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Mahler and the Taking Back of the Ninth

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It is safe to say that no work of Beethoven shaped his posthumous image among musicians and among the general public as profoundly as the Finale of the Ninth Symphony.[1] The composer's ideological testament aligned him with the vision articulated most influentially by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who saw man as originally good and whole, his capacities in harmony with one another and he himself in harmony with his fellow men, but subsequently corrupted by the multiple artificial needs bred by modern civilization; as a result, man, now alienated from himself and his fellows, came to need a force to make him and his society whole again, a bond the magic of which binds again what fashion had strictly divided ("Zauber bindet wieder, was die Mode streng geteilt"), ensuring that all men become brothers ("Alle Menschen werden Brüder")—the words are, of course, those Friedrich Schiller's *Ode to Joy*. It is this hopeful, modern, progressive vision of earthly redemption that is promised by the Finale of the Ninth.

Setting Schiller's *Ode to Joy* in the Finale of the Ninth Symphony was the one occasion in his late work when Beethoven tried to keep faith with

1 The interpretation of the work proposed in the first two paragraphs of the present paper is more fully developed in my *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow: An Essay on the Origins of Musical Modernity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2017), 293–352.

Mahler i odwołanie Dziewiątej Symfonii

the ideal of engagement in the historical social world of emancipating autonomous humanity—even in the inhospitable context of post-Napoleonic Europe's reassembled monarchies, which allowed most members of the composer's educated audience little room for substantial involvement in public life. In a world in which one could no longer realistically expect all men to become brothers on earth, the ideal of *fraternité* was displaced into a realm no less transcendent than that in which the ideal of a loving father must dwell—both equally the subject of wistful nostalgia for original wholeness and utopian longing for the disalienated future of restored harmony. To the situation in which the German middle classes had to give up any desire for directly exercising political power in their own name Beethoven responded by means of a symbolic art in which the desired outcome of human history was represented as utopian, an unforgotten ideal of fraternity accessible, if at all, only in some unspecified future. The Ninth was an artistic exercise in political metaphysics.

It was this legacy, the idea of a symphony as a vehicle for metaphysical longings, that Mahler picked up in his earlier symphonic work. His Second and Third Symphonies, in particular, tread unmistakably in the wake of the Ninth, both involving, for the first time in a significant Viennese symphony since Beethoven, substantial vocal forces, and both culminating in personal metaphysical visions.

The text of the Finale of the Second Symphony, for instance, begins with the initial two stanzas of a 1758 poem, *Die Auferstehung* ("The Resurrection"), designed by its author, the protestant Hamburg poet Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock, to be sung during the Easter service, but traditionally sung at funerals. Klopstock's poem is a personal statement of confident hope in his own resurrection of the body. After the second stanza, Mahler drops Klopstock's poem and supplies a text of his own, leading to an emphatic culmination: "I shall die in order to live!" ("Sterben werd'ich, um zu leben!").

The affirmations heard in the Finale until that point do not overstep the boundaries of orthodox Christianity, whether Protestant or Catholic: the resurrection to the eternal life retrospectively endows the sufferings

of earthly existence with sense. But in the Christian worldview resurrection achieves this effect because it goes hand in hand with the Last Judgment, the final separation of the good from the wicked. Mahler's last stanza, however, introduces a new and potentially heterodox thought: "What you fought for will carry you to God!" ("Was du geschlagen, zu Gott wird es dich tragen!"). With these final words Mahler swerves from the idea of personal resurrection and immortal life as either the gift of God's mercy or the reward for good works to the idea that it is the outcome of striving itself, an idea strikingly similar to the one expressed by the angel who carries Faust's immortal part upwards in the final scene of Goethe's tragedy: "Who ever strives with all his power, / We are allowed to save." ("Wer immer strebend sich bemüht / Den können wir erlösen.")[2] It is the spirit of Goethe, not of Dante, that presides over Mahler's symphony. As with Goethe, the poet Mahler revered above all others,[3] the symphony knows no Last Judgment, no final separation of the saved from the damned, no theology of the Cross. ("The theology of the Cross found no entrance into the *Faust* poem," writes Albrecht Schöne.[4]) The allusions to *Dies irae* heard in the opening movement and again in the earlier part of the Finale have been left behind by the time the choir intones Klopstock's poem: *all* that have strived may be saved. The Second Symphony ends with a suggestion of a Faustian vision of *apokatastasis panton*, the restitution of all things at the end of time or universal redemption (in which even the devil himself is included), a heterodox vision stemming from Origen in the third century and rejected by the Church. To be sure, at this stage it is no more than a mere suggestion, which is perhaps why Mahler felt compelled to return

2 Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust*, 11936–37, trans. Stuart Atkins, in Goethe, *Faust I & II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 301.

3 Goethe's works "occupied the position of a central sun in the composer's literary firmament…" in Jens Malte Fischer, *Gustav Mahler*, trans. Stewart Spencer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 133.

4 "Die Theologie des Kreuzes hat keinen Eingang gefunden in die *Faust*-Dichtung." Albrecht Schöne, *Kommentare* in Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 7/2 (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1994), 784.

to this vision to give it a fuller and this time explicitly Goethean treatment again in the Eighth.[5]

Like so many of the modern intellectuals and artists since at least the time of Goethe, indifferent or hostile to organized religion, but recognizing the hunger for transcendence as the essential mark of human condition, Mahler mined the images, myths, and doctrines of the inherited European religious, artistic, and philosophical tradition to construct an outlook that was his own and yet could be understood by, and shared with, his listeners. He put together his worldview in a similar way in which he put together his symphonic edifices, by the method of *bricolage*, playing with building blocks and creating out of the most heterogeneous materials—*Dies irae*, *Faust*, the Ninth, the Book of Revelation, the *Wunderhorn*, and much else—something personal and new.

But between the metaphysical visions of the early symphonies and that of the Eighth Mahler composed three symphonies, the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh, that have to be considered resolutely anti-metaphysical, and indeed have been interpreted as such since at least 1920, when Hans Ferdinand Redlich suggested that these symphonies represented a turn away from metaphysics.[6]

In music, the turn away from metaphysics is practically synonymous with the turn away from romanticism. The reason for this is simple. Recall that E.T.A. Hoffmann famously claimed, in a review of Beethoven's instrumental music and most specifically of his Fifth Symphony, that music "is the most romantic of all arts, ... since its only subject-matter is infinity."[7]

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5 For the notion of *apokatastasis* and its applicability to the ending of *Faust*, see Schöne, *Kommentare*, 784–95. To be sure, the suggestion that Origen's doctrine found its expression in Goethe's tragedy was proposed only in 1932 (see Schöne, *Kommentare*, 789) and hence could not have been known to Mahler. What matters here is Mahler's dependence on Goethe, not his knowledge of the sources of the poet's ideas.

6 See Hans F. Redlich, "Die Welt der V., VI. und VII. Sinfonie Mahlers," *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 2/7–8 (1920), 265–8.

7 Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann, "Beethoven's Instrumental Music," in *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: "Kreisleriana", "The Poet and the Composer", Music Criticism*, ed. David Charlton, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 96.

In effect, Hoffmann equated romanticism with a striving for transcendence. It is appropriate, then, that the earliest sign that Mahler might have had enough, for the time being at least, of the romantic strivings is the neo-classical pastiche of the opening movement of his Fourth Symphony. If the culminating portion of the development of the first movement of the Third, a Dionysian riot that was Mahler's most savage music to date, could be considered an anticipation by almost two decades of *The Rite of Spring*, the opening movement of the Fourth was his anticipation of *Pulcinella*.

But the Fifth and Seventh went further, shifting the neo-classical accent from the opening to the closing movement of the symphony and thus allowing it to have the last word, to define the character of the whole work. The index of this shift was the very form chosen for the movements, both labeled in Mahler's scores as *Rondo-Finale*, a label designed to provoke with its anachronistic, anti-romantic implications. (I shall not discuss here the very different strategy chosen for the Sixth Symphony.)

The form of the classical symphonic rondo-finale is a variant of the symphonic allegro form, beginning with the exposition of the allegro (with the main theme taking the role of the A-section and the subsidiary theme of the B-section), interpolating a repetition of the A-section between the exposition and the development, continuing with the development (section C), and ending with the recapitulation (sections A and B) and coda (section A). In short, the rondo is just like the allegro, except that it interpolates an extra A-section between the exposition and development, and another one at the end: ABACABA instead of ABCAB.

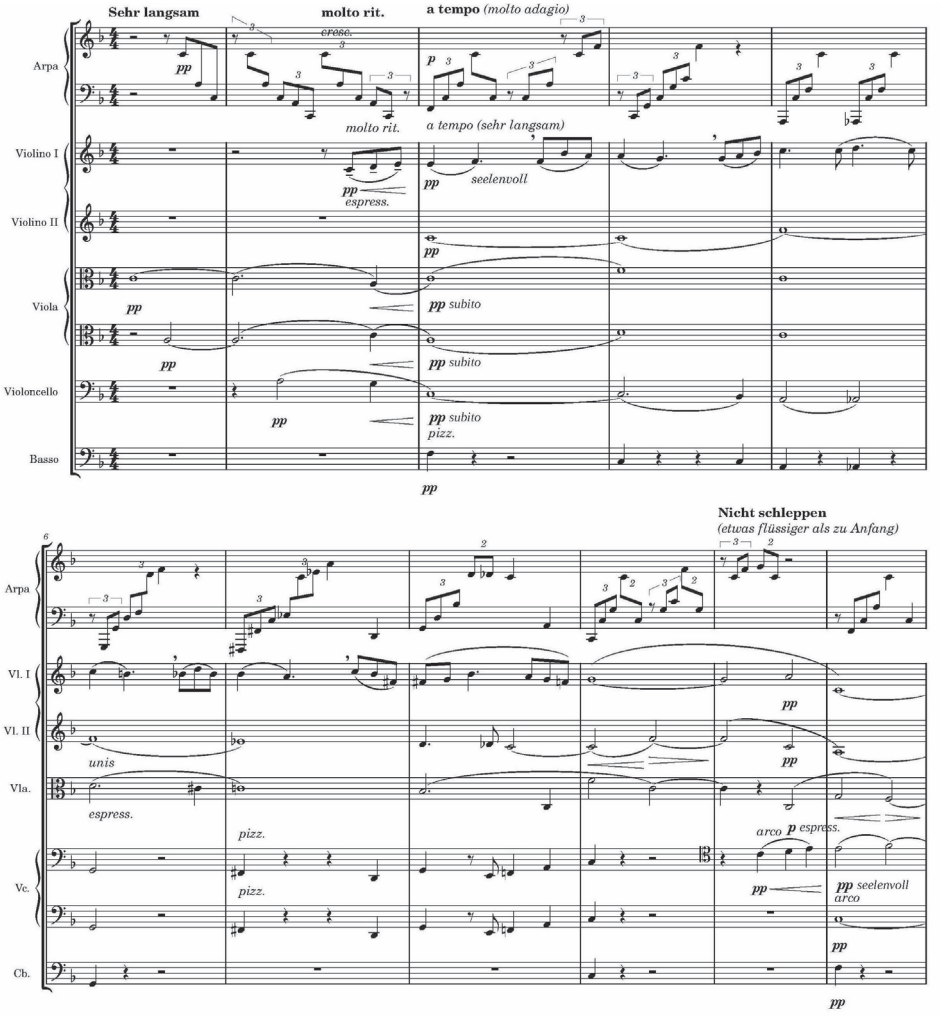
Mahler was clearly cognizant of this background, but complicated the form of his Rondo-Finales in an unprecedented way: formally, these must surely count among his most complex, and least understood, movements. In the Rondo-Finale of the Fifth (the only one I shall discuss here), the main complicating factor is created by the interpolation of one more, third, theme into the movement; together with the music that surrounds it, this introduces an extra formal unit (let's label it with the letter X). Section X expands the form at three points: first, right before the development, that is between the first return of section A and section C; second,

in the middle of the development, hence dividing section C into two parts (to make clear that these are two parts of a single section, Mahler begins each part similarly); and third, within the coda which is thus also divided into two parts. Instead of the usual ABACABA, we get ABAXC1XC2ABA1XA2.

