in symphonic form to a personal statement of spiritual validation.

A Mahler première in Germany was a rare and highly anticipated event.<sup>1</sup> Little was the world to know that the performance of his Symphony No. 8 in Munich, on 12 & 13 September 1910, would be the last time Mahler himself would conduct a world première of one of his own works. Mahler's life was soon to end. He died in Vienna on 18 May 1911. However, that is getting ahead of the story. Let us go back to the summer of 1906, a more pleasant time for Mahler, a time of great personal and professional success. Mahler was at the pinnacle of his career. He was director of the Vienna Hofoper, a leading European theater served by no less a significant orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic.<sup>2</sup> Most importantly Mahler was a respected composer, husband and father of two children.

Mahler's usual custom was to work on compositions only during his summers off from the Opera. This pattern was initially established in 1893, when

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Franklin, "Mahler, Gustav" Stanley Sadie, ed., *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*.

*Second Edition*, (London: Macmillan, 2001), Volume XIV, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 612.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 608.

he would return to Austria – to Steinbach on the southeast shore of the Attersee in the Salzkammergut – renting rooms for his family at a lakeside inn.<sup>3</sup>

In 1899 Mahler built his own villa with a separate composing hut at the village of Maiernigg on the Wörther See. The villa was his own and was much bigger than anything he had rented in the past. In some ways, Mahler felt a bit overwhelmed by his new baronial status. “It’s too beautiful”, he said in 1901. “One can’t allow oneself such things.”<sup>4</sup> However, Mahler was soon at home in his composing hut, which was much roomier and larger than the one at his farmhouse in Steinbach. It contained plenty of space for a piano, his desk and many books – Goethe, Kant, and “many volumes of Bach.”<sup>5</sup>

Alma as usual was a bit unsettled with the décor at the beginning. She was quite vocal with her displeasure of their summer residence and proceeded to change the entire villa. She described the interior as “frightful”. However, all the rooms had tremendous views of the lake, especially Mahler’s room, which was on the top floor just under the eaves, “like a watchtower”(see fig.1). Whatever Alma said at the beginning, their villa and his hut were to become for them, especially Mahler, a beautiful haven, a lovely resting spot where he could rekindle his spirits.<sup>6</sup>

Mahler’s routine was the same every summer. He would arise early in the morning, around 6:00 a.m., and go up the hill 200 yards to his composing hut. His

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 608. (Natalie Baure-Lechner would often accompany the family and her “Mahleriana” diaries were the source of much posthumous information).

<sup>4</sup>Jonathan Carr, *Mahler A Biography* (Woodstock & New York: The Overlook Press, 1998), 118.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 119. (Mahler would go on to build another, his final composing hut, at the farmhouse at Alt-Schluderbach in the Dolomites for the summers between 1908-1910).

<sup>6</sup> Natalie Bauer-Lechner, *Recollections of Gustav Mahler* (London: Faber & Faber 1980), 167-8.



Figure 1 – Mahler's Villa on the Wörther See



cook would later bring up his breakfast. The afternoons he would spend with Alma and his family and would often take strenuous walks later in the day. The evenings “were spent reading or making music, sometimes with friends.”<sup>7</sup>

The summer of 1906 started out like most of Mahler’s retreats. Exhausted from his duties with the Opera and the orchestra, he wanted to relax and do nothing but re-charge his spirit and body. As usual he thought that he would not be able to compose. Each summer always started with feelings of doubt and anxiety, and this summer was no exception. However, “on the first morning of vacation I went up to my Hauschen in Maiernigg firmly resolved to be really lazy (I needed it so badly) and gather my strength. As soon as I entered my old, familiar workroom, the *Spiritus creator* took hold of me, shaking me and scourging me for eight weeks, until the main part was finished.”<sup>8</sup> Mahler’s inspirational zeal was now fully upon him with a new symphony, his Eighth, and bringing this work to fruition would occupy him for the rest of the summer.

There are numerous other accounts of this story that bear repeating. All leading to the same conclusion that Mahler’s Symphony No. 8 was first conceived to be a massive work. It was created in an outburst of pure musical energy in a

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>8</sup> Henry Louis De La Grange, *Gustav Mahler III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 426-427.

very short amount of time, and as such it represents “the extreme point of expansion of the performing forces.”<sup>9</sup>

Alma relates the story as follows:

After we arrived at Maiernigg, there was the usual fortnight during which, nearly every year, he was haunted by the spectre of failing inspiration. Then one morning just as he crossed the threshold of his studio up in the wood, it came to him – *Veni creator spiritus*. He composed and wrote down the whole opening chorus to the half-forgotten words. But the music and words did not fit in – the music overlapped the text. In a fever of excitement he telegraphed to Vienna and had the whole of the ancient hymn telegraphed back. The complete text fitted the music exactly. Intuitively he had composed the music for the full strophes.<sup>10</sup>

Mahler’s conception of his newest work was not without some initial pangs of compositional angst. His new work was flowing from his pen, and he quickly composed the entire hymn or what he thought was the entire hymn. However, after an orchestral interlude the words and the music did not fit; Mahler had written more music than text. This was unsettling to Mahler and he wrote his friend Dr. Fritz Löhr, (archaeologist and teacher of Latin and Greek at a girls’ school) requesting him to send him the four lines beginning at “Qui paraclitus diceris”, indicating the scansion, as well as that of “Holsem repellas”. He requested Löhr to

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<sup>9</sup> Donald Jay Grout, Claude V. Palisca, *The History of Western Music*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1996), 659.

<sup>10</sup> Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler Memories and Letters* (New York: The Viking Press 1969), 102.

answer by return mail. He needed the information urgently, both as “creator and creatus”. He also asked Löhr to send a complete copy of the text along with a translation of “Firmans petiti” and the two lines which began at “Per te sciamus”, “as that accursed old church book (*verfluchte Kirchenschmöker*) does not seem reliable.”<sup>11</sup>

Mahler goes on to say in a letter to Mengelberg<sup>12</sup> in mid-August “I have just finished my Eighth – it is the greatest thing I have done so far. And so strange in its form and content that it is impossible to write about it. Imagine that the universe begins to ring and resound (*zu tönen und zu klingen*), no longer with human voices but with revolving planets and suns.”<sup>13</sup>

In August 1906, while meeting with Richard Specht<sup>14</sup> in Salzburg (Mahler was there to conduct two performances of *The Marriage of Figaro* with the Vienna Opera for the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration of Mozart’s birth), Mahler again related the inspiration for the Eighth:

Just think: within the last three weeks I have completed the sketch of a completely new symphony, something that makes all my other works seem like preliminary stages. I have never composed anything like this. In content and style it is altogether different from all my other works, and it is surely the greatest thing I have ever composed. I have probably never

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<sup>11</sup>Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 428.

<sup>12</sup>Rob Overman, “The Mahler-Reception in the Netherlands 1911-1920” *A “Mass” For The Masses: Proceedings of the Mahler VIII Symposium*, (1988), 68. (William Mengelberg conductor, 1871-1951, He had a special relationship with Mahler and premiered many of his symphonies in the Netherlands).

<sup>13</sup>La Grange, 431.

<sup>14</sup>Richard Specht (1870-1932, critic).

worked under such compulsion; it was a vision that struck me like lightning the whole immediately stood before my eyes; I had only to write it down, as if it had been dictated to me. This Eighth Symphony is already remarkable in that it brings together two works of poetry in different languages. The first part is a Latin hymn and the second nothing less than the final scene of Part II of *Faust*. Are you not amazed? I had longed to set to music the hermit scene and the Finale with the Mater gloriosa in a manner that would be different from all the sugary, weak ways<sup>15</sup> it has so far been done, but then thought no more about it. Then the other day I came across an old book. I opened it to the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and immediately the whole thing was there: not only the first theme, but also the entire first movement. In response to this I could not possibly find anything more beautiful than Goethe's words in the hermit scene! Even in form it is also something quite new. Can you imagine a symphony that is sung throughout, from beginning to end? So far I have employed words and the human voice merely to suggest, to sum up, to establish a mood. I resorted to them to express something concisely and specifically, which is possible only with words –something that could have been expressed symphonically only with immense breath. But here the voice is also an instrument. The whole of the first movement is strictly symphonic in form yet it is completely sung. It is the egg of Columbus, “die Symphonie an sich”, (the symphony of oneself) in which the most beautiful instrument of

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<sup>15</sup> Such as Schumann, *Szenen aus Faust* (1849); [Mahler used the identical text]; Liszt, *Faust Symphony* (1845); Gounod, *Faust* (1860); Berlioz, *La Damnation de Faust* (1862).

all is given the role it was destined for, and yet not only as sound, since in it the human voiced is the bearer of the poet's thoughts.<sup>16</sup>

It is ironic that Mahler had avoided using program notes or referring to programmatic themes over the years. With both his Symphonies Nos. 1 and 3 there were originally program notes, but Mahler later discarded them. Mahler wanted his listeners to be free to decide what they heard for themselves. He wanted to let the music speak for itself. However, in Symphony No.8 he wanted them to hear what he heard and the work to have a specific message. Perhaps Mahler thought of his symphony as nothing more than a musical vessel through which the ideals of both the sacred hymn and Goethe's text could be related in an emotionally heightened state to his listeners. The combining of these two different texts represented to Mahler a very personal statement and "defines the character of his unorthodox religious thought."<sup>17</sup> Sometime later he said to Specht that this symphony was a "gift to the nation." He further elaborated, "All my earlier symphonies are but preludes to this one. In my other works, everything is still subjectively tragic – this one is a great giver of joy."<sup>18</sup> Upon reading this, one cannot help but think that Mahler is referring to the metaphysical "joy" connected with the tradition of Beethoven's "Choral" symphony. Wagner had earlier (in 1856) described his *Ring des Nibelungen* as a "gift to the nation" and had referred

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<sup>16</sup>Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 430. (Footnote #131-Richard Specht, "Zu Mahler's Achte Symphonie" (*Tagespost*, Graz, no. 150), 14 June 1914).

<sup>17</sup> Phillip Otto Naegele, *Gustav Mahler & Johann Sebastian Bach* (Northampton: Lecture at Smith College 1983), 26-7.

<sup>18</sup>Constantin Floros, *Gustav Mahler The Symphonies* Translated from the German by Vernon and Jutta Wicker, (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1993), 213, Richard Specht, *Gustav Mahler* (1<sup>st</sup> edn., illustr., Schuster & Loeffler, Berlin, 1913), 304.

to Beethoven's symphony as the perfect synthesis of text and music. The idea starting with Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, adapted by Wagner and finally evolved by Mahler was that each composer was striving for a tradition of High German art poetry expressed in a symphonic style. This reverence for Beethoven and Wagner were understandable, for he considered them his gods, "the rest nowhere."<sup>19</sup>

Julius Korngold<sup>20</sup> also met with Mahler in Salzburg in August during the Mozart Festival. "He was full of visions of a new symphony, full of happy anticipation, almost boisterous. A well-thumbed little book was peeking out of his coat pocket: *Faust*. The sequences of the medieval religious poet had been set; they were to occupy the first part of the symphony (it became the Eighth)."<sup>21</sup>

Stories abound about whether it took Mahler three weeks or eight weeks to write his Symphony No.8; the musicologist Constantin Floros has suggested it might have taken as long as ten weeks. What might give rise to the three-week theory was the fact that Mahler took some time off for a brief walking and cycling

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<sup>19</sup> Burnett James, *The Music of Gustav Mahler* (London: Associated University Presses 1985), 139.