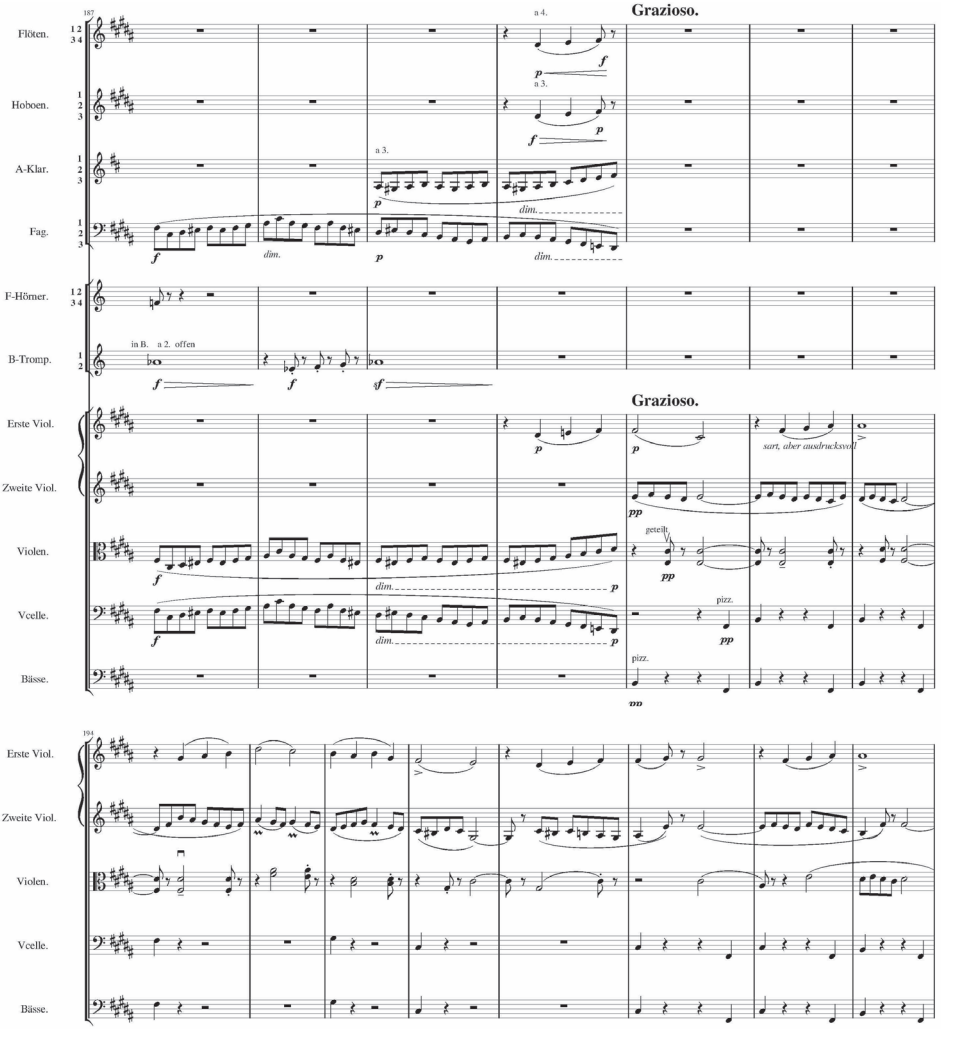
This added complication is not introduced for its own sake. Rather, it is motivated by the wish to integrate into the Finale much of the preceding music, to make of it a compelling summit and summation of the symphony. Theme 3 (that is, section X) is calculated for maximum contrast with the remaining music of the movement. Where themes 1 and 2 emphasize, as we shall see, their classical heritage and polyphony, this one is a warmly romantic monophonic cantilena of the first violins, its very texture reminiscent of the movement that preceded the Finale, the famous (or notorious) Adagietto. And not only the texture: in fact, theme 3 is clearly a variant of the Adagietto theme, stressing like its slow-tempo model the repeated use of the three-even-notes upbeat ascending stepwise to a longer accented downbeat. Compare the beginning of the Adagietto theme (see Example 1) with that of the third theme of the Rondo-Finale (see Example 2). The last portion of theme 3, in particular, is very close to the last portion of the Adagietto's central section: compare the ending of theme 3 (see Example 3) with the central portion of the Adagietto (see Example 4). It is precisely this portion of the Adagietto cantilena that recalls the Glance motive from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* with particular insistence and clarity (see Example 5).

At its first and second appearance, theme 3 is marked *Grazioso* and the first time around the violins are asked to play "tenderly, but expressively" ("zart, aber ausdrucksvoll"). The contrast with the preceding and following neo-classical *allegro giocoso* music is so pronounced that theme 3 sounds like a reminiscence of something heard earlier (it is a reminiscence of the Adagietto, of course) rather than a normal continuation of the course of the Rondo, a fragment of the past rather than the present. It sounds, in short, like an alien body that interrupts and disturbs the normal flow of the music.

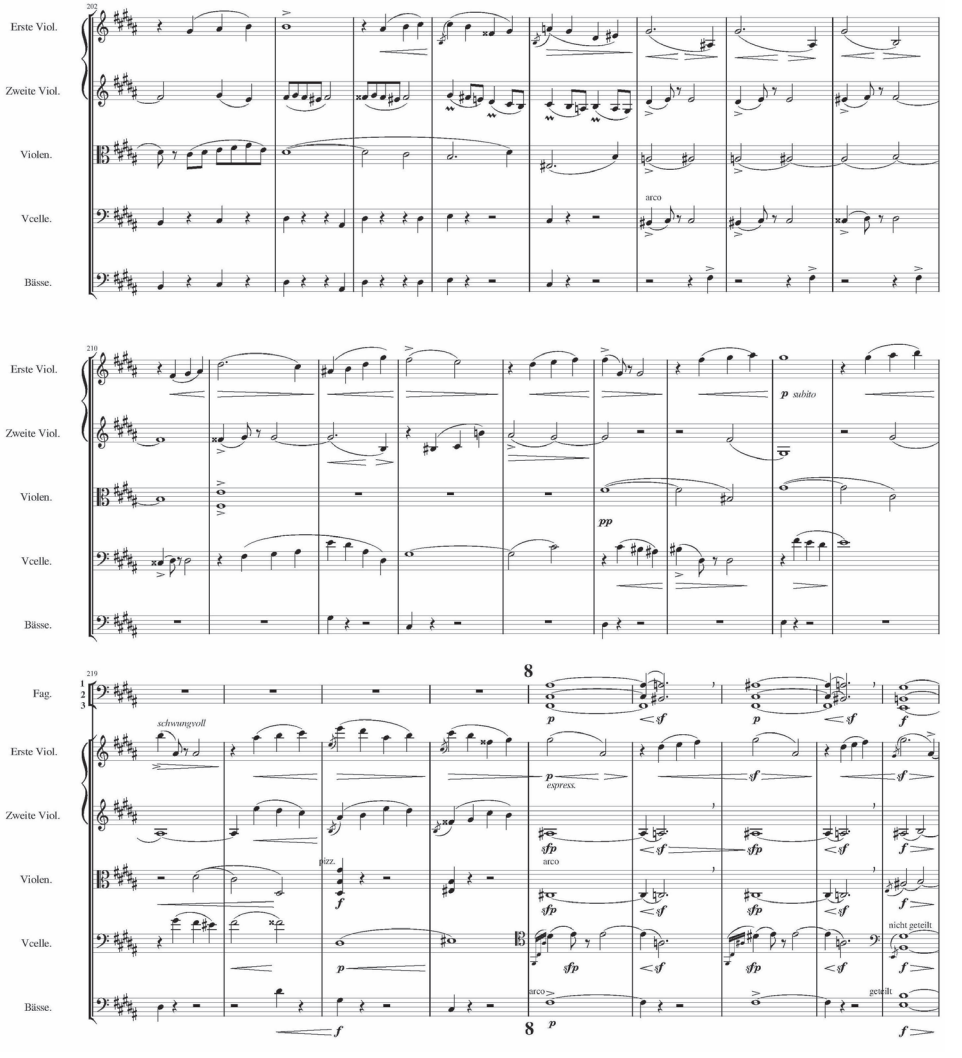
Example 1. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 4. Adagietto, mm. 1–6



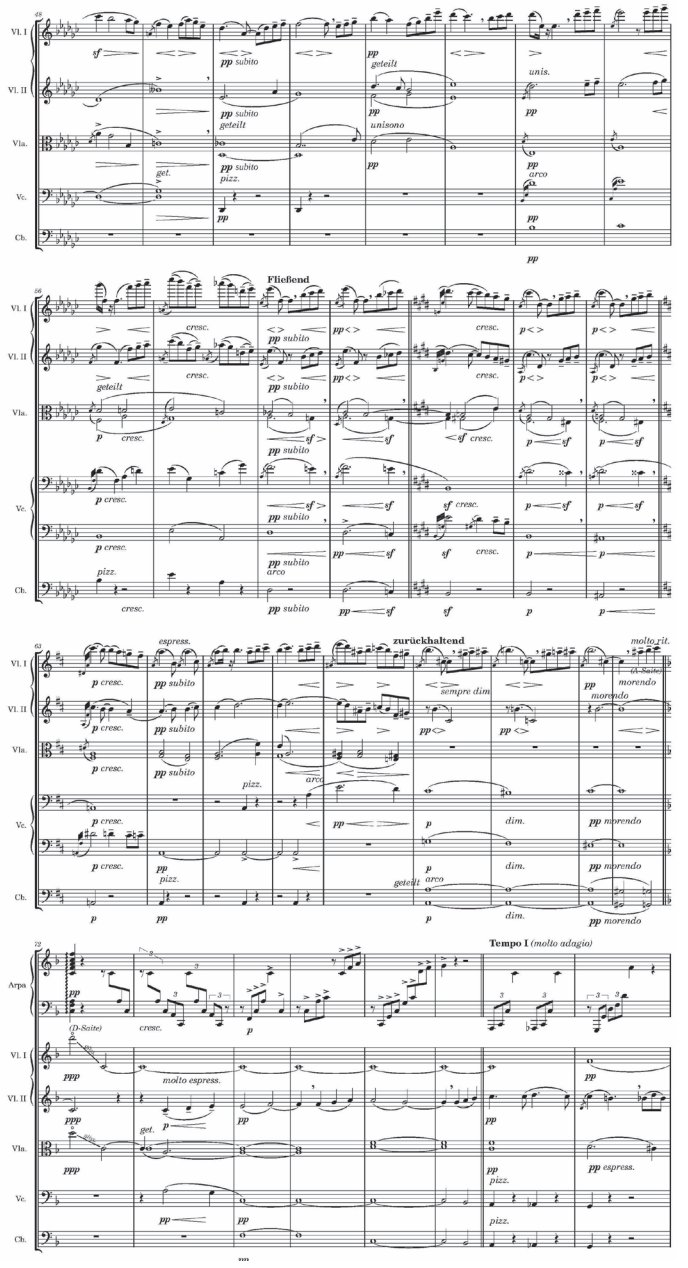
Example 2. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 191–97