<sup>20</sup> Julius Korngold (1860-1945, critic) His son Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957) was a gifted prodigy. Julius took his son to see Mahler in 1906 (possibly 1907) seeking his advice regarding his son's education. Mahler declared Erich "A genius!" "Take the lad to Zemlinsky", he urged. "Above all, no conservatory, no drill! In private lessons with Zemlinsky he will learn everything he needs." Erich wrote many works, his most famous was his Second Piano Sonata (1908) and his masterpiece *Die Töte Stadt*, Opus 12. In 1934 after teaching at Vienna Staatsakademie he left for Hollywood where he wrote Lieder, and orchestral works, but is primarily noted for his music for many film scores. "In 1935 at the age of 38 he was asked by director Max Reinhardt to adapt Mendelssohn's music for a cinema performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*...His work during the next five years, which included *Captain Blood*, *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*, *The Adventures of Robin Hood* and *The Sea Hawk* quickly set the standard for all composers in the future: huge, vibrant cues, brassy adventure themes and tender and passionate romantic melodies. During this time, Korngold was nominated for four Academy Awards, winning twice in 1936 and 1938." (Movie Music U.K.-Jonathan Broxton). It would be interesting to speculate that Mahler had a part in the inspiration of 20<sup>th</sup> century film music by his encouragement of Erich.

<sup>21</sup> Constantin Floros, 216.

tour in mid July. This was the three-week point of his summer vacation. La Grange believes that a now lost postcard from Mahler to Alma was from Toblach was from that trip.<sup>22</sup> Leaving Toblach he stopped at Dölsach, near Lienz in eastern Tyrol, and did a two-hour climb to Winklern north of there. The next day in Bleiberg he did another three-hour climb, up the Dobratsch in the Villach Alps, from which he could enjoy the splendid view of the Karawanken, the Carinthian lakes, the Julian Alps, and the Tauern.<sup>23</sup> One could easily believe that this was research for the beginning of the second movement (*Bergschluchten*/Mountain ravines) and that he had already completed the first movement by this point.

Mahler was at the height of his compositional prowess, and the extended sonata form that he so often used with great ease at the beginnings of his symphonies<sup>24</sup> must have been virtually finished. He was, after all, working from a previously known hymn. In its finished state, the first movement is proportionally shorter than the second movement, and it is easy to believe the correlation between the lengths of the two movements is proportional to his work on the piece as a whole; three weeks for the first movement (580 measures) and five weeks for the second movement (1572 measures). This could be one possible explanation for the three-week theory.

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<sup>22</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, 431, (Footnote # 139).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 431. (Footnote #140-The summit of the Dobratsch is 2,167 meters and dominates one of the most panoramic views in Carinthia.).

<sup>24</sup> John Williamson, "Mahler and Veni Creator Spiritus," *The Music Review* 44, (1983), 27.

Previously when talking with Specht, Mahler said an “old book” had accidentally fallen into his hands and that it fell open to the Pentecost hymn. Ernst Decsey<sup>25</sup> tells a similar story:

He set the old hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* to music, for which he had gotten the text from somewhere. While composing he realized that the music was pouring out beyond the text, overflowing like water from a full basin; in other words, the structural concept of the music did not coincide with the verses. He told a friend of his misery and this friend, a philologist, pointed out to him that this was natural because in the version he had, the text was incomplete, with about one-and-a-half verses missing. Mahler then saw to it that the court music director Karl Luze in Vienna sent the complete text to him as quickly as possible. When the hymn arrived, Mahler was surprised to find that the words coincided exactly with the music and that his sense of form was responsible: every one of the new words fit easily into the whole.<sup>26</sup>

Bruno Walter<sup>27</sup> confirms this story:

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<sup>25</sup> Ernst Decsey (1870-1941 critic and musicologist).

<sup>26</sup> Constantin Floros, 215 –See (Footnote #8-Decsey, “Stunden mit Mahler,” 353f.).

<sup>27</sup> Bruno Walter (1876-1962- conductor) was Mahler’s favorite disciple and after Mahler’s death in 1911 became a great champion of Mahler’s works. “In 1905 Mahler had been forced to listen to one of his latest works”, and Alma recalled his dilemma: “I only saw him ‘making a conscious effort’ once. On this occasion Bruno Walter played to him his symphonic tone poem *Peer Gynt*, whose anemic sterility horrified him from the very first bar. But he spoke words of encouragement to Walter. On a later occasion when Rosé (Arnold Rosé 1863-1946 violinist) played a quartet by Walter, Mahler sat with him for a long time in the green-room discussing aspects of the work, giving him advice, etc. He told me afterwards that he found it exceptionally difficult to encourage



No change was necessary. And the famous passage in the Eighth, on which Mahler had always placed the greatest emphasis, *Accende lumen sensibus – In funde amorem cordibus* [Kindle a light in our senses/With love our hearts inflame] (these words he naturally knew by heart) could be left in its place! This is fortuitous concordance of imagination and reality, not only in the technical but also in the intellectual sense, made a deep impression upon Mahler. Inclined to mysticism, indeed under its spell – like many a great mind, who is greater as a thinker than as a creator – he believed he saw in this concordance the working of a power which reigned over all art and over all life. He did not want to call it a divine power – he was too modest and too profoundly religious for that...Mahler told this story to all his close friends, and each time the experience moved him anew – indeed he was quite shattered when he thought again about it.<sup>28</sup>

Alma says that Mahler had written the text for the first part from memory. However, we know that this is not true for Mahler admits along with Decsey and Specht that he was actually inspired from a book of hymns he previously owned. His hymnal textbook was not accurate and it did not contain what was in the final version of his Eighth Symphony.

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Walter, for he was unable to see that he had a future as a composer, but at the same time did not wish to offend his loyal friend" (La Grange 607).

<sup>28</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 428-429.

Mahler had fashioned his Eighth Symphony in his mind from the beginning. He had several different drafts of this work,<sup>29</sup> the majority of which were discarded almost from the start. One of his early plans was similar to the scheme of his Fourth Symphony, a four-movement work.

1. *Hymne Veni creator*
2. *Scherzo*
3. *Adagio Caritas*
4. *Hymne: die Geburt des Eros*

Another version shows a different order between the second and third movements.

1. *Veni Creator*
2. *Caritas*
3. *Weinachtsspiele mit dem Kindlein*
4. *Schöpfung durch Eros. Hymne*

Alma owned these discarded versions, but both are now lost.<sup>30</sup>

The title *Caritas* has been previously been associated with the slow movement of Mahler's Fourth Symphony. In the end it was not used in the Eighth. As far as the other three sections go, both Richard Specht and Paul Bekker find traces of them in the three sections of the finale.<sup>31</sup> Mahler even contemplated including two poems from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* in the Symphony No. 8, as mentioned in a document from the Bruno Walter collection, which is located in

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<sup>29</sup> John Williamson, "The Eighth Symphony," *The Mahler Companion*, ed., Donald Mitchell & Andrew Nicholson (New York: Oxford University Press 1999), 409.

<sup>30</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, 889. (Footnotes: 2, & 7).

<sup>31</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, 889. (See footnote # 6).

New York.<sup>32</sup> Most importantly this symphony was to be a work for chorus and orchestra – a complete work devoted to the “greatest instrument” the human voice and sung throughout (*durchgesungen*).<sup>33</sup>

The hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* has had a long life and has been used by many composers throughout the centuries.<sup>34</sup> When Mahler was writing to Löhr for exact translations and complete texts he incorrectly attributed the hymn to Saint Francis.<sup>35</sup> Some current scholars attribute it to an unknown author. However for most of its long life it has been attributed to Hrabanus Maurus<sup>36</sup> (d.856) a well-respected scholar of the 9<sup>th</sup> century who reportedly wrote the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* in Fulda sometime after 809.”<sup>37</sup> Many other composers, Binchois, Palestrina, Praetorius, Gibbons, Bach, J.N. David and Berlioz have also set the text.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, *A “Mass” For The Masses: Proceedings Of The Mahler VIII Symposium, Amsterdam, 1988*. Chapter II- *Mahler's Eighth From Different Angles*— “The Eighth.: Exception or Crowning Achievement?” (Rotterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar Universitair 1992), 133.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Becqué, “A Survey of Performances of Mahler’s Symphony VIII in the Netherlands.” Eveline Nikkels, Robert Becqué, Jos van Leeuwen, ed., *A “Mass” For The Masses: Mahler's Eighth, Symphony – Proceedings of the Mahler VIII Symposium* (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1992), 195-208.

<sup>34</sup> Guillaume de Machaut (1300-1377) used the *Veni Creator Spiritus* for the motetus of one of his last motets (*Christe, Qui Lux Ex/Veni, Creator Spiritus/ Tribulatio Proxima*). This work was written between the years 1359-1360, when the English under Edward II, laid siege to Rheims. It was known to be sung at the Council of Rheims in 1049. It was very popular in that town during that time. Jeremy Yudkin, *Music in Medieval Europe* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1989), 476-481.

<sup>35</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 428, (see footnote # 126).

<sup>36</sup> Heinrich Lausberg claims that Raban Maur, or Hrabanus Maurus wrote it on the occasion of a synod in Aachen in 809. Maurus lived in Mainz and was a Benedictine monk. He was a pupil of Alcuin and of Saint Martin of Tours, master and organizer of the Abbey of Fulda, finally becoming archbishop of Mainz. He wrote many works but his most famous was the *Veni Creator*. This hymn celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the apostles on the day of the Pentecost (La Grange, 892).

<sup>37</sup> Constantin Floros, 216.

<sup>38</sup> David B. Greene, *Mahler Conscious and Temporality* (New York: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1984), 258.

*Veni Creator Spiritus* is the first line of a hymn, which was sung at Vespers on the Feast of Pentecost, but it is widely used in other ceremonial and liturgical contexts. Goethe was very fond of this hymn, and there is ample evidence that Mahler knew this. Goethe had translated the hymn into German, and in a letter to the composer Karl Friedrich Zelter dated 10 April 1820 Goethe had requested that the piece be set to music “so that it could be sung by a chorus, every Sunday in front of my house.” Goethe mentioned the hymn many times in other letters. He called it “ein Appel an das allgemeine Weltgenie”(An appeal to the condition of the world genius).<sup>39</sup>

What is perhaps most characteristic of the hymn is the opening falling fourth on the word *Veni*. This falling fourth sets the tonality of the piece. Mahler’s attempt to define the tonality by using the falling fourth rather than the ascending fifth was an important device that he used in many other pieces. He used the falling fourth in his Symphony No. 1 (1888), which in actuality was a re-working of an earlier work, *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (*Songs of the Wayfarer* 1884-85)<sup>40</sup>, specifically the second lied “Gieng heut’ Morgens über’s Feld” (I went out this morning over the countryside). The interval of the falling fourth in his Symphony No.1 sets the tonality of the entire first movement quickly, similarly to the beginning of his Symphony No.8 in which the tonality of E-Flat major is established by the second measure of the work through the device of the falling fourth and the word *Veni*.