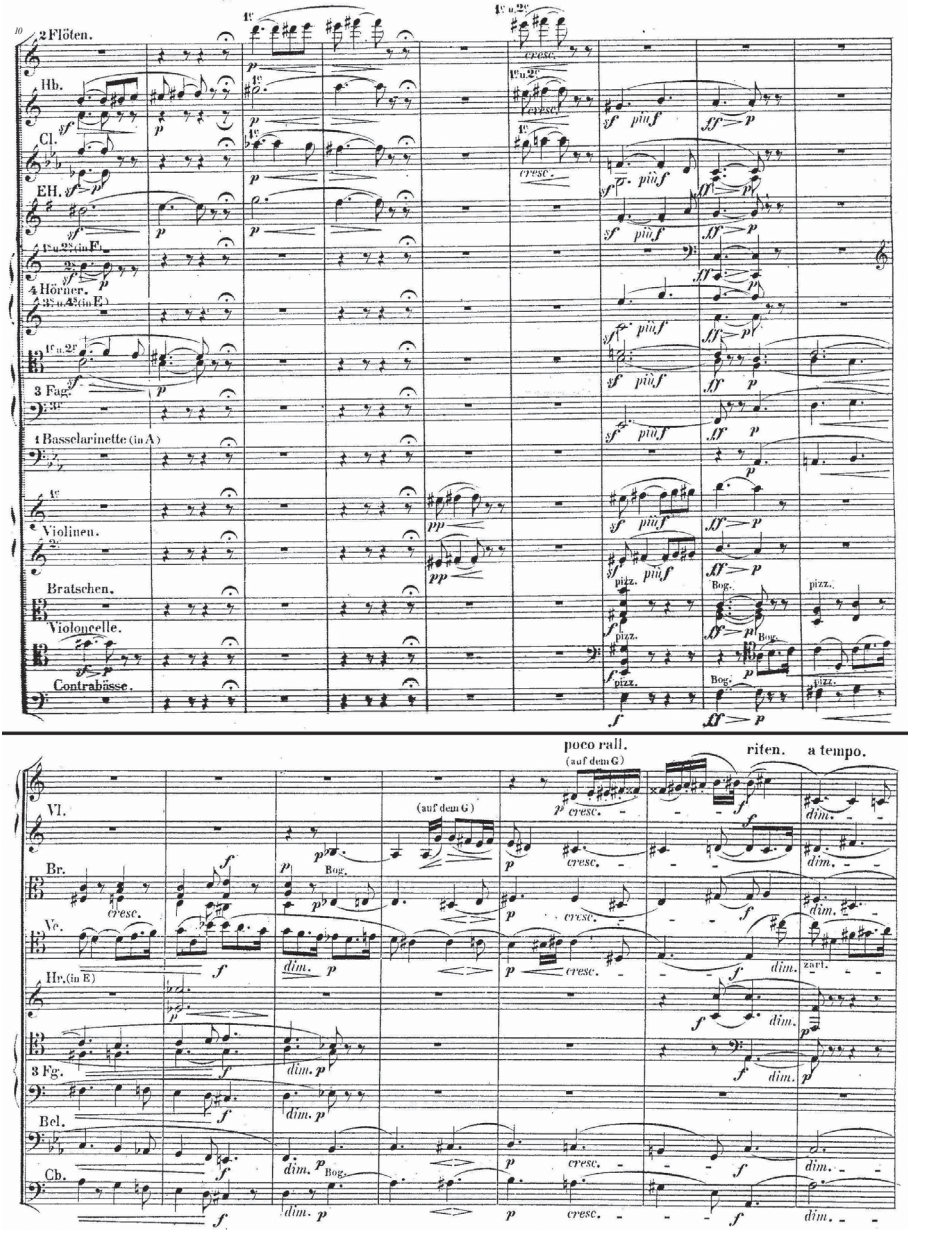
Example 3. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 207–27



Example 4. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 4. Adagietto, mm. 50–72



Example 5. Richard Wagner, *Tristan und Isolde*, Einleitung, mm. 17–22

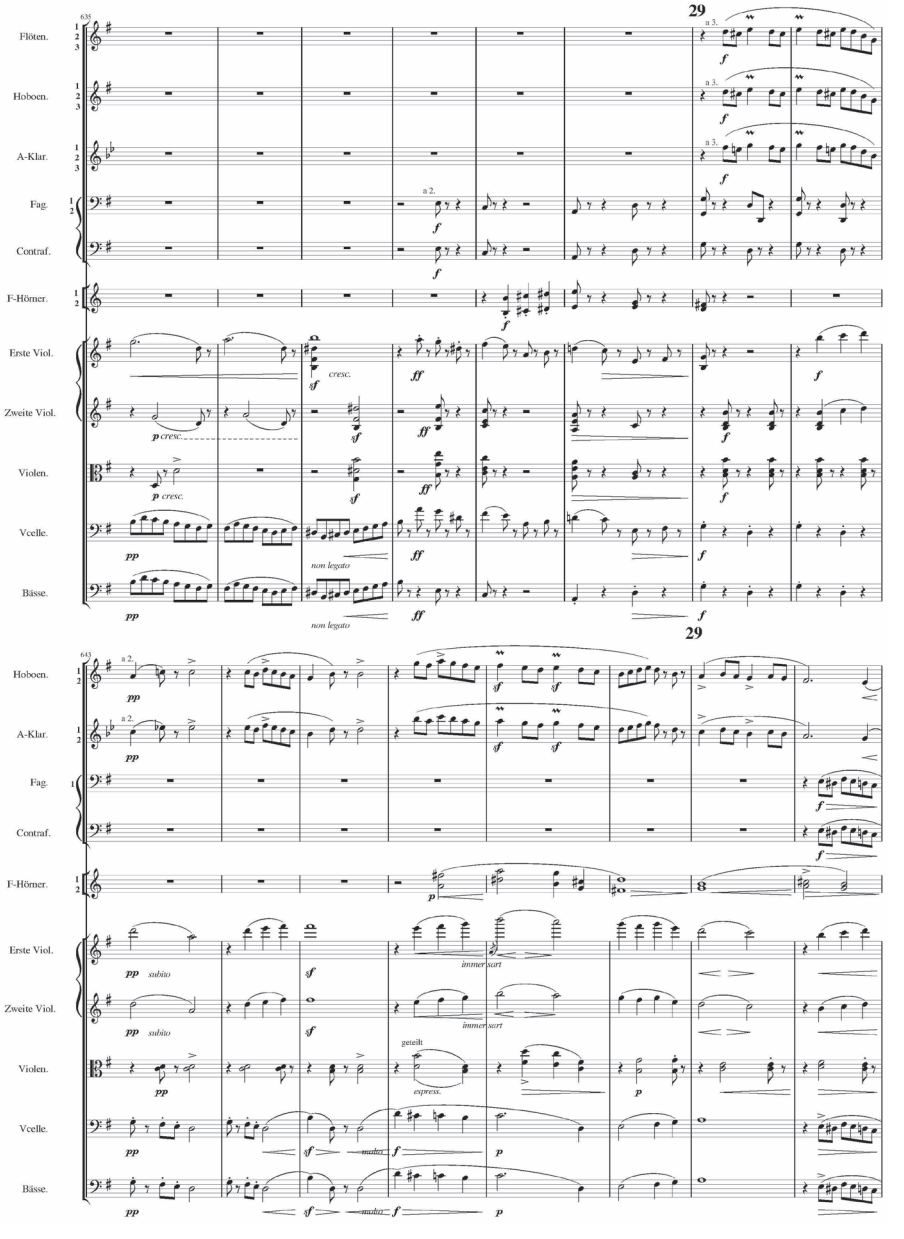


It is only at its third and last appearance that the theme is fully integrated into the movement. No longer marked *Grazioso*, its character is made to conform to the rest of the music. But there is a price to be paid for this reintegration: the gracious and tender melody is not naturally *giocoso* and, when forced to conform to the general character of the movement, it comes close to becoming its own parody (see Example 6). The two measures of woodwind counterpoint that introduce the theme, in particular, make it sound like a quadrille and bring the music into the proximity of the defensive and burlesque *Tristan* parodies with which musicians at the turn of the century tried to exorcise the over-potent fluids reaching them from Bayreuth, the world of Emmanuel Chabrier's *Souvenirs de Munich* or Debussy's *Golliwog's Cakewalk*. It is thus that the cool Rondo neutralizes the memory of the overheated Adagietto. After the decades of Wagnerism, this is Mahler's *rappel à l'ordre*. Clearly, then, the formal anomaly created by the interpolation into the rondo form of the three extra X sections has been motivated by Mahler's wish both to integrate the preceding Adagietto into the Rondo-Finale *and* to exorcize its spirit.

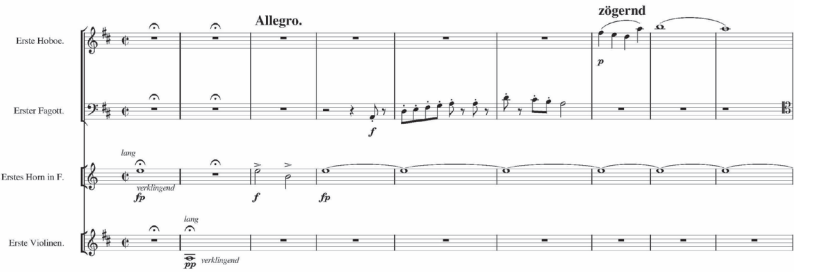
The neo-classical order to which the Adagietto is recalled is defined by the other two themes of the Rondo, by its sections A and B. Theme 1, preceded by a brief introduction in which solo woodwinds individually respond, like birds waking up in the forest, to a horn call, searching for the theme's motives, key, and character, is itself initiated by the horns and dominated by woodwinds. In the introduction, the very first motive that responds to the horn call, that of the bassoon (see Example 7), is derived from an 1896 *Wunderhorn* song, "Lob des hohen Verstands", in which a musical contest between a cuckoo and a nightingale is decided by the judge, a donkey, in favor of the former—a "song against the critics," says Adorno.[8] But the point of the quotation is not to poke fun at the long-eared critics. Rather, the gesture is one of auto-irony: the bassoon motive belongs to the cuckoo, as if Mahler wanted to say with the donkey, Enough of the preceding sublimities, enough of the lovely singing of the

8 Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 22.

Example 6. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 641–49

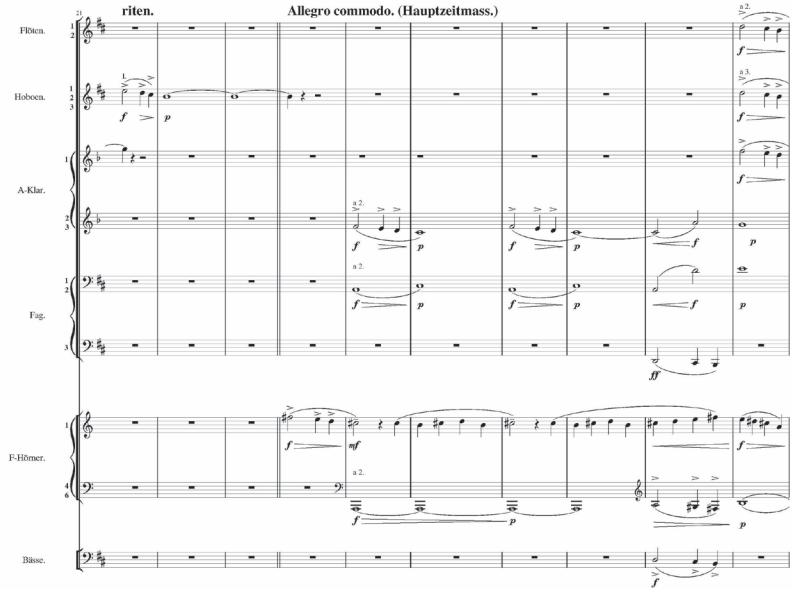


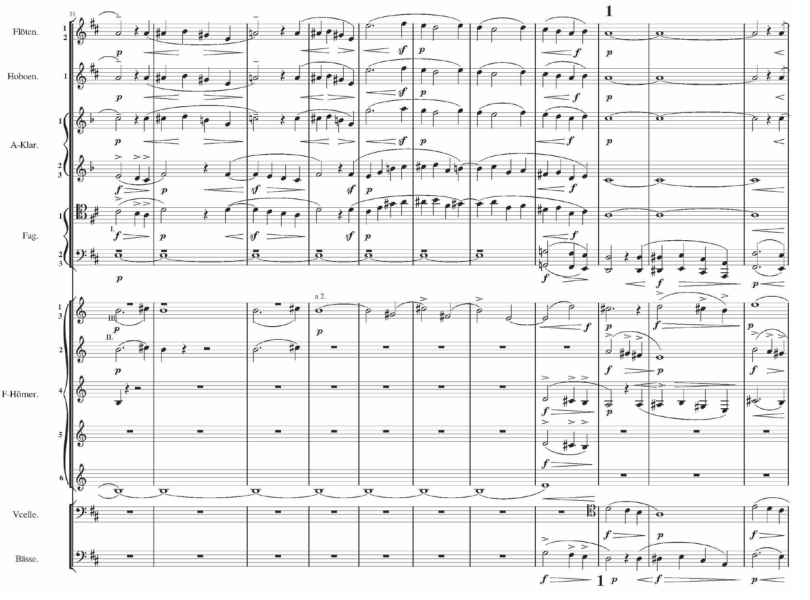
Example 7. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 1–6



nightingale, it only confuses me! From the start, the Finale announces that it will search for an answer to the problems raised in Part 1 of the symphony not in some transcendent realm, but right here on earth, and that down-to-earth it will stay. The heavily accented downbeat beginning of the theme itself with its background of an open-fifth pedal point plunge us on the spot into the *giocoso* rustic ambience of a classical symphonic finale (see Example 8).

Example 8. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, Rondo-Finale, mm. 24–39



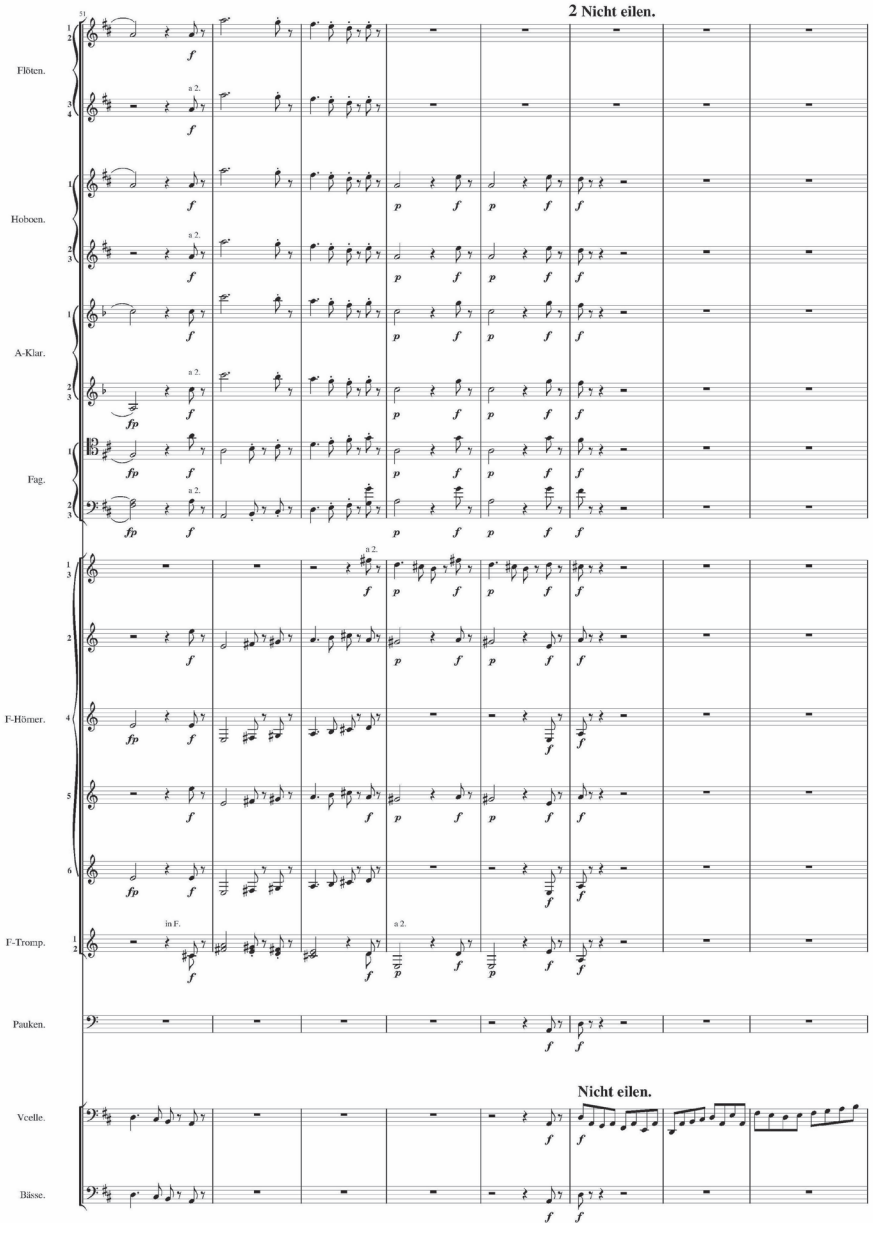


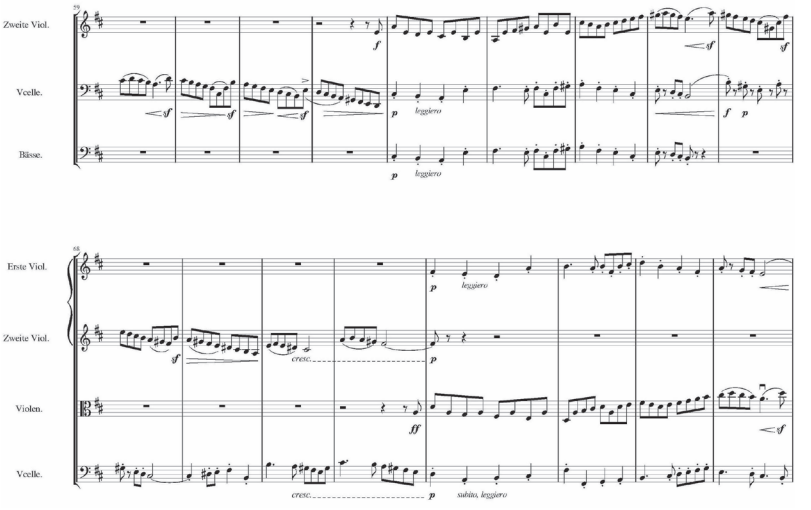
Theme 2, in turn, is a busy string-dominated fugato moving mostly in even eighth notes, additionally enriched with cocky counterpoints. And thus section B too projects the decisively unromantic aura of a boisterous and humorous neo-classical Finale (see Example 9).

The role of section X, we have seen, was to integrate the Adagietto into the movement and to exorcize its passionate spirit. But if classicism and humor is fully to triumph over the romantic sublimity, the Rondo-Finale needs also to reach back to the first part of the symphony and somehow overcome its tragic and passionate tone. This is the role of the movement's huge developmental coda that begins in m. 581.

The goal of the coda, of the movement, and actually of the whole symphony, is the apotheosis and the return to the D-major tonic at m. 711 (the tonic has not been heard since the recapitulation of section A). The dominant preparation of this return at m. 693 is kept in the minor mode so that the arrival of the major tonic at m. 711 will be heard as a forceful and triumphant breakthrough, rather than a logical and inevitable outcome (see Example 10).