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<sup>39</sup> Constantin Floros, 217.

<sup>40</sup> Gustav Mahler, *Songs of the Wayfarer and Kindertotenlieder in Full Score*, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1990).

However, Deryck Cooke claims that the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* is more than a humble Christian prayer for personal salvation in another world. It is concerned with Pentecost—the great moment of inspiration, when the Holy Ghost descended and spoke in many tongues through the mouths of the Apostles, and was interpreted by Peter in the words of the prophet Joel: “Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” In other words, it is concerned with the time when the Christian faith itself was at its most dynamic, and it suggests the march of men towards higher things. It addresses the Creator Spirit as *Dux* –leader – and contains the lines: “Scatter the foe; with Thee as our leader going before us, may we shun all that is evil.”<sup>41</sup>

Goethe himself was the main guiding light or source of inspiration for Mahler’s Eighth Symphony. But more importantly this was going to be a great work for chorus which Mahler called “the most beautiful of all instruments.”<sup>42</sup> He was, like most of the other great composers of the time, deeply interested in the resurgence and study of Bach.<sup>43</sup> Beethoven set the standard that any monumental work of substance and universality required a chorus. However, what made Mahler’s Eighth Symphony different from all others was that this one was literally to be a sung symphony in which the voice would be the “bearer of the poetic idea.”<sup>44</sup> In a letter to Alma one year before the première Mahler said that Goethe’s

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<sup>41</sup> Deryck Cooke, “The Word and the Deed, Mahler and his Eighth Symphony”, in *Vindications: Essays on Romantic Music*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 114.

<sup>42</sup> La Grange, 430.

<sup>43</sup> Norman Lebrecht, *Mahler Remembered* (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1987), 254-55.

<sup>44</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, A “Mass” For The Masses: *Proceedings Of The Mahler VIII Symposium, Amsterdam, 1988 Chapter II- Mahler’s Eighth From Different Angles*—“The Eighth: Exception or Crowning Achievement?” (Rotterdam: Nijgh & Van Ditmar Universitair 1992), 133.

text contrasted the “eternal masculine,” desire, effort, the driving force, the striving towards a goal, with the “eternal feminine,” the Mater gloriosa, incarnation of peacefulness, the supreme goal.<sup>45</sup>

True to Mahler’s instincts as a composer, he made changes in the text of *Veni Creator Spiritus*. He repeated many words and phrases of the text before moving on. The first two verses remain the same as in the liturgical version.<sup>46</sup> La Grange suggests that Mahler may have mislaid his copy of the hymn. Mahler’s most important omission is the second half of verse three, which never makes it to his final version. Then the switching of the two halves of verse four becomes Mahler’s third verse. Mahler’s verse four was the original verse five but with the word *nóxium* replaced by *pessimum*. The first half of the original verse three becomes a poetic and musical interlude between Mahler’s verse four and five. Mahler’s verse five is the most reworked verse from the original liturgical version (formerly verse six). He omits the word *atque* and *Te utriúsque Spiritum*, shortening the last two lines of the original verse into *Credamus spiritum, Omni tempore*. Verse six of Mahler’s text occurs only in the Munich manuscript that Löhr had sent him. Finally in Mahler’s verse seven both he and the liturgical version differ from the Hrabanus Maurus old “Roman” text. Mahler composed

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<sup>45</sup>Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 430. (Footnote #133- In 1820 Goethe himself translated the hymn into German. According to the psychoanalyst Theodor Reik, Mahler’s strange combination of texts was perhaps inspired by an unconscious recollection of Goethe’s versified translation, which he could well have read in the complete works. Reik considers Mahler’s idea of the Virgin and the eternal feminine to have been consciously and unconsciously determined by the conflict between his creative instinct and sexual desire which made him idealize woman as the Heavenly Mother, distant and unapproachable, because he no longer experienced effective sexual desire for his young wife. (RHM 330)).

<sup>46</sup>Stefan Strohm, “Die Idee der absoluten Musik als ihr (ausgesprochenes) Programm Zum unterlegten Text der Mahlerschen Achten,” *Schutz-Jahrbuch* (1982/83), 91.

two lines of his own, *Deo sit Gloria/Et filio qui a mortuis*, creating a six-line text at the end. Mahler managed still to create a seven-verse work. The significance of the number of verses (seven) has profound meaning and alludes to the seven gifts of the spirit, which, according to Isaiah 11:2 are spirit, wisdom, knowledge, counsel, strength, insight, and fear of the Lord. However, another way to see it is that Mahler created an eight-verse work. If you combine the two extra lines of the Doxology with the two-line interlude section they become an even, four-line verse. Thus Mahler really created an eight-line work. This is one way in which Mahler's unique genius searched for new and different approaches to inspirational materials of the past. What many see as a traditional, seven-verse work is really a newer form created by Mahler and disguised as the old.<sup>47</sup>

A Mahler autograph of the text of *Veni Creator* has survived.<sup>48</sup> An important sign that Mahler thought the text extremely important reveals his early struggle with the text. Here, written in ink, are stanzas one and two of the Hrabanus/liturgical version. However, in Mahler's handwritten version in the second stanza we can see his first conflict with the words *Paraclitus diceris*, where he writes these two words then inverts them over what he has already written (see appendix B). The second half of the third stanza then follows. What will become verse four is complete. At this point in Mahler's text the words *Gloria Patri Domino* are at the bottom of this page. They will become the first line of verse 7 in his final version. The next three lines Mahler lists as verse seven. Added in

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<sup>47</sup> See Appendix A.

<sup>48</sup> La Grange (p. 893) says this document is to be found at the Library of the Performing Arts/Lincoln Center/Bruno Walter Collection. Floros cites it as being formerly owned by Bruno Walter and it is now in the New York Public Library (p.212).

pencil on the right side of the page is what Mahler labels as verses four, three, and six (in that order). What Mahler describes as verse four contains only two lines (one couplet). From what he labels as verse three he will use only the first couplet, which acts as a poetic bridge between the full verses four and five in his final work. His labeling of verse six will become verse five in his final version. Clearly we can see the conflict Mahler had in working out the texts by the fact that this facsimile shows his use of both pen and pencil, suggesting that he worked on the text over the period of a number of different days before the Munich manuscript arrived to which Mahler was finally satisfied and then set his final version.

Neither La Grange nor Floros date his autograph text. After comparing Mahler's finished version to the liturgical version and then once again comparing Mahler's autograph text to the version in his final score, it would be interesting to attempt to date his autograph of the text. The evidence suggests somewhere before 21 June, when he first wrote Löhr for help, but no later than 18 July 1906, when he left on his bicycle trip. Because the hand written text does not reflect the order of the final work, it was a product of Mahler's first struggle with the piece. It is possible that Mahler had finished the first part when he left for his bicycle trip and sent a card to Alma dated 18 July.

Mahler considered the Eighth to be his masterpiece. Its unusual form gives it the distinct characteristics of a symphony, oratorio, music drama, and most importantly a redemption mystery all in one work. What Mahler has done in the first movement of the symphony is set forth the masculine, the Creator and all that is powerful that comes through him. It is also important to note that Mahler



changed the order of the verses, omitted and composed new words. He felt that he needed to give a clear statement of his beliefs. There was to be no doubt in anyone's mind as to what Mahler wanted to say. This is consistent with Mahler the man, Mahler the genius, and most importantly Mahler the spiritual being in that he was very specific as to the clarity of his vision.

The first movement of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 is agreed by most to be in a large sonata form generally in the key of E-flat major. There are occasional changes of meter throughout the movement, but its over-all time signature is 4/4. Its rhythm is basically a march, but without the military effects. The tempo *Allegro impetuoso* is the basic tempo for the first theme with *etwas gemässiger*, *immer sehr fliessend* (a little more moderate, still very flowing), for the second theme, and *etwas gehalten* (slightly held back) for the third. According to Julius Korngold, the duration of the first movement at its première was thirty minutes. The score<sup>49</sup> calls for an unusually large number of instruments (see table 1).

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<sup>49</sup> Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No.8 in Full Score*, (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1989), The Dover edition, first published 1989, is a republication of the edition originally published by Izdatel'stvo "Muzyka," Moscow, in 1976. The poetic texts have been newly translated by Stanley Applebaum.

**Table 1: Instrumentation for Mahler's Symphony No. 8**

4 Flutes	Timpani
2 Piccolos	Triangle
4 Oboes	3 Cymbals
English Horn	Bass Drum
E-Flat Clarinet (doubled throughout)	Deep Bells (A & A-Flat) <sup>50</sup>
3 Clarinets (B-Flat & A)	Glockenspiel
Bass Clarinet (B-Flat & A)	Celesta <sup>51</sup>
4 Bassoons	Piano <sup>52</sup>
Contra Bassoon	
	Harmonium <sup>53</sup>
8 Horns (F)	Organ
4 Trumpets (F, B-flat)	2 Harps <sup>54</sup>
4 Trombones	Mandolin <sup>55</sup>
Tuba	
Violins I, II	
Violas	
Cellos	
Basses (With low C-string)	
Off Stage: 4 Trumpets (F) and 3 Trombones	

Mahler writes, "*Bei starker Chor- und Streichervesetzung empfiehlt sich Eine Verdoppelung der ersten Holzbläser.*"  
(When a large choir of voices and strings are used, doubling of the first-chair woodwinds is recommended.)

<sup>50</sup> This always poses a problem. The lowest note of the modern chimes is middle C—however most percussionists substitute.

<sup>51</sup> Is the last to enter and is saved for the penitent Gretchen's *Neige, neige* at m. 1104.

<sup>52</sup> During the Munich rehearsals Mahler added the piano and the glockenspiel parts.

<sup>53</sup> Theodore Bloomfield, "The Contrasts of Mahler's Eighth Symphony" *A "Mass" For The Masses: Mahler's Eighth Symphony –Proceedings of the Mahler VIII Symposium*, ed. Jos van Leeuwen (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1992), 168. "Provides an ethereal effect beneath the orchestra prelude in the *Mater gloriosa*".

<sup>54</sup> Here the score calls for *mehrfach besetzt*- (several to a part), knowing Mahler's propensity for big sound multiple harps if available would be desired.

<sup>55</sup> *mehrfach besetzt*-Same as #55 above.

**(Table 1 cont.)**

1 <sup>st</sup> Soprano (Magna Peccatrix)	Tenor (Doctor Marianus)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Soprano (Una poenitentium)	Baritone (Pater ecstaticus)
Soprano (Mater gloriosa)	Bass (Pater profundus)
1 <sup>st</sup> Alto (Mulier Samaritana)	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Alto (Maria Aegyptiaca)	Boys' choir
	Mixed choirs I, II

Mahler was often criticized for the large orchestral forces he used. The German press had lampooned him for the large forces in his Symphony No. 6. The cover to *Die Musquete* on 19 January 1907,<sup>56</sup> showed a perplexed Mahler saying: “My God, I’ve forgotten the motor horn. Now I’ll have to write another symphony.”<sup>57</sup> Similar to Symphony No. 6, Mahler’s Eighth was also known for its large forces and the many parts and instruments it took to perform it. However, is not the longest of Mahler’s works, at approximately seventy-seven minutes it is ten minutes shorter than the previous Symphony No. 7.

The exposition can be divided into three sections, A-B-A’. Section A uses verse one first couplet and is in the key of E-flat major. The A section contains both the first main theme (mm. 1-20) and second theme (21-30). Mm. 31-45 is a transition (first main theme) to the B section. Mm. 46-107 is the B section; it is a “rondolike” section with its key centers of D-flat and A-flat major and uses the second couplet of verse one and verse two. The A’ begins at m.108 by returning to E-flat major.<sup>58</sup> It contains an intermezzo section with a new setting of *Veni* theme. At m. 124-140 there is a musical interlude. In m. 135 (D-minor) we now hear the

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<sup>56</sup> Michael Kennedy incorrectly sets the date for this cartoon as 1906 (see p. 151).

<sup>57</sup> Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler Memories and Letters* (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), 183.

<sup>58</sup> Constantin Floros, 220.

low bell on the great A. Beginning at m. 142-68 is the closing section of the exposition that incorporates verse three (first couplet) and returns us to the home key of E-flat major.

The development, like the exposition, can be divided into three parts, but it is not an A-B-A' form. The first section of the development (mm. 169-216) starts with the distant sounding of an orchestral interlude. The key is A-flat major, and the low bell on the great A-flat highlights this passage. The low-pitched bells are “always a symbol of transcendence in Mahler.”<sup>59</sup> This first section quickly leaves A-flat major and changes to C-sharp minor which then traverses through F, D, C, and B major. A second theme is introduced (mm.217-61), where once again the key is C-sharp minor. But this quickly goes through F, D, C, and E major. This is a re-working of verse three-*Infirma nostri corporis/Virtute firmans perpeti* (With thy strength which never decays/Confirm our mortal flame), which is the closing verse to the exposition.

The second section of the development (mm. 262-311) has a march-like character that uses the second couplet of verse three (*Accende lumen sensibus/Infunde amorem cordibus*--Kindle a light in our senses/Infuse love in our hearts). In this section, with its sudden surge into E-major with all the choirs declaring in unison *Accende lumen*, a sense of great light and enlightenment occurs. Adding to the drama of the moment is the rising fourth, which then falls, similar to the *Veni* theme heard at the beginning, followed by four rising notes, a

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<sup>59</sup>Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 916.

characteristic musical motif found in many other Mahler works.<sup>60</sup> Once again the listener is taken quickly through a number of keys, E major, D major, E major then E-minor. The children's chorus (m.275) makes its first appearance on *Amorem cordibus* singing with innocent joy. The children's choir will go on to make a significant contribution to the overall effect of the symphony in the second movement. The march rhythm increases in tempo when the second chorus declares, *Hostem repellas* (Drive away our foes). Later the sopranos angrily declare, *Hostem* and with more force *Pacem*.

The third and last section of the development (mm.312-412) is a double fugue of tremendous complexity that is nonetheless regular in its construction with the entries always coming on E-flat and B-flat.<sup>61</sup> This section uses most of the remaining text, the second couplet of verse four and all of verses five and six. Mahler does not close the development with the double fugue but provides an extension to the *Accende* theme and develops it along with other motifs. This creates a type of da capo structure that encases the drama of the previous verses within the drama of the final fugue.

The recapitulation after a long pedal point on B-flat begins m. 413 with a loud cymbal crash that lasts through m. 507. We are brought back to the main

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 917. (Footnote #86—Notably the theme of the Finale of the First, the resurrection theme in the Second, the opening theme of the Fourth, the Adagietto of the Fifth, the Alma theme in the Sixth).

<sup>61</sup>David B. Greene, 260. (Footnote # 19 – “The double fugue is one of the most conspicuous justifications for the vast choral and orchestral forces that Mahler calls for and that constitute the basis for Wellesz to link this symphony with the tradition of the “colossal style” going from Benevoli’s *Festival Mass* in fifty-three parts (1628) through Berlioz’ *Requiem* and the Liszt *Gran Festival Mass*. Hans-Ferdinand Redlich (in *Bruckner and Mahler* (1963), 49-52) said that Mahler knew the Benevoli Mass well.

theme, *Veni creator spiritus* before going on to the final Munich verse at m. 442.

The close of the recapitulation deals with the thoughts of victory over evil.

The coda uses the last verse of the hymn with the inclusion of Mahler's two extra lines of his own thoughts, *Deo sit Gloria et Filio/Natoque, qui a mortuis* (Glory to God and to the Son/Who was born and from the dead) which combines all the previously heard themes, glorifies the Holy Trinity, and makes the Doxology much stronger. Off stage there is the distant sound of trumpets and trombones, giving the movement the central thought of enlightenment and love.<sup>62</sup>

## SECOND MOVEMENT

Mahler's second movement is the longest movement he ever composed for any of his symphonic works; its length is over 55 minutes. But more importantly, in this section Mahler uses Goethe's *Faust* to express mankind's eternal dilemma of redemption and salvation. Man does conquer evil and finds final salvation through love and the eternal feminine. Mahler uses the final scene of *Faust* Part II as a complete music drama/oratorio/cantata to express his ideals of transcendentalism and faith. He combines the *Veni* and the *Faust* legend into one work of massive proportions.

Goethe's final scene from Part II of *Faust* is what Mahler used to complete his Symphony No.8. This final scene of Goethe's *Faust* starts in a setting of Mountain Gorges, perhaps the same gorges and mountains Mahler saw on his brief tour of Dölsach earlier. This second part of *Faust* was published in 1832, just

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<sup>62</sup> Constantin Floros, 226.

before Goethe's death. It is in some ways a glimpse of Goethe's beliefs as an old man, not the heady idealism of a young man who wrote Part I, but a somber and more reflective person at the end of his life.

In Part II, Faust's soul is saved from eternal damnation by the women who carry it up to heaven. Some have suggested that this scene acts to balance the Prologue in Heaven. Goethe used Christian symbolism as an answer to the original Faust legend. The original Faust was dragged off to Hell, but this Faust, who represents mankind, is taken up to Heaven, because he won his wager with the Devil. Man could not save himself, so by the use of Christian symbols that represent a higher force Goethe found the meaning to life that all could understand, and man was saved.

This scene combines many of the themes of *Faust*. Faust's soul is lifted in exultation upwards across a landscape of wild beauty. This natural background was important for Goethe and Mahler, for it represents nature, a kind of transcendentalism, and a form of religion if you will. In Mahler's Symphony No. 3 there are many references to nature and what the various aspects of nature "tell" Mahler.<sup>63</sup> This was not a new subject for Mahler's thoughts and beliefs, for he held nature in a special reverence and wanted to express this by using Goethe in this final movement.

In Goethe's epic poem<sup>64</sup> the Anchorite Fathers were Pater Ecstaticus, Pater Profundus, Pater Seraphicus, and Doctor Marianus. They represent the mystical tradition of early Christianity, in that by living in seclusion they become closer to

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<sup>63</sup> Floros, 88.

<sup>64</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust*, trans., Walter Arndt, ed., Cyrus Hamlin (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2001), 337.

God. Some believed that Goethe learned this from Herder.<sup>65</sup> Incidentally, in the Roman Catholic Church, St. Anthony, c. 250-c. 350, was known as *Ecstaticus*; St. Bernard, 1091-1153, as *Profundus*; and St. Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226, as *Seraphicus*.<sup>66</sup> Mahler omitted the Pater Seraphicus part along with two choruses of the blessed boys and some of the singing of Doctor Marianus.

Although the scene is highly emotional and Mahler's music adds a great sense of theater to the work, it is not solemn but is rather joyous in nature. The Blessed Boys who come in after the Anchorite Paters represent the childlike innocence and freedom of children, always struggling not to be bound to earth. They fly upwards towards the angels, who bear Faust's "immortal essence," which by chicanery and delight they have snatched from Mephistopheles with great glee.

The angels in the first chorus are important for the understanding of the whole drama. The angels' song explains that Faust's special status as the equal of spiritual beings, and his ceaseless striving, have guaranteed him salvation. But he will also be welcomed into Heaven because "transfigured love" has spoken on his behalf. This refers to Gretchen, who loved Faust deeply – too deeply for her own good – and was redeemed.

Lifting Faust's soul upwards, the angels pass it on to the Blessed Boys, who in turn give it a new beginning. The ideal of the mystical woman is revealed in a song sung by Doctor Marianus to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He asks for the Virgin's help to save the chorus of penitent women.

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<sup>65</sup> Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803-German philosopher and writer)

<sup>66</sup> Seraphim originated from Hebrew. It is conceived as an order of celestial beings, conceived as fiery and purifying ministers of Jehovah. The seraphim are usually ranked as the highest order of angels, immediately above cherubim.



Gretchen joins the three penitent women of Christian tradition in pleading for forgiveness, singing a version of the prayer she spoke in her despair by the city wall. As the Blessed Boys describe how Faust's soul will grow so that he can become their teacher, Gretchen implores the Virgin Mary to allow her to lead Faust's soul into eternal salvation.

Her prayer is granted. Gretchen is told to fly upwards and Faust will follow her. This great epic poem ends with a beautiful chorus in praise of "Woman Eternal." The chorus announces that in heaven man finds what was unattainable on earth: understanding, action, and sincerity. After his long and arduous journey, Faust is finally redeemed by the love of woman.

Mahler's music and Goethe's text reveal to us at the beginning of the second movement, creating a place of dark foreboding and mystery that is far from the earthly world and unrecognizable to most humans. There are also angels, anchorites, and blessed young boys hovering throughout this bizarre world. The shimmering quality of the strings at the opening further brings on a sense of surrealism.<sup>67</sup>

Mahler changed very little of Goethe's text except for the omission of the character of Pater Seraphicus and his dialog with the Blessed Boys (lines 11890 to 11925). Sometimes the text had to fit the music and Mahler made small changes usually with repetition of certain words or small additions such as "Euch" added after "Hände verschlinget" (line 11926) or "uns" added before "Zu tragen

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<sup>67</sup> David B. Greene, 261. (Footnote #31-Mahler opens "Der Spielmann" [*Das klagende Lied*] and his First and Second Symphonies with similar shimmers. Bruckner makes even more extensive use of this technique.).

peinlich" (line 11955). Mahler changed the order of Goethe's lines for the angel's chorus (lines 11966ff.),<sup>68</sup> and he omitted line 11970.