Example 9. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 56–72

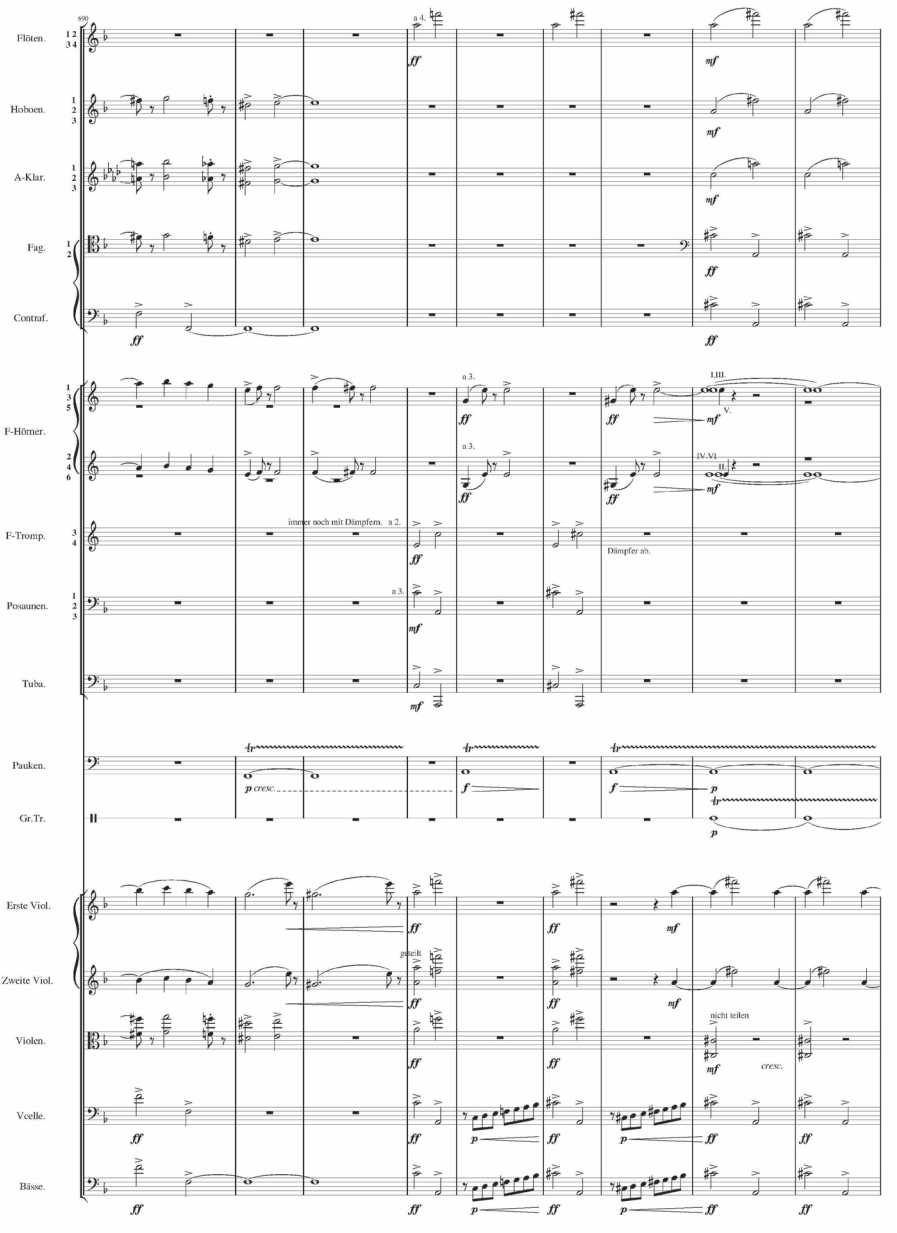


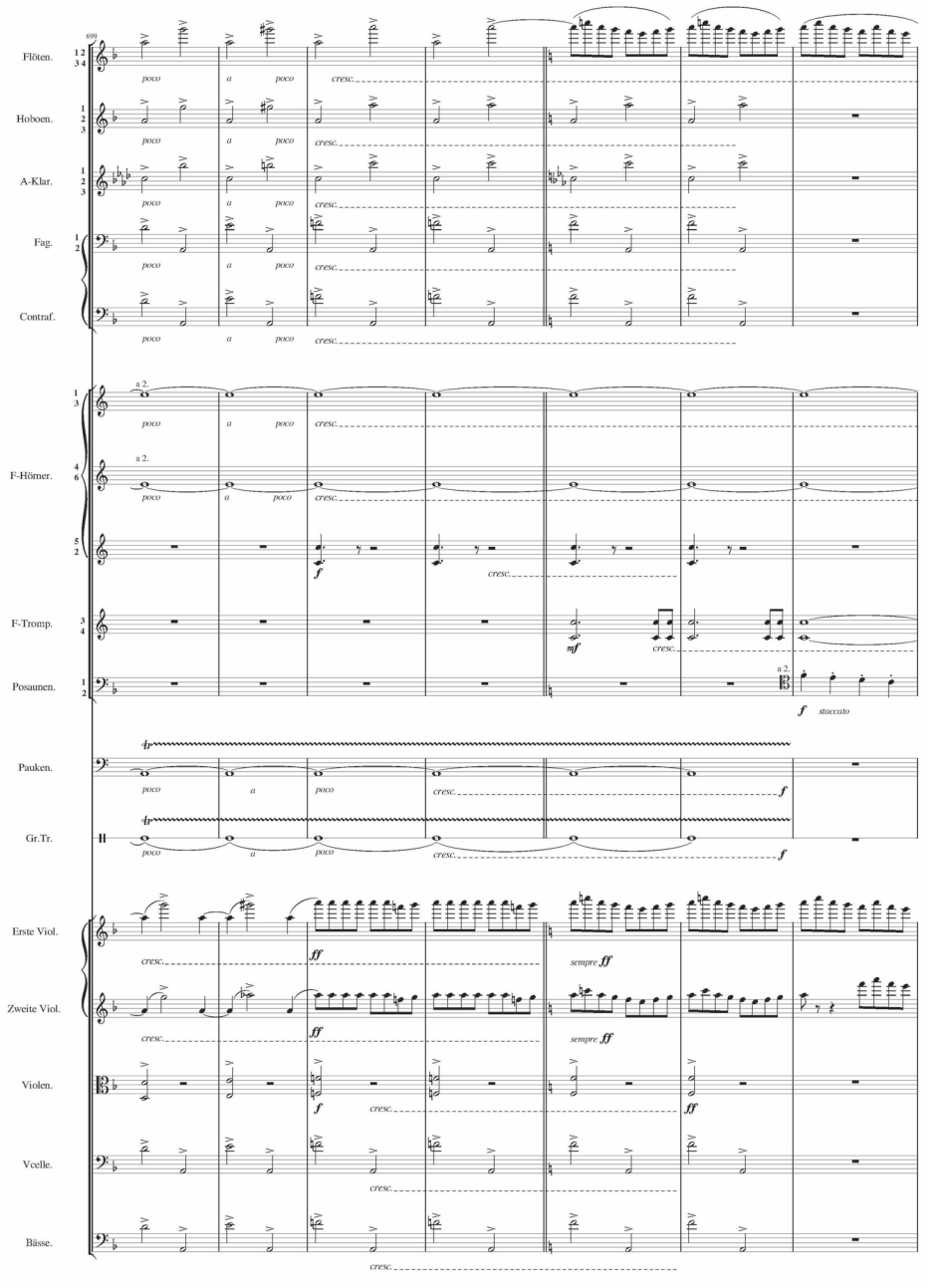


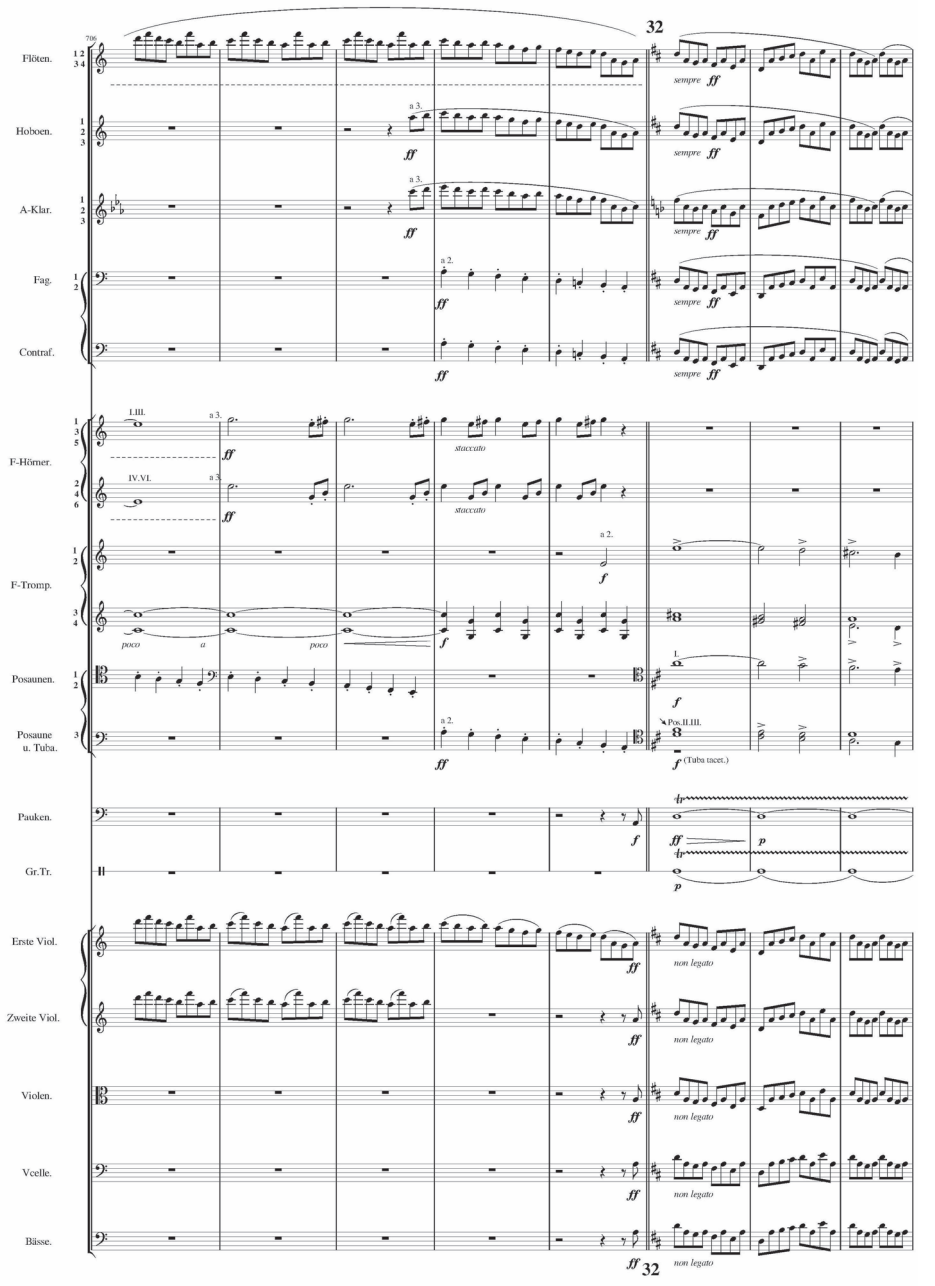
The apotheosis itself is where a connection is made with the first part of the symphony. The passage is, namely, closely related to the apotheosis within the coda of the second movement (the apotheosis begins in m. 464 of the second movement). Also that passage was in the key of D major, but within the context of the second movement the key represented the subdominant and hence the triumphant impression the passage made could not be quite final. Now, in the rondo, this impression is strengthened and corrected, since the key is unmistakably the tonic. The apotheosis of the Finale completes the one of the second movement, replaces its tentative character with one of utter conviction.

More interesting still are the motivic relationships between the two apotheoses. The first phrase of the one in the Finale is only loosely related to the one in the second movement: the resemblance is limited to that of the general triumphant character of the music, the fact that the main melodies are in both cases projected by the trumpets, and that they both begin with an upward jump of an octave followed by a stepwise descent. Compare the opening of the apotheosis of the second movement (see Example 11) with the opening of the apotheosis of the Finale (see Example 12). But if in the first phrase of the final apotheosis the resemblance to the one in the second movement is still vague, the second phrase is unmistakably

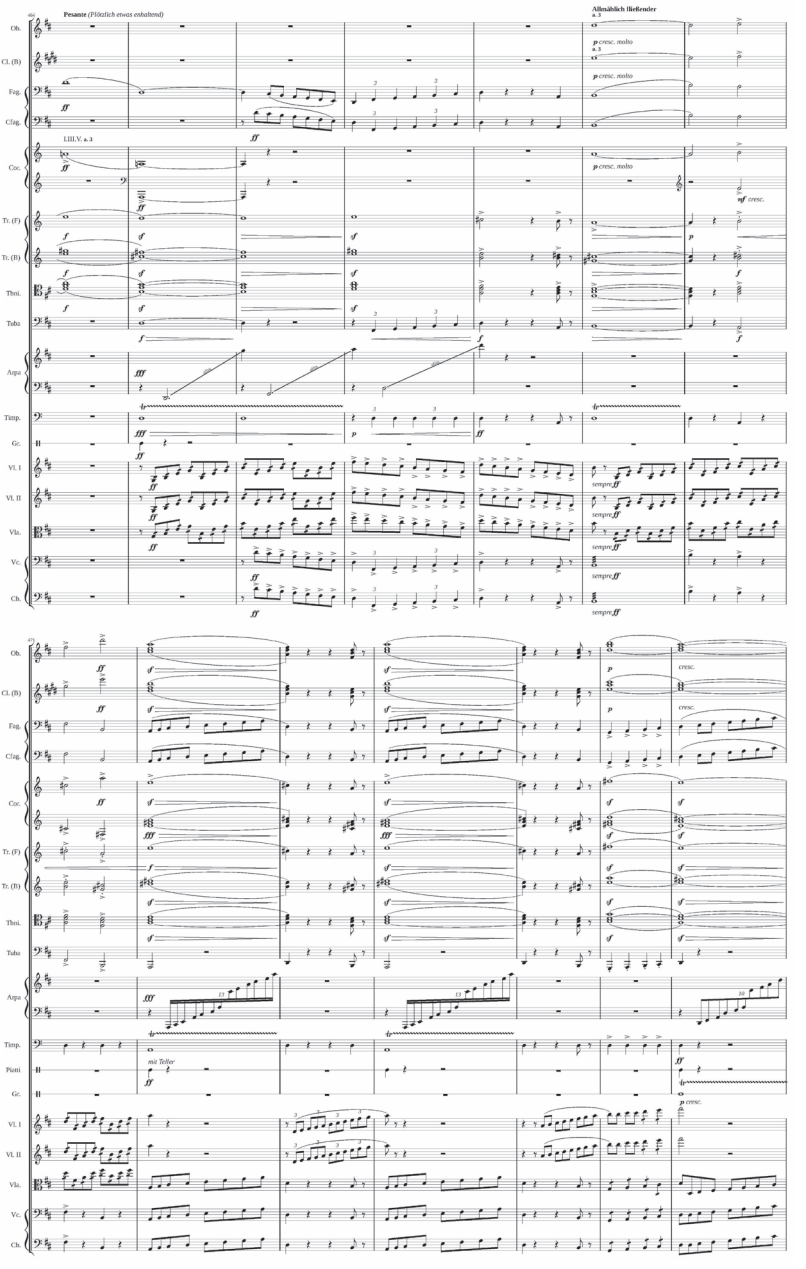
Example 10. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 693–711