La Grange cites Susanne Vill saying there was music originally written for the passage "Um sie verschlingen" (lines 12013 to 12019) in the first proofs corrected by Mahler but he cut this episode for reasons of length, and partly because of the visual metaphor.<sup>69</sup> Occasionally there are sections where the chorus and soloists overlap. Finally, Rudolf Stephan observes that the passage where Mahler makes the most changes to the text is "Uns bleibt ein Erdenrest" (bar 532, line 11954) and on to the entrance of Doctor Marianus (bar 604). He uses the music of "Infrima nostri corporis", from the first section, at the price of repetitions of words or half-lines, and of some switching around. All the last part of Dr. Marianus monologue ("Dir, der Unberührbaren": lines 12020ff.) is given to the chorus. In the "Chorus mysticus" the treatment of the text is also very free, as might be expected in such an apotheosis."<sup>70</sup>

La Grange says that there is only one complete autograph score of the Eighth Symphony and that it used to belong to Alma Mahler but is now in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. However, two separate autograph pages of orchestral

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<sup>68</sup>Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 904. (Footnote #41 – Mahler's order of lines is as follows: 11967, 11966, 11969, 11968, 11972, and 11971. Rudolf Stephan notes that Mahler changed certain words for reasons of diction, notably "beweget" to "bewegt" and "träget" to "trägt" [lines 12002 and 12004]. At line 12050 he changes "fliesset" into "fließt" but fails to modify the previous "ergiesset" [bars 934-5]).

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 904. (Footnote # 43 – Vill, in *Vermittlungsformen*, 152, quotes in a footnote the various melodic lines of this episode, which Mahler dropped in the proofs. It contains 26 bars for chorus (between bars 763 and 7640. Later on, a reprise of "Jungfrau, rein in schönsten sinne" (28 bars for chorus between bars 844 and 845 of the score) is also dropped, as well as the melody of "zu höhern Sphären" (bars 1249 to 61) and "alle reuig Zarten" (bars 1280 to 1283)). See also footnote #41.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 904.

score are in BMG – Bibliothèque musicale Gustav Mahler, Paris.<sup>71</sup> Mahler made changes to the score after the first rehearsals (which took place in June of 1910), and there is also a piano score of the work.<sup>72</sup> A complete set of proofs bearing numerous corrections by Mahler himself survived. The second corrected piano score was composed in October of 1910. Some string parts were published before the première in 1910, but were corrected by Mahler after the June rehearsals and the definitive version was available in September. Other orchestral parts were published between November 1911 and February 1912, after Mahler's death.

Richard Specht, one of the first to attempt an analysis of the Eighth, and Paul Bekker believe the second movement should be divided into three parts. The Andante or Adagio (mm. 1-184), the Scherzo (mm. 443-611) and the Finale (mm. 612-ff). However many musicologists now disagree with this simple approach. Ortrun Landmann in a strong and scholarly analysis of the Eighth Symphony feels that this movement should be divided into 5 parts,<sup>73</sup> the basis of which is poetic preference for the episodes of Goethe's text as follows:

1. Description of the landscape; presentation of the Paters; entrance of the angels with the soul of Faust (up to "die ewige Liebe nur"/Only the Love beyond, line 11965).<sup>74</sup> (m.579)
2. We approach the sphere of Mater gloriosa; Dr. Marianus and the children start to take care of Faust's soul (up to "Gottern ebenbürtig"/In the great perfection! line12012).<sup>75</sup> (m. 758)

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 905. "BGM" in La Grange should read "BMG."

<sup>72</sup> Mahler wrote Alma on September 4 1910 regarding the dedication: "At home I found the keyboard reductions with the dedication and hoped that Hertzka was smart enough to send a copy to Toblach. It was strange and exciting to see the tender, beloved name on the title page for all the world to see, like a joyful confession." Constantin Floros, 339.

<sup>73</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 912.

<sup>74</sup>Corrected from La Grange; line 11965 the last line, Vermages zu scheiden/Time can divide them. (m. 579)

3. Principle episode: appearance of the Mater gloriosa; prayers of the three sinning women and of Gretchen (from line "Er kommt zurück/Comes back to me! Line 12075. (m.1130)
4. Faust's soul blossoms; the Mater gloriosa pronounces redemption; hymn to the action of grace (up to "Göttin, bleibe, gnädig"/Goddess, kind for ever! Line 12103). (m.1383)
5. Chorus Mysticus: final commentary. (m.1449-1572)

	CHORUS MYSTICUS	CHORUS MYSTICUS
Line 12104	Alles Vergängliche Ist nur ein Gleichnis; Das Unzulängliche, Heir wird's Ereignis; Das Unbeschreibliche, Heir ist's getan; <sup>76</sup> Das Ewig-Weibliche Zieht uns hinan.	All that must disappear Is but a parable; What lay beyond us, here All is made visible; Here deeds have understood Words they were darkened by; Eternal Womanhood Draws us on high.

Landmann asserts that the division exactly fits the formal scheme it suggests, episode 1 is the exposition, followed by episodes 2 through 4, (a kind of development in three sections). Episode 5 is the Epilogue."<sup>77</sup> The various themes are divided into families according to their rhythmic and melodic character. The emphasis is that the first movement is entirely dominated by the sonority of the choruses, while the orchestra participates in a more consistent manner in a secondary role. Landmann notes, finally, that Mahler's most important change to Goethe's text concern the end of the monologue of Dr. Marianus ("Dir, der Unberuhrbaren", Though inviolate, exempted line 12020)<sup>78</sup>, which Mahler gives to the chorus and places after the entrance of the Mater gloriosa."<sup>79</sup> This type of

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<sup>75</sup> Corrected line number from La Grange I believe this is a misprint, (Originally 1212).

<sup>76</sup> Hermann Danuser notes that Goethe's text, in most editions, reads "ist es getan" but that Goethe corrected his own text in an earlier version of the text as "ist's getan" (Danuser, "Interpret", 279).

<sup>77</sup> Henry-Louis de la Grange, 912.

<sup>78</sup> Corrected line number from La Grange (originally 12090) I believe this to be another misprint.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 912.

orchestral blurring creates a sense of uncertainty as to where the last section ends and the next begins, and it is often heard in Mahler symphonies. (Note that at this point Mahler omitted two lines of poetry at the end of Doctor Marianus' solo: *Wen betört nicht Blick und Gruss/Schmeichel-hafter Odem?* (Ardent eye and flattering lip /Breathe such strong seduction?))

David Greene offers another analysis on the structure of Mahler's second movement. He maintains the three sections (Adagio, Scherzo, and Finale) but offers a slightly different breakdown in a truncated Scherzo formula.<sup>80</sup>

1. Adagio – mm.1-384
2. Scherzo – mm. 385-638  
(Two interpolations-mm.548-579 & mm.604-638)
3. Finale mm. 639-905
4. Scherzo returns – mm.906-1204
5. Finale returns – mm.1205-end (1572)

Although Floros and Greene use the term Scherzo for the middle section of the last movement (under the influence of Specht), the tempo for this section is never in  $\frac{3}{4}$  and the form never follows that of a minuet. This entire section is either alla breve or 4/4. Perhaps when Specht first formed an analysis of the piece he misunderstood Mahler's use of the term Scherzando in m. 443 as "in the manner of a scherzo." The term could simply be interpreted as "light-hearted" or "humorous." Nowhere in this movement, however, is there any sense of a true scherzo.

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<sup>80</sup> David B. Greene, 223-233.

Seeing Mahler's Symphony No. 8 in terms of being the most consonant and optimistic of all his works as compared to his other more tortured works would be a compelling comparison. Most of all its sections are centered on E-Flat. There is little variance from this tonal center, either on E-flat minor/Major or E Major for most of the time.<sup>81</sup>

Its structure can be easily understood in the manner of the sonata structure; Introduction, Exposition in three sections, Development in three sections, and Epilogue.

**Table 2: Structure of Mahler's Symphony No. 8. 2<sup>nd</sup> Movement.**

INTRODUCTION (orchestra)			
Bars	Themes and Motifs	Tempos	Keys
1-56	instrumental Arioso (anticipating the 1 <sup>st</sup> chorus)	<i>Poco Adagio</i> (somewhat slow)	E-flat minor
57-96	(anticipating the Pater ecstaticus solo)	<i>Etwas bewegter</i> (somewhat quicker)	
97-146	theme of Pater Profundus similar to mm. 580-593	<i>più mosso</i> (more agitated)	
147-66	Coda		
EXPOSITION (first part mm.167-384)			
167-218	Chorus: " <i>Waldung, sie Schwankt</i> "	<i>Wieder langsam</i> (again slow )	E-flat minor/ Major
219-60	Baritone: Pater ecstaticus " <i>Ewige Wonnebrand</i> "	<i>Moderato</i> <i>sehr leidenschaftlich</i> (very passionate)	

<sup>81</sup> Isabelle Werck, "Cosmogony Of The Eighth Symphony," *A "Mass" For The Masses: Mahler's Eighth Symphony – Proceedings Of The Mahler VII Symposium*, ed. Jos van Leeuwen, (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1992), 88-91.

261-265	love theme (trumpet)		
266-361	Bass Pater Profundus:	<i>Allegro appassionato</i> (fast with passion)	E-flat Major
362-84	Postlude (Hymn like transition motivic material from song of Pater ecstaticus 2 <sup>nd</sup> Part (mm. 385-539)		C-flat Major
385-420	Women's Chorus: <i>Gerettet</i> its' theme used earlier in Mvt. I- <i>Accende lumen</i> mm. 262-281	<i>Allegro deciso</i> (fast deliberate)  <i>Allegro mosso</i> (faster)	B-Major
418-442	Transition: trumpet & horn an- nounce Faust's spiritual reincar- nation		G-Major
443-519	Choir of the younger angels	<i>Scherzando</i> (Humorous)	E-flat Major
520-539	Postlude		

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Part (mm. 540-79)

540-79	Prelude (orchestra) Choir of more perfect angels. Borrowed from I-mm. 135-168. Alto solo	<i>Schon etwas</i> D-minor <i>langsamer</i> (already somewhat slower)	E-flat Major
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## DEVELOPMENT

### 1<sup>st</sup> section (mm. 580-779)

580-604	Chorus of younger angels	<i>Im Anfang noch etwas</i> (at the beginning held back)	E-flat Major
604-638	Dr. Marianus	<i>Noch etwas kecker</i> (still a little livelier)	G, B-Major
639-723	solo Dr. Marianus	<i>Sempre l'istesso tempo</i> (always the same tempo)	E-Major

724-57	Praise of <i>Mater Gloriosa</i>	<i>Sehr langsam</i> (very slow)	E-flat Major
758-79	Interlude	<i>Poco più mosso</i> (Slightly more agitated)	E-flat, E-Major
2 <sup>nd</sup> Section (mm. 780-1248)			
780-867	Men & Mixed Chorus (extremely slow)	<i>Adagissimo</i>	E-Major
868-905	Magna Peccatrix		B, G-#-minor, E-flat-Major B-flat minor/ E-flat Major
906-56	Mulier Samaritana		
956-67	Intermezzo (played by trumpets)		
968-1016	Maria Aegyptiaca	<i>Immer fliessend</i> (steadily flowing)	G-minor
1017-93	Trio of Penitent women	<i>Sehr fliessend, beinahe flüchtig</i> (very flowing, almost hasty)	C, A, F-Major
1093-1141	Prelude and song of the Una Poenitentium	<i>Sich etwas mässigend</i> (a little more moderate)	D-Major
1141-1185	Choir of the blessed young boys-(theme of Mater Gloriosa)	<i>Ummerklich frischer</i> (Imperceptibly faster)	
1186-1212	Choir of the blessed young Boys (with Glockenspiel), Later Una Poenitentium. Same music as mm. 613-638 (Faust's spiritual life)	<i>Allegro</i> (fast)	B-flat Major
1213-48	Soprano II- Una Poenitentium.	<i>Wie die korrespondierende Stelle im ersten Teil.</i> (Like the corresponding passage in the first part)	B-flat Major



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Section (mm1249-420)

1249-76	Mater Gloriosa and Chorus	<i>Sehr Langsam, Dolcissimo</i> (very slow, sweetly)	E-flat Major
1277-383	Dr. Marianus and Choir	<i>Hymnlike</i>	E-flat Major/ C-minor/E-Major
1384-420	Postlude	<i>Fliessend</i> (flowing)	E-flat Major
EPILOGUE – (1421-572)			
1421-48	Prelude or Transition	<i>Langsam</i> (slow)	E-flat Major
1149-1528	Chorus Mysticus <sup>82</sup> and Soloists	<i>Sehr langsam beginnend</i> (very slow at the beginning) <i>Schon bewegter, etc</i> (already getting faster)	
1528-72	Postlude (orchestra) (with the <i>Veni</i> theme from Mvt. I.)	<i>Fliessend</i> (flowing)	

Mahler's great oratorio/music drama continuously uses motives reverting back to the first movement in many ways. First by seldom leaving the keys of E-flat major, E-flat minor, E major, however, always returning to E-flat major. The massive choral symphony sets the tonality around E of one type or another. This can also assist the choir in always keeping in mind their tonal center by this reference to E-flat. This constant tonal center lends gravity to the idea that Mahler was portraying in Goethe's *Faust* and Faust's final redemption. The falling fourth or the "*Veni*" theme is the melodic/tonal cell of the symphony from which most all of the major themes were created,<sup>83</sup> followed by the inversion or the ascending

<sup>82</sup> Alban Berg once owned a preliminary sketch of the *Chorus Mysticus* written on toilet paper (ca.8x11 cm2) in pencil by Mahler. The Alban Berg Foundation in Vienna now owns it.

<sup>83</sup> According to Constantin Floros, "Mahler considered it a theme of enlightenment and love", 230.

fourth. Another thematic interval important to Mahler is the ascending sixth. Lyrical soprano lines along with powerful ostinato lines combine to become the basis for this symphony. Mahler basically used six thematic groups to create his entire symphony.<sup>84</sup> It is easy to see that Mahler employed Wagner's technique, so popular during that time, of the *Leitmotif* in his own particular and unique Mahlerian way. The feeling, or sensing, of being musically projected forward or backward in time by the borrowings of one motif from one another, the excitement of what is to be or what was can be heard frequently. The Wagnerian categories of *Ahnung*, (foreboding), *Vergegenwärtigung* (bring to mind), and *Erinnerung* (remembrance) are liberally used in this work.<sup>85</sup> The use of these qualities created outer (emotional) and inner (intellectual) connections that the people of the time were well aware of.

The basic ideas of eternal love, divine grace, earthly inadequacy, and spiritual reincarnation guided Mahler in his creation of his Eighth Symphony.<sup>86</sup> Beethoven previously used the chorus to extol the glories of Mankind and Mahler was sensitive to that standard and followed his example. Schumann was also an influence on Mahler and Mahler's use of the chorus. Schumann had written many "cantata-oratorio-ballad admixture"<sup>87</sup> that Mahler would have been familiar with.

Using the forces of many different types of choirs (male, female, boys, mixed) gave Mahler the many colors in which to paint his sound picture of Goethe's *Faust*. Zoltan Roman notes that Mahler put great demands upon the

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<sup>84</sup>Henry-Louis de la Grange, *Gustav Mahler Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)*, 934-938.

<sup>85</sup>Constantin Floros, 230.

<sup>86</sup>*Ibid.*, 230.

<sup>87</sup>Zoltan Roman, "The Chorus in Mahler's Music," in *The Music Review* Vol. 43, No.1 (1983), 32.

chorus in terms of its tessitura. Sopranos varied from a major 13<sup>th</sup> to two octaves plus a major third. Altos were expected to sing a major 13<sup>th</sup> or up to two octaves with a major second. Tenors needed only to do a minor 13<sup>th</sup> to two octaves less a major 2<sup>nd</sup>. However, it was upon the basses that Mahler put the most demands. The ranges for the expectations of the basses in Mahler's Eighth Symphony were to combine the qualities of a *basso profundo* to a *basso cantante*; this group was expected to perform in a range from two octaves plus a perfect 4<sup>th</sup> to a major 6<sup>th</sup> beyond two octaves.<sup>88</sup> Mahler came to use the voice and the chorus as simply another sound source from which to paint with his samples of tonal colors. The voice became another medium of endless timbres from which to choose. Often he would press the chorus to the extreme of their ranges, the sopranos to high C and the basses down to the great B-flat. He would extend the range of the voice for color and texture and sonority, but would keep the middle range clear for the message of Goethe's text.

#### The Performance:

Mahler left Vienna in Sept 1907 for the United States and the Metropolitan Opera in New York. He had decided to leave the Imperial Opera in Vienna after reaching the pinnacle of success. The decision to leave Vienna had been in some ways the result of the great amounts of money he was being offered in New York. His new financial status gave Mahler the freedom of a life style similar to Richard

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 35.

Strauss.<sup>89</sup> His years in Vienna had turned into troubling times both personally and professionally. Many of his good friends such as Lilli Lehmann did not wish to see him leave saying, "...I was sorry that he had to cross the ocean to attain...what so many wished to attain: financial independence for his old age, his family and not least for his own creativity."<sup>90</sup> His favorite daughter Maria Anna (Putzi) had died of scarlet fever in July and his heart condition had been diagnosed.<sup>91</sup> America was to become the chance for a complete change of *milieu*. Mahler would now live in New York but would return for the summers to the South Tyrolean farmhouse (see fig. 2) and the composing hut for his remaining years of 1908-1910.<sup>92</sup>

In 1909 Mahler wrote to Alma with his thoughts regarding the Goethe scene of the symphony:

That which draws us by its mystic force, what every created thing, perhaps even the very stones, feels with absolute certainty as the center of its being, what Goethe here – again employing an image – calls the eternal feminine – that is to say, the resting-place, the goal, in opposition to the striving and struggling towards the goal (the eternal masculine) – you are quite right in calling the force of love. Goethe...expresses it with a growing clearness and certainty right on to the Mater Gloriosa – the personification of the eternal feminine!

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<sup>89</sup> Herta Blaukopf, *Gustav Mahler Richard Strauss Correspondence 1888-1911* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1996), 149-50.

<sup>90</sup> Herta Blaukopf, comp., *Mahler's Unknown Letters* (London: St. Edmundsbury Press Ltd., 1983), 90.

<sup>91</sup> Maria Anna was laid to rest in Keutschach cemetery near Maiernigg on 13 July. The coffin was move to Vienna and re-interred in 1909. La Grange, Footnote # 250, 692.

<sup>92</sup> Kurt Blaukopf and Herta Blaukopf, *Mahler His Life, Work and World* (New York: Thames & Hudson 2000), 173.



Figure 2 – Mahler and Alma lived in the second story of this South Tyrolean farmhouse at Toblach during the summers of 1908-10.

Mahler and Alma traveled to Toblach in April of 1910. The summer would be spent on finishing all sorts of details for the September première of the Eighth, in Munich. Mahler worked feverishly that summer. By this time Mahler had lived with his heart condition for a number of years, there was always intrigue and drama with his New York season not unlike Vienna. However Mahler would not have the luxury of composing this summer (although he did work on sketches of the 10<sup>th</sup>). It was to be a working time for Mahler preparing for the next season in New York but most importantly the première of his Eighth Symphony. He was always possessed with a single mindedness when it came to his work. His career (his music) came first and everything else was second. Goethe and Mahler both shared the same thoughts regarding work, both of them were nearing the ends of their lives when Goethe quoted the lines, “*Wer immer strebend sich bemüht/Den können wir erlösen*” (Whoever strives unceasingly/Him we can redeem), adding that they contained the “key to Faust’s salvation,” in many ways Mahler felt the same way about his life.<sup>93</sup>

During the early rehearsals for the symphony in June Mahler wrote Alma saying:

The essence of it is really Goethe’s idea that all love is generative, creative, and that there is a physical and spiritual generation, which is the emanation of this “Eros”. You have it in the last scene of *Faust*, presented symbolically... The wonderful discussions between Diotima and

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<sup>93</sup> Jonathan Carr, 187.

Socrates...The comparison between (Socrates) and Christ is obvious and has arisen spontaneously in all ages...in each case Eros as Creator of the world.<sup>94</sup>

Alma decided in the summer of 1910 that she needed another rest cure. This cure however was cut short due to her romantic involvement with a young architect name Walter Gropius (later to become her second husband) whom she met while on this cure.

August 26, 1910 Mahler sought the advice of the now famous Sigmund Freud while Freud was on vacation in Leyden in Holland.<sup>95</sup> Freud's thoughts are remarkable in what he said to Mahler. Mahler was struggling to find the same answers to life<sup>96</sup> though his understanding of the feminine that he was writing about in his Symphony No.8.<sup>97</sup> On 4 January 1935 in a letter to Theodor Reik, Freud wrote the following about Mahler;

I analyzed Mahler for an afternoon in Leiden. If I may believe reports, I achieved much with him at that time. The necessity for the visit arose, for him, from his wife's resentment of the withdrawal of his *libido* from her.

In highly interesting expeditions through his life history, we discovered his

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<sup>94</sup>Michael Kennedy, *The Master Musicians- Mahler*, (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1974), 150.

<sup>95</sup> Klaus Pringsheim in 1907 relates a story where a few years earlier Mahler did not think much of Freud, the subject of psychoanalysis did not interest him. Mahler said, "Freud...he attempts to cure everything from a single point of view." From a single point: he did not name it; he obviously shrank from letting me hear the word in question in the presence of his wife. Kurt Blaukopf and Herta Blaukopf, 237.

<sup>96</sup> Peter Ostwald, "Gustav Mahler: Health And Creative Energy," *A "Mass" For The Masses: Mahler's Eighth Symphony – Proceedings Of The Mahler VII Symposium*, ed. Jos van Leeuwen, (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1992), 100-117.

<sup>97</sup> David Holbrook, *Gustav Mahler and The Courage To Be*, (London: Vision Press Ltd., 1975), 71-72.

personal conditions for love, especially his Holy Mary complex (mother fixation). I had plenty of opportunity to admire the capability for psychological understanding of this man of genius. No light fell at the time on the symptomatic facade of his obsessional neurosis. It was as if you would dig a single shaft through a mysterious building.