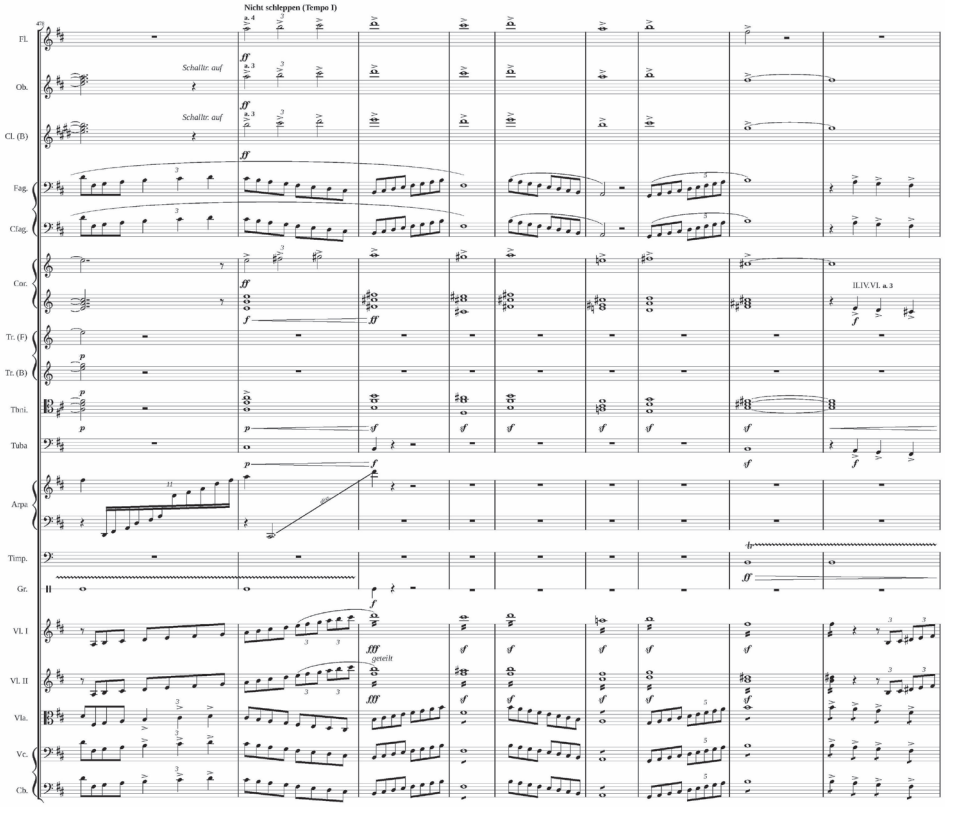



Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Pauken.
Gr.Tr.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
poco
a
cresc.
a 2.
f
mf
staccato
ff
sempre ff


706
32
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Gr.Tr.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
sempre ff
non legato
(Tuba tacet.)
32

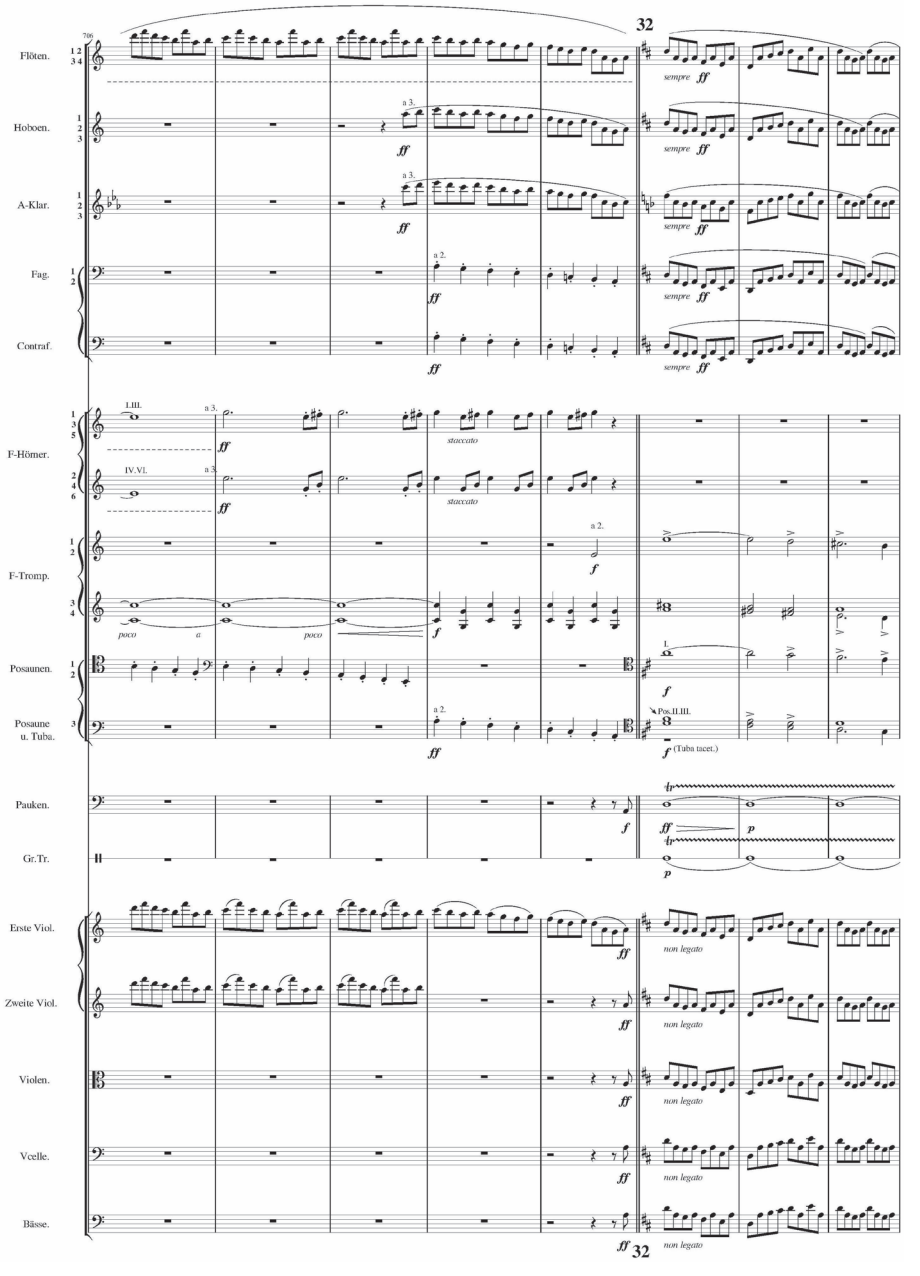
Example 11. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 2. Stürmisch bewegt, mm. 464–78