Mahler was a man who believed that fate along with faith controlled many aspects of his life. Yet Mahler was always there to challenge the concept of fate, but it was faith that would allow Mahler to realize his potential in all things including love. There is help along the way, and Eros was there to ensure that end. In a letter to Alma from 4 September shortly before the 1910 première, Mahler revealed his thoughts to her in exactly the same way he was trying to illuminate Hrabanus Maurus and Goethe's thoughts in his Symphony No.8.

By the way, I have made a strange discovery! You see it was always just like this, and with almost the same longing, that I sat straight down to write when I was away from you...Freud is quite right – you were always my light and my focal point...But what a torment, what an agony, that you can no longer return it. But as truly as love must re-awaken love, and faith will find faith again, as long as Eros remains the ruler of men and gods, so truly I shall reconquer everything again, the heart that once was mine and which still can find God and happiness only in union with mine.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Michael Kennedy, 150.



Mahler's Symphony No.8 was not only a world première, it was to be the first work to be presented in the new the Munich Exhibition Hall especially built for the occasion. Mahler's work, which flowed forth with great ease in 1906, was now a testament, a solution to the complexities that had befallen his life. Like the new orchestra hall and the new symphony, this was to be a new beginning for both him and Alma. Goethe's *Faust* and Mahler's great music were to prove the point to both of them and to the world that Eros' love along with the divine grace of the Mater Gloriosa were life's answer. Mahler was taking stock of his life and the few opportunities left to him with his marriage in the performance of his great work. Before the final rehearsals and concert Alma relates the following;

One night I was awakened by an apparition by my bed. It was Mahler standing there in the darkness. "Would it give you any pleasure if I dedicated the Eighth to you? You might regret it." "I have just written to Hertzka"<sup>99</sup> now – by the light of dawn, he said. Any pleasure! All the same I said: Don't. You have never dedicated anything to anybody.

Mahler left Toblach for Munich at the beginning of September to be in charge of the final rehearsals and Alma was to follow later. This huge undertaking took the talents of choral members from three cities. In his letters to Alma, Mahler graphically reflected a man whose mental states alternated between "bouts of

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<sup>99</sup> Emil Hertzka (1869-1932) –Director of Universal Edition one of the leading music publishing firms in Europe.

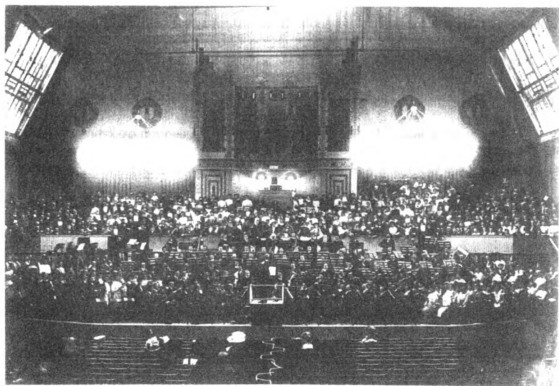


Figure 3 – Mahler rehearsing the Symphony No. 8 in the Exhibition Hall in Munich.

elation and anxiety which characterized the last eight or nine days of preparation.”<sup>100</sup> The concert would never have taken place at all but for the high-handed and unscrupulous conduct of Emil Gutmann,<sup>101</sup> who organized it. He cabled to Mahler in New York, telling him that the score was already printed and that the preliminary rehearsals had long ago begun in Vienna. In fact, not a note had been printed. As soon as Mahler knew this, he wanted to cancel the performance immediately, but by this time rehearsals were actually in progress.

It is the use of large forces in Mahler’s Eighth Symphony that speak to our imagination.<sup>102</sup> The orchestra for this work along with the immense choirs reached a gigantic size of 1021 performers. The Munich Concert Society’s orchestra was enlarged to include 84 strings, 2 harps, 22 woodwinds, and 17 brass, plus 4 trumpets and 3 trombones set off from the main body. All total there were 171 instrumentalists. The 250 vocalists from Vienna were members of the *Singverein* of the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, 250 members of the *Riedel Verein* from Leipzig, and 350 children from the *Zentral Singschule* in Munich.<sup>103</sup> Bruno Walter, Mahler’s trusted disciple, was in charge of rehearsing the eight soloists. Alfred Roller, the great theater set designer, was in charge of positioning all the musical forces for their best acoustical advantage. Both Mahler and Roller tried to create a total environment that would elevate the visual, musical, and emotional and mental experiences for which this work was reaching. The bold step of

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<sup>100</sup> Zoltan Roman, *Gustav Mahler’s American Years 1907-1911 – A Documentary History* (Stuyvesant: Pendragon Press, 1989), 376.

<sup>101</sup> Emil Gutmann (1877-1922(?)), Concert agent in Munich for Mahler’s Eighth Symphony premiere. He was the agent who coined the subtitle, *Symphony of a Thousand*.”

<sup>102</sup> Robert Becqu , “A Survey of the Performances of Mahler’s Symphony VIII In The Netherlands”, *A “Mass” For The Masses: Mahler’s Eighth Symphony*, ed. Jos van Leeuwen, (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1992), 195.

<sup>103</sup> Egon Gartenberg, *Mahler: The Man and His Music* (New York: Schirmer Books 1978), 320.

changing the typical atmosphere was challenged when the lights in the *Festhalle* were lowered and the hall was cast into almost complete and eerie darkness.

Mahler noticed during the final rehearsal that during the *pianissimo* passages he could hear the bells of the Munich street cars.<sup>104</sup> Ever the perfectionist, with the whole town excited about this upcoming event, the street cars would go by and not use their bells on the nights of the performance out of respect for Mahler's wishes.

As the concert neared, Mahler's admirers, close friends and disciples came to Munich to be with him and hear this great work. In attendance was Arnold Schönberg; conductors Otto Klemperer and Siegfried Wagner; Alfred Casella and Anton Webern (who got free tickets from Schönberg); writers Stefan Zweig, and Thomas Mann; and the theater's rising star Max Reinhardt. In addition, Oskar Fried (composer/conductor), Fritz Erler (painter), Albert Neisser (Dr. of Dermatology), and Arnold Berliner (physicist) were there.

The *Chronik der Stadt München* reported in its review of the "monster concert" event that also in attendance were "their Royal Highnesses Princess Gisela of Bavaria and Prince Ludwig Ferdinand, Hermann Bahr and his wife, Court Singer Bahr-Mildenburg, Richard Strauss, Court Singer Lilli Lehmann, Court Singer Schmedes, Princes Thurn and Taxis, Princess Marietta zu Hohenlohe, Countess Palin Paul Clemenceau from Paris, Professor Kolo Moser, Professor Anton [*sic*] Roller, the well-known stage designer, Professor Dr. Oskar Bie, Dr

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<sup>104</sup>While writing his early symphonies at his composing hut on lake Attersee in Steinbach in Austria, Mahler would often have his family shoo the birds away to keep the area quiet so he could concentrate on his composition without the distraction of other sounds.

Leopold Schmidt, Court Conductor Schalk, Director of the Vienna Singverein, Court Conductor Bruno Walter from Vienna and many, many more.”<sup>105</sup>

The review ended with a short paragraph praising Mahler’s Eighth Symphony; “The success of the evening was extraordinary, as befitted the participation in it of the whole musical world. The final scene left an unforgettable impression, culminating in a long and enthusiastic apotheosis of Mahler.”<sup>106</sup>

Alma in her memoirs relates how she thought Mahler felt about the opening:

I too found a copy of the Eighth<sup>107</sup> with its dedicatory page on my table. Mahler was eager now to hear what his old friends would have to say; for egocentric though he was, he expected his friends to enter into and share his pleasure. But his friends kept silent. He found himself alone; his feelings and his happiness were of no account; he was of importance to them only in so far as he reflected credit on themselves...Mahler refused to give an audition to a certain singer. She sent a gilded basket of roses up to my room an hour later as a propitiatory offering. But he was blind no

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<sup>105</sup> Kurt Blaukopf and Herta Blaukopf, 239. “Chronik der Stadt München”, ms., 1910, vol. 11, Stadtarchiv München, 2312-13).

<sup>106</sup> Later many would disagree See: Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 140-41 or Donald Mitchell, “Mahler’s Paradoxical Eighth, Eveline Nikkels, Robert Becqué, Jos van Leeuwen, ed., *A “Mass” For The Masses: Mahler’s Eighth, Symphony – Proceedings of the Mahler VIII Symposium* (Rotterdam: Universitaire Pers, 1992), 185-194.

<sup>107</sup> This was a piano reduction by Josef von Woess, 1863-1943. He also made the piano reductions for Mahler’s 3rd 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> Symphonies, and *Das klagende Lied*. Later in 1912 there was a piano duet published by Universal Edition arranged by Alfred Neufeld it too was also dedicated to Alma.

longer. On the contrary, he was ready to take offense at the slightest sign that I was not paid enough honor or not received with enough warmth.<sup>108</sup>

Alma's feelings about the première reflected an almost dismissal quality in their brevity as read in her memoirs:

The whole of Munich as well as all who had come there for the occasion were wrought up to the highest pitch of suspense. The final rehearsal provoked rapturous enthusiasm, but it was nothing to the performance itself. The whole audience rose to their feet as soon as Mahler took his place at the conductor's desk; and the breathless silence which followed was the most impressive homage an artist could be paid. I sat in a box almost insensible from excitement.

And then Mahler, god or demon, turned those tremendous volumes of sound into fountains of light. The experience was indescribable.

Indescribable too, the demonstration which followed. The whole audience surged towards the platform. I waited behind the scenes in a state of deep emotion until the outburst died down. Then, with our eyes full of tears, we drove to the hotel.<sup>109</sup>

In Lilli Lehmann's emotional account from *Mein Weg* of 1913 she relates her feelings of that special evening:<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Alma Mahler, 179.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. 180.

<sup>110</sup> Kurt Blaukopf and Herta Blaukopf, 239-40.

I saw Mahler again, and for the last time, in 1910 when he conducted his Eighth Symphony; Riezl and I had gone there specially. Mahler had aged very much; it gave me a real shock. His work, which was given by 1,000 performers, sounded as from *one* instrument, from *one* throat. The second part of the Symphony, based on the second part of *Faust*, touched me painfully. Was it he, his music, his appearance, a premonition of death, Goethe's words, reminiscences of Schumann, my youth? I do not know; I only know that for the whole of the second part I gave way to emotion, which I could not control.

Shortly after the concert Thomas Mann<sup>111</sup> wrote to Mahler to add his praise to the excitement of the evening:

How deeply I am indebted to you for the experience of 12 September. I was incapable of telling you in the hotel in the evening. I feel an urgent necessity to give you at least an inkling of it, and so I ask you to be kind enough to accept the enclosed book – my latest – from me.

It is ill-suited as a counter-gift to what I have received from you, and it must weigh as light as a feather in the hands of the man who embodies, as I believe I discern, the most serious and sacred artistic will of our time...<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Wrote *Death in Venice* in 1911- Thomas Mann's character of the novelist becomes an obsessive composer in many ways similar to Mahler. Peter Franklin, *The Life of Mahler*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1997), 166.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

Emil Gutmann whose role in ensuring that Mahler's première was a success wrote in *Die Musik*:

As Mahler stepped on the podium in the semidarkness of the enormous hall, where the black mass of the audience merge with the black and white mass of the performers, everyone sensed that a primordial, fully formed and vital being had just been given a heart which was about to start beating. In this moment, there were no singers and no listeners, no instruments and no sounding boards, only one single body, with many, many veins and nerves, that was waiting to have the blood and breath of art course through it. Under no one else has there been such a complete readiness of all for art, for the artwork and the reception of art. The name and purpose of this body was the concept of the communality of art!

And Mahler began to beat with this baton – animating blood throbbed rhythmically through his body, and for the first time humanity, massed on the sacred heights, brought forth the ardent cry: “Veni creator spiritus!”<sup>113</sup>

Bruno Walter in *Theme and Variations* gave this account of Mahler's actions at the end of the concert:

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<sup>113</sup> Zoltan Roman, *Gustav Mahler's American Years 1907-1911*, 376-77. (“Gustav Mahler als Organisator,” in MUB, p.91), This letter was in the form of an eulogy and was first published in *Die Musik*.



When the last note of the performance had died away and the waves of enthusiastic applause reached him,<sup>114</sup> Mahler ascended the steps of the platform, at the top of which the children's choir was posted. The little ones hailed him with shouts of jubilation, and walking down the line, he pressed every one of the little hands that were extended towards him. The loving greeting of the young generation filled him with hope for the future of his work and gave him sincere pleasure.<sup>115</sup>

All these recollections of that event in September testify to the fact that a great musical event had happened that evening. To the German people of the upper and middle class this was the type of work that all would recognize. Most all would have known the *Veni creator* hymn and of course all would have read Goethe's *Faust*. Combined with Mahler's music and Roller's<sup>116</sup> setting indeed the event must have attained a kind of German artistic message that everyone could understand and feel with a sense of great national pride that evening.

Emotionally as well as creatively, Mahler's Eighth, Symphony was the culmination and highpoint of his life. Mahler's Eighth Symphony represents the end of the expansion and the enlargement of sonorities and form that began with Beethoven's *Eroica* (some would say earlier with Haydn or even earlier with the antiphonal juxtaposition of tonal masses traced back to the Venetian Renaissance of the sixteenth century) in regard to the enlargement of form and sound, and of

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<sup>114</sup> There were over 3,000 people in attendance in which they gave Mahler a 30-minute standing ovation.

<sup>115</sup> Egon Gartenberg, 321-22.

<sup>116</sup> Alfred Roller (1864-1935) – symbolist-inspired painter and important figure in the Vienna Secession movement. He was director of design at the Vienna Opera from 1903-9.

another which also began with Beethoven's Ninth – in regard to the inclusion of the human voice into the symphonic structure.<sup>117</sup>

This was a symphony of triumphant for Mahler, he would later go on to the brooding resignation and final farewells in his *Das Lied von der Erde* and Symphony No. 9, but Mahler's dream of a total choral symphony had come to fruition and his personal artistic recognition could not be denied. Mahler had reached for the universe and had achieved it with his Eighth Symphony.

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<sup>117</sup>Egon Gartenberg, 322-23.

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A** – Comparison of texts: Hrabanus Maurus / Liturgical/Mahler  
/English Translation/ Measure  
Numbers.

**Appendix B** – Facsimile of Mahler's handwritten text.

# APPENDIX A

## Herabanus Maurus

1. *Veni, Creator Spiritus,  
mentes tuorum visita,  
imple suprema gratia  
quae tu creasti pectora!*

2. *Qui Paracletus diceris,  
donum Dei altissimi,  
fons vivus, ignis, caritas  
et spiritualis unctio;*

3. *tu septiformis munere  
dextrae Dei tu dignus,  
tu rite promissum Patris  
sermone ditans guttura;*

4. *accende lumen sensibus,  
infunde amorem cordibus,*

*Infirmi nostri corporis  
virtute firmans perpeti;*

5. *hostem repellas languis,  
pacemque dones protinus;  
ductore sic te praevio  
vitemus omne noxium;*

6. *per te sciamus, da, Patrem,  
noscamus atque filium,  
te utriusque Spiritum  
credamus omni tempore!*

7. *Praesta hoc, Pater piissime  
Patricque compari Unice*

*cum Paracleti Spiritu  
regnans per omne saeculum!  
Amen.*

## Liturgical Tradition

*Veni creator spiritus,  
Mentes tuorum visita  
Imple suprema gratia,  
Quae tu creasti pectora!*

*Qui Paracletus diceris,  
Donum Dei altissimi,  
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,  
Et spiritualis unctio.*

*Tu septiformis munere,  
dextrae Deo tu dignus,  
Tu rite promissum Patris,  
Sermone ditans guttura.*

*Accende lumen sensibus:  
Infunde amorem cordibus:*

*Infirmi nostri corporis  
Virtute firmans perpeti.*

*Hostem repellas longius,  
Pacemque dones protinus;  
Ductore sic te praevio  
Vitemus omne noxium*

*Per te sciamus da Patrem,  
Noscamus atque Filium,  
Te utriusque Spiritum  
Credamus omni tempore.*

*Stanza taken from the  
Munich manuscript  
(see above)*

*Glória Patri Domino,  
Natoque, qui a mortuis  
Deo sit gloria!*

*Surrexisti, ac Paraclete,  
In saeculorum saecula,  
Amen.*

## Gustav Mahler

*Veni creator spiritus  
Mentes tuorum visita  
Imple suprema gratia,  
Quae tu creasti pectora!*

*Qui Paracletus diceris  
Donum Dei altissimi,  
Fons vivus, ignis, caritas,  
Et spiritualis unctio.*

*Infirmi nostri corporis  
Virtute firmans perpeti*

*Accende lumen sensibus:  
Infunde amorem cordibus:*

*Hostem repellas longius,  
Pacemque dones protinus;  
Ductore sic te praevio  
Vitumus omne pessimum  
Tu septiformis munere,  
Dextrae paternae digiti!  
Per te sciamus da Patrem,  
Noscamus atque Filium,  
Credamus Spiritum  
Omni tempore.*

*Da gaudiorum praemia  
Da gratiarum munera,  
Dissolve litis vincula,*

*Gloria Patri Domino  
Natoque qui a mortuis  
Deo sit gloria!*

*Et Filio qui mortuis  
Surrexisti, ac Paraclete,  
In saeculorum saecula*

## English Translation

*Come, Holy Ghost, Creator come,  
From the bright heavenly throne.  
Come, take possession of our souls,  
And Make them all Thine own.*

*Thou who art called the Paraclete,  
Best Gift of God above,  
Living fountain, fire, charitable love,  
Sweet Unction, and True Love!*

*With Thy strength which ne'er decays  
Confirm our mortal frame*

*Kindle a light in our senses,  
With love our hearts inflame*

*Far from us drive our hellish foe,  
True peace unto us bring.  
And through all perils guide us safe  
Beneath Thy sacred wing.  
Thou who are sevenfold in Thy grace,  
Finger of God's right hand,  
Through Thee may we the Father know,  
Through Thee the Eternal Son,  
And Thee, the Spirit of them Both  
Be worshipped for all time.*

*Give us the heavenly joy  
Give us Your divine grace,  
Appease our human quarrels*

*All Glory to the Father be,  
And to the risen Son;  
God and to the Son*

*Who was born and from the dead  
The same to Thee, O Paraclete,  
While endless ages run.*

## Bars

1-45 (Theme A)

46-80 (Theme B)

80-90

91-108

108-22 (*Veni Creator*)

122-140 Orchestral Interlude

142-68 Closing section (Theme C)

169-216 Interlude

218-53 (Theme D)

254-61: Interlude

262-89 (Theme E)

290-307

308-11

312-32

333-49

349-66

366-412: *Accende*

413-416 *Veni Creator*

442-74

475-88: *Ductore te praevio*

488-507: Interlude

508-80

<sup>1</sup> These two lines were added by Mahler, making the 'Doxology' more explicit than in the original text of the stanza, using the same words but replacing 'Domino' with 'Deo', and 'Nato' with 'Filio'. LaGrange, Henry-Louis de. *Gustav Mahler: Volume III Vienna: Triumph and Disillusion (1904-1907)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 895.

### English Translation

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator come,  
From the bright heavenly throne.  
Come, take possession of our souls,  
And Make them all Thine own.

Thou who art called the Paraclete,  
Best Gift of God above,  
Living fountain, fire, charitable love,  
Sweet Unction, and True Love!

With Thy strength which ne'er decays  
Confirm our mortal frame

Kindle a light in our senses.  
With love our hearts inflame

Far from us drive our hellish foe,  
True peace unto us bring.  
And through all perils guide us safe  
Beneath Thy sacred wing.  
Thou who are sevenfold in Thy grace,  
Finger of God's right hand.  
Through Thee may we the Father know,  
Through Thee the Eternal Son,  
And Thee, the Spirit of them Both  
Be worshipped for all time.

Give us the heavenly joy  
Give us Your divine grace,  
Appease our human quarrels

All Glory to the Father be,  
And to the risen Son;  
God and to the Son

Who was born and from the dead  
The same to Thee, O Paraclete,  
While endless ages run.

### Bars

1-45 (Theme A)

46-80 (Theme B)

80-90

91-108

108-22 (*Veni Creator*)

122-140 Orchestral Interlude

142-68 Closing section (Theme C)

169-216 Interlude

218-53 (Theme D)

254-61: Interlude

262-89 (Theme E)

290-307

308-11

312-32

333-49

349-66

366-412: *Accende*

413-416 *Veni Creator*

442-74

475-88: *Ductore te praevio*

488-507: Interlude

508-80

# APPENDIX B<sup>1</sup>

Veni creator spiritus,  
 Mentis tuorum visita,  
 Imple superna gratia  
 quae tu creasti pectora.  
 Qui <sup>diceris</sup> paracletus <sup>paracletus</sup> diceris  
 Donum Dei altissimi,  
 Fons omnis ignis caritas  
 et spiritalis unctio,  
 Accende lumen sensibus  
 infunde amorem cordibus  
 hostem repelles longius  
 pacemque domos protinus  
 ductor2 sic te praevisto  
 vitemus omne noxium  
 gloria Patri Domino

Et tuque qui a mortuis  
 surrexisti ac Paraclete  
 in saeculorum saecula.  
 Amen

4 In forma vestri corporis  
 virtute vivens perpetuo

3 In symphonis numero  
 dignis polens delectare  
 tu recte promissum Patris  
 sermone dabas gubernas

6 Tu te videmus da Patrem  
 noscimus atque filium  
 laque "vinctus spiritum  
 ostendimus omni temporis

<sup>1</sup> Constantin Floros, 212.

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