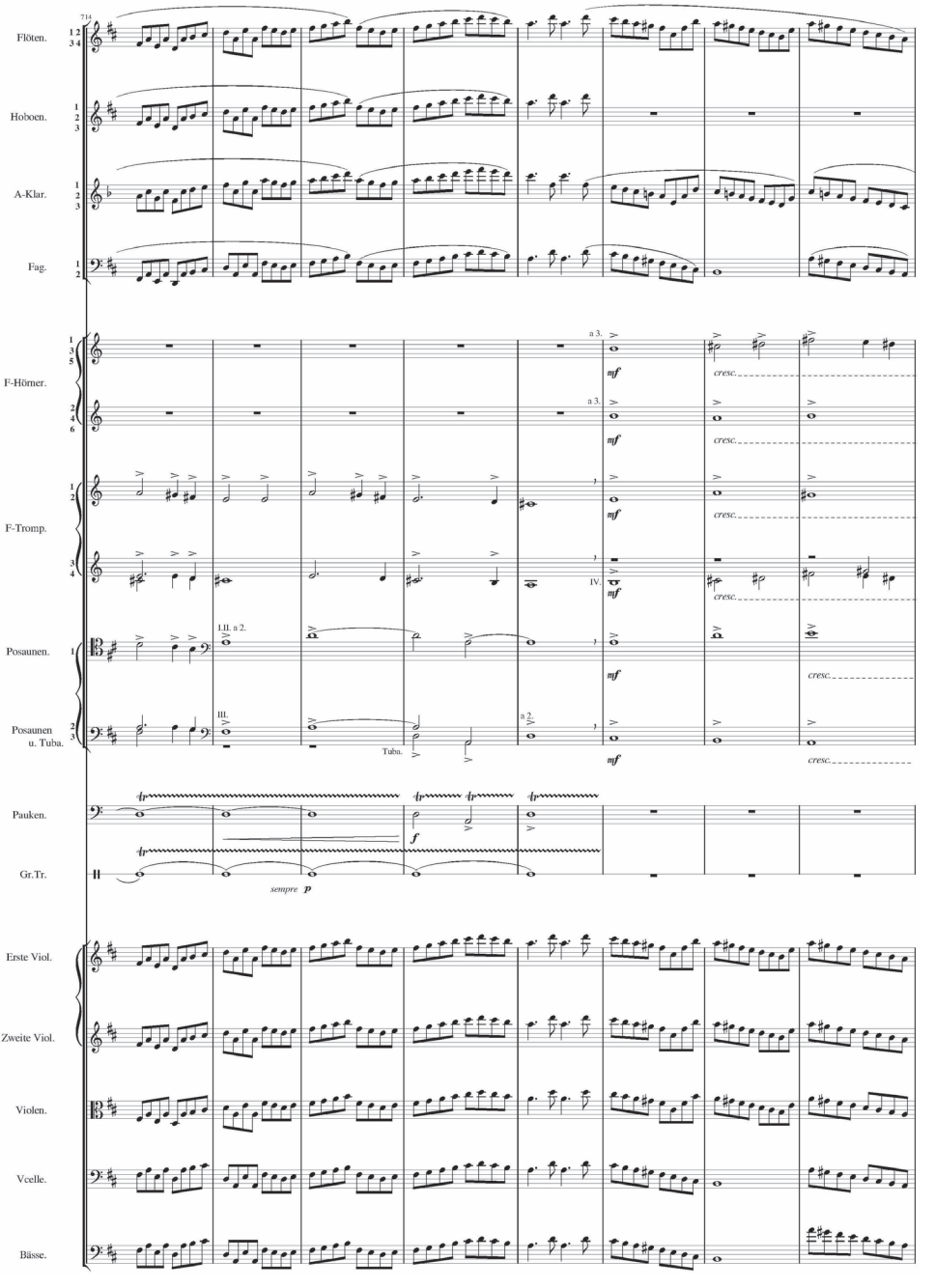


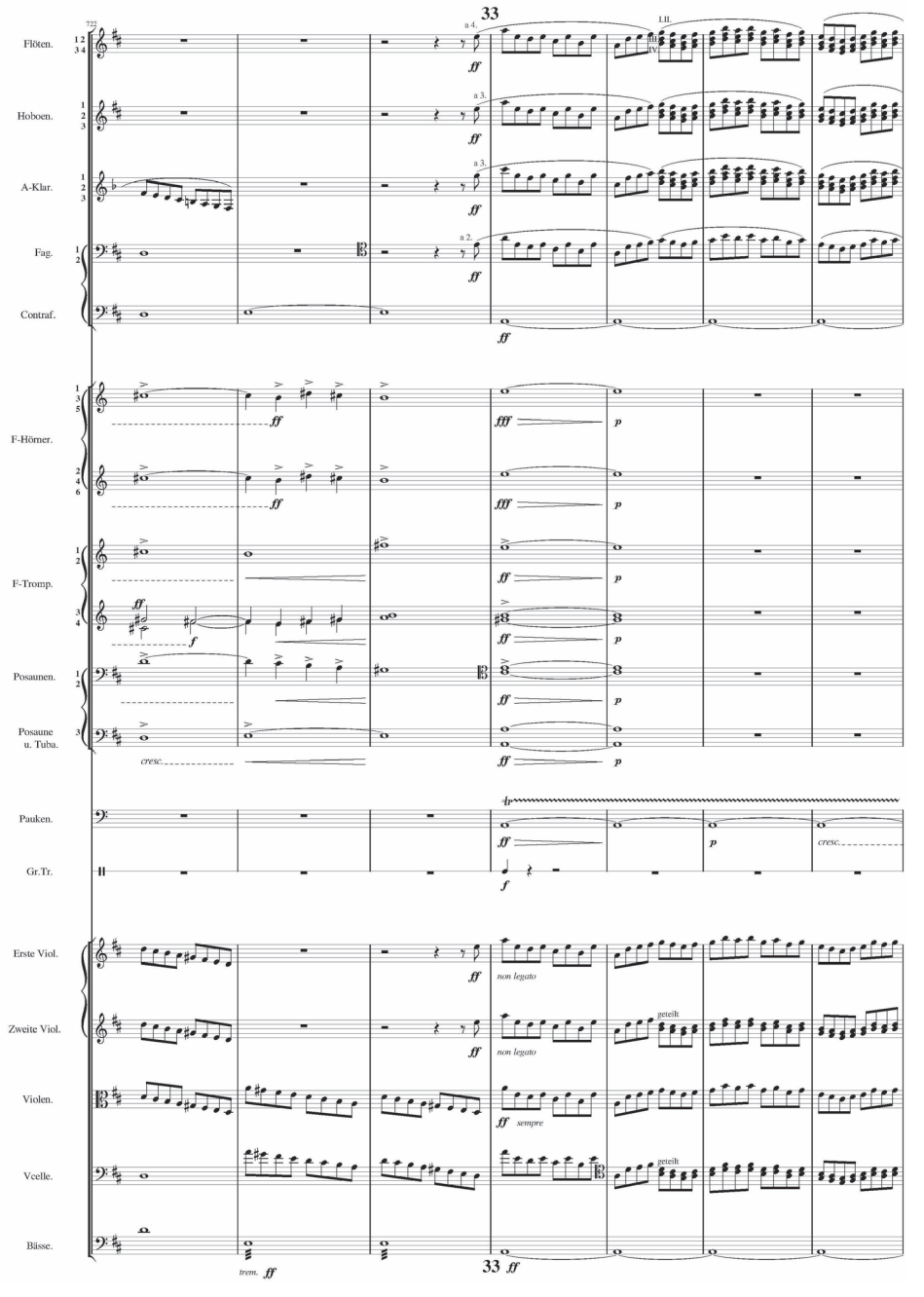


repeating the last phrase of the culmination from the second movement. Compare the ending of the apotheosis of the second movement (see Example 13) with the ending of the apotheosis of the Finale (see Example 14). If hearing the first phrase of the Finale's apotheosis the listener asks, Haven't I heard this before, much earlier?, with the second phrase there can no longer be any doubt: Yes, I have, toward the end of the first part of the symphony. Thus, Mahler postpones a complete clarity in this matter as long as possible. By the end of the Finale's apotheosis everything that was negative in the symphony, everything tragic or even merely troubling because passionate, has been triumphantly overcome, smothered by the heavy D-major brass.

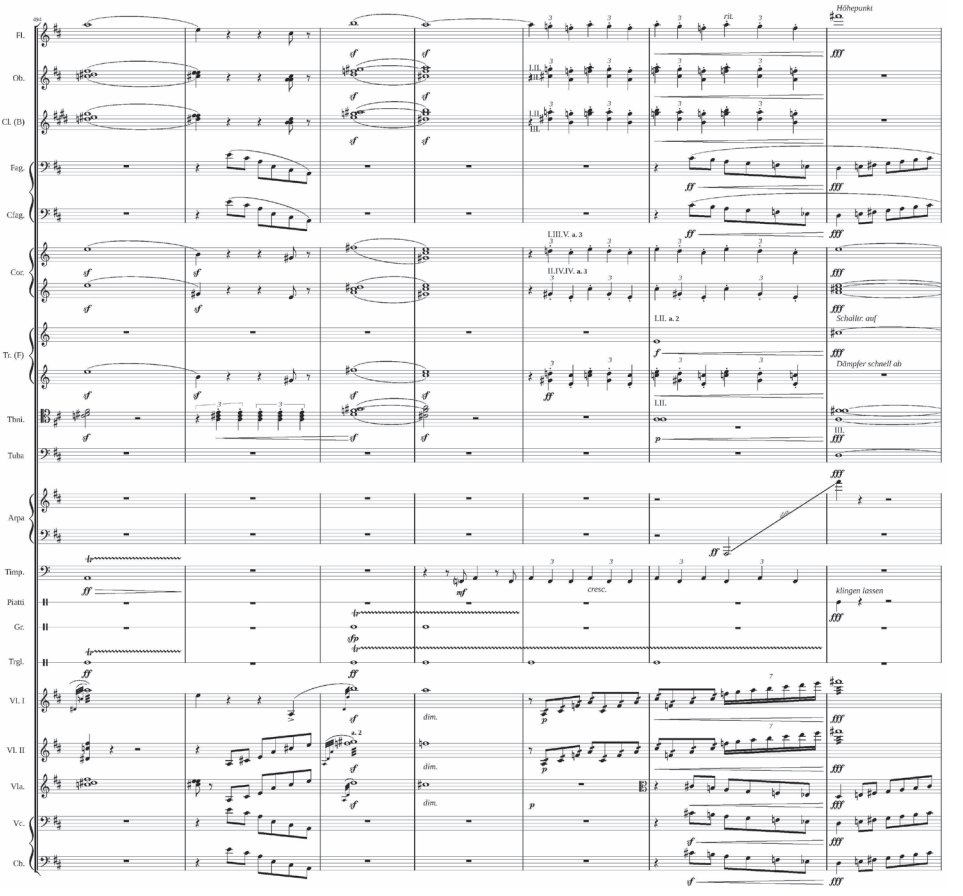
Example 12. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 711–26

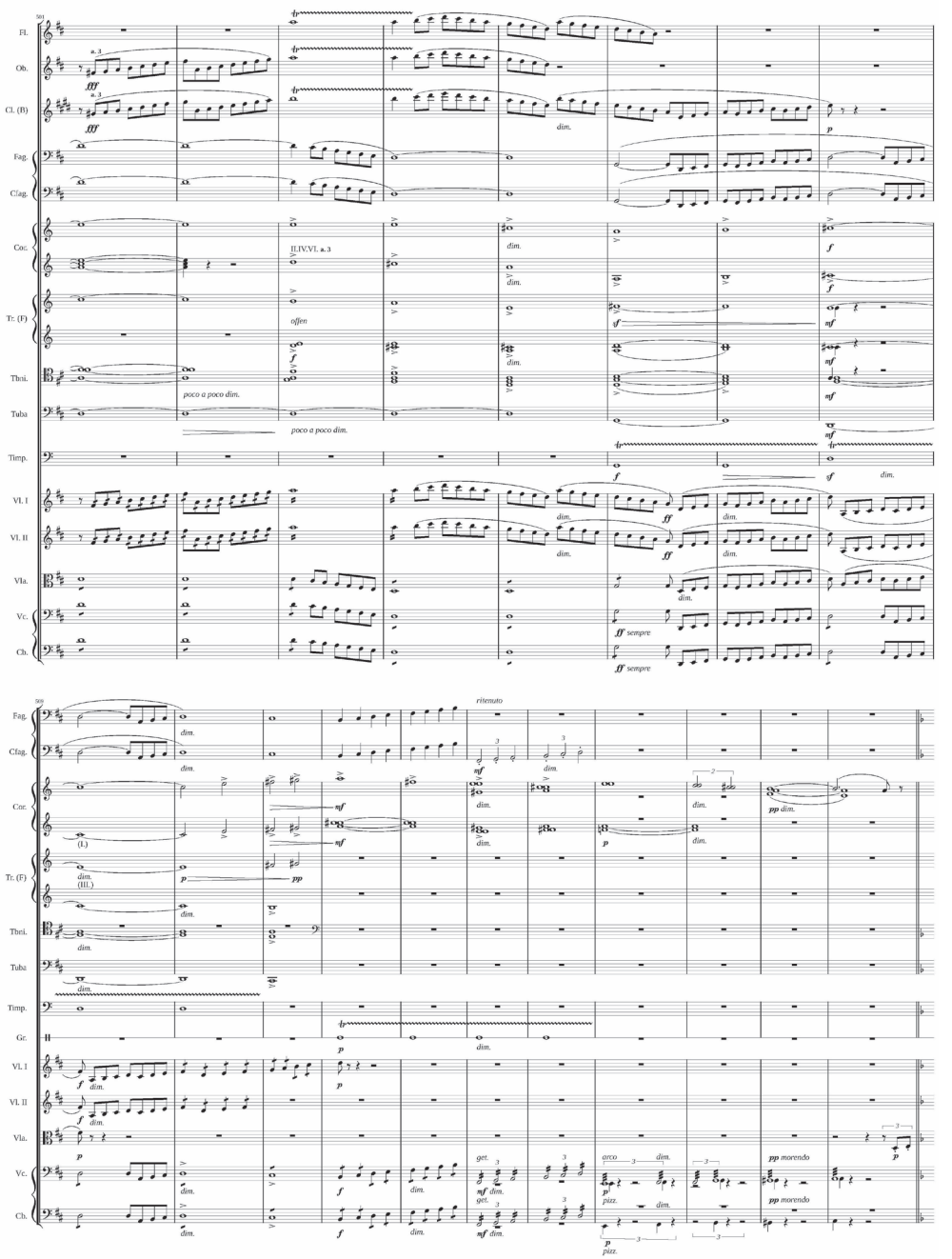



Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaunen u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Gr.Tr.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
a 3.
mf
cresc.
I.II. a 2.
III.
Tuba.
a 2.
IV.
f
sempre p

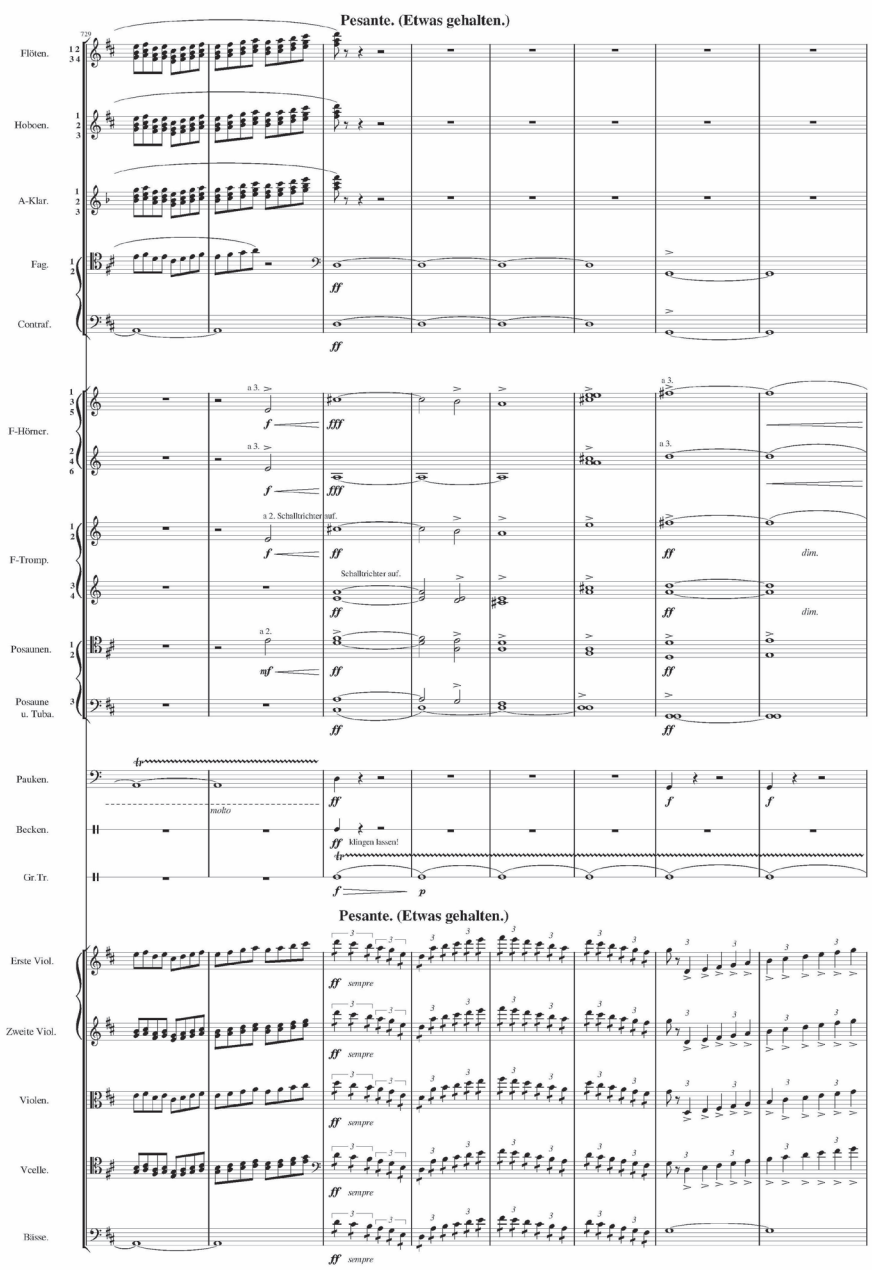

33
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Gr.Tr.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
non legato
sempre
geteilt
cresc.
trem.
33

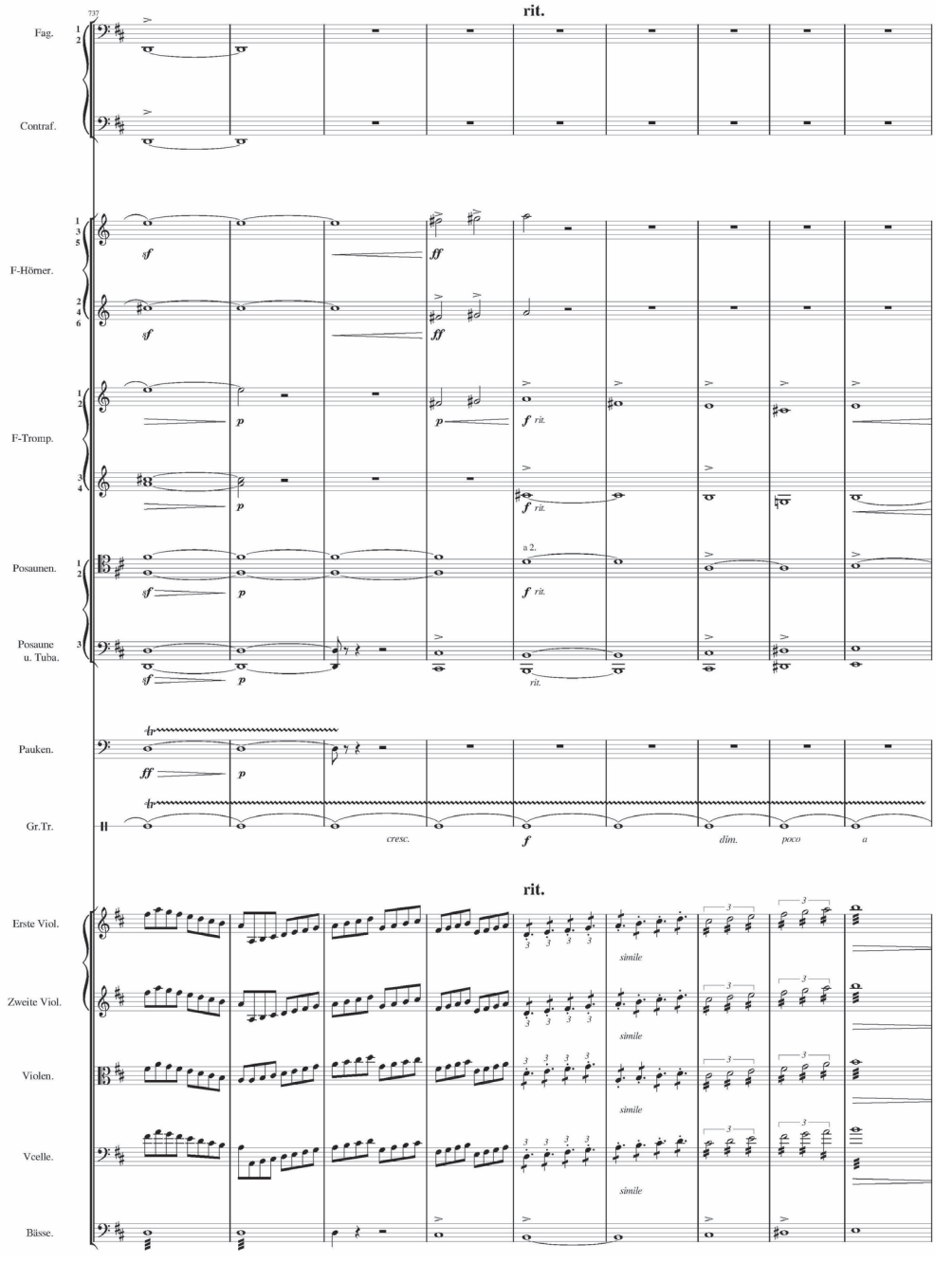
Example 13. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 2. Stürmisch bewegt, mm. 499–519

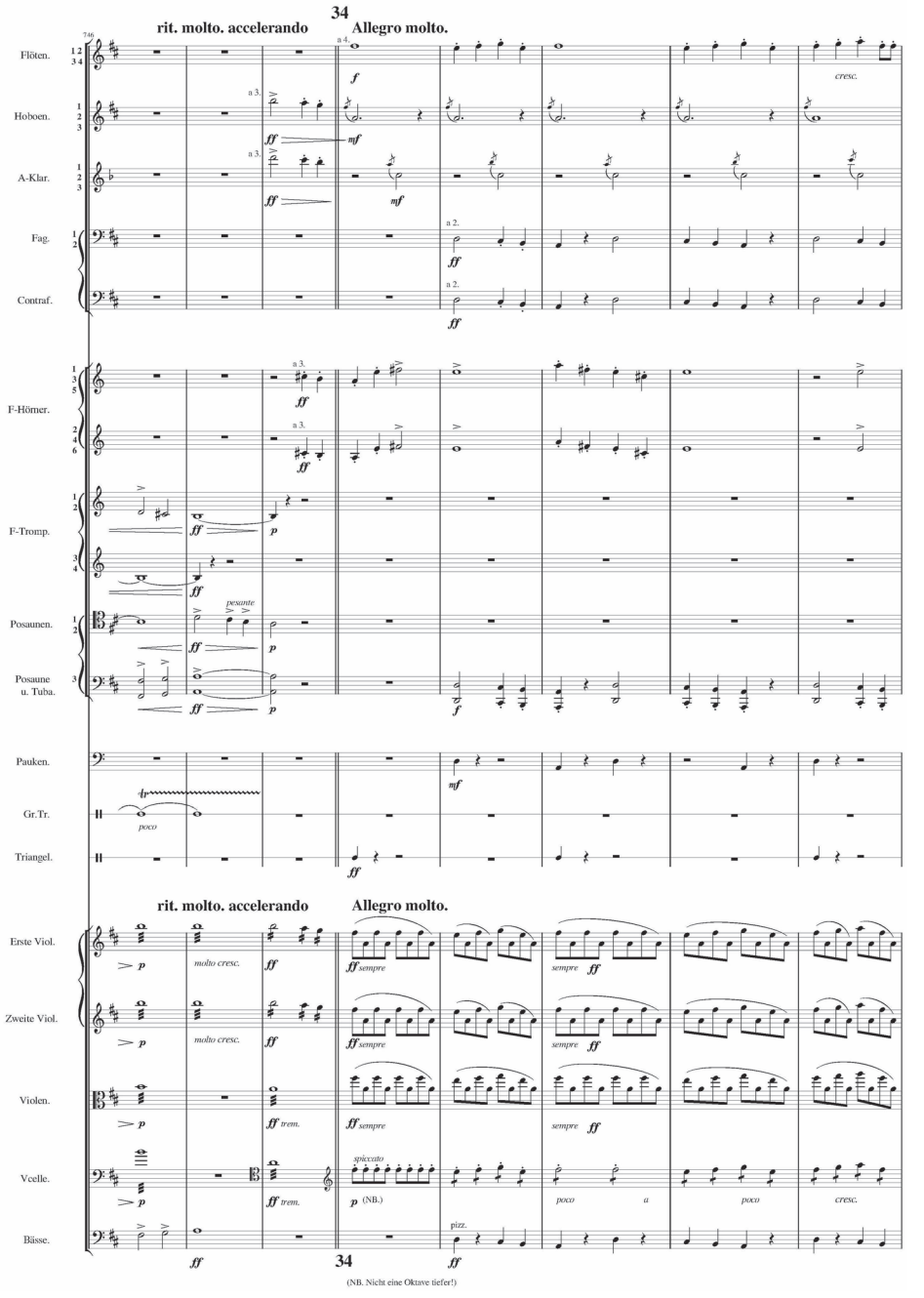



569
Fl.
Ob.
Cl. (B)
Fag.
C.fag.
Cor.
Tr. (F)
Tbni.
Tuba
Timp.
Vl. I
Vl. II
Vla.
Vc.
Cb.
a. 3
fff
dim.
p
II.IV.VI. a. 3
offen
poco a poco dim.
f
ff
sempre
sf
mf
ritenuto
(I.)
(III.)
pp
Gr.
get.
arco
pizz.
pp morendo

Example 14. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 731–47




737
rit.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Gr.Tr.
a 2.
cresc.
dim.
poco
a
rit.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
sinile


34
rit. molto. accelerando
Allegro molto.
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Gr.Tr.
Triangel.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
cresc.
molto cresc.
sempre
poco
pizz.
spiccato
(NB.)
34
(NB. Nicht eine Oktave tiefer!)

But the apotheosis is not the symphony's final word; this belongs to the stretto that follows in m. 748. The stretto is based on the main counterpoint to the second theme, with the head motive of the main theme remaining in the background; significantly, there is at this point no longer any trace of the interpolated and alien theme 3. Played "Allegro molto and accelerating until the end" ("Allegro molto und bis zum Schluß beschleunigend") and accentuating the cocky nature of the material it employs as if thumbing its nose at all and sundry, the Stretto pulls the rug from underneath the pomp of the apotheosis (see Example 15).

And thus the symphony's last word is ironic, mocking even, certainly not pompously triumphant. What is mocked here is a whole tradition of victorious symphonic scenarios epitomized by Beethoven's symphonies, the Fifth and Ninth in particular, the "per aspera ad astra" tradition that had post-Beethovenian symphonists propose stories of suffering triumphantly overcome. In the Stretto of the Finale Mahler pokes this tradition in the ribs. The "aspera" are there to be sure (in Part I of the symphony and even as late as the Adagietto), but the "astra" are ultimately ironized, brought down to earth from the sublimity of the Apotheosis to the burlesque of the Stretto, back to the level of cuckoo the musician whose call was heard at the beginning of the Finale.

The Finale as a whole, however, does more than merely undermine a hallowed symphonic tradition. It puts into question Mahler's own past. For the first time, the composer writes here a symphony that does not aim at a transcendence and sublimity, that accepts and embraces the comic immanence of the earthly existence. As I have said earlier, already in 1920 Redlich was suggesting that Symphonies Nos. 5–7 represented a turn away from metaphysics, a thesis that found a development in Adorno's 1960 monograph. Having earlier complained about Mahler's "subjective incapacity for the happy end," Adorno now affirmed with regard to the finale of the Fifth that it "is undoubtedly too lightweight in relation to the first three movements" and, there being no limits to the wonders that nimble dialectical thinking can accomplish, immediately followed this "undoubtedly"

with an observation that "opinions may differ over this".[9] They may, indeed. The formal complexity and motivic density of the Rondo-Finale is more than sufficient to match those of Parts 1 and 2 of the symphony. The movement is not lightweight, but it does undermine the ponderousness of the *pesante* apotheosis. This is not its shortcoming; it is, rather, its point. I fully concur with Federico Celestini's conclusion that "this is the matter ... of music in which the failure of transcendence becomes the aesthetic experience."[10]

If all that Mahler wanted to accomplish in the Fifth Symphony were to negate the Beethovenian "per aspera ad astra" trope, it would have sufficed to end the first part of the symphony with a not-quite-successful apotheosis (as he did) and to end the symphony as a whole with a simple neo-classical rondo (as he did not). But the Rondo-Finale of the Fifth, while undeniably neo-classical, is not at all simple, with its multiple motivic and thematic links to the preceding movements and with its taking up once again the apotheosis, making it fully successful this time, and then undermining it after all. The aspiration to transcendence fails, but is not forgotten, and neither are the negative aspects of human existence that gave rise to this aspiration. In the Fifth Mahler withdrew for the first time his earlier bet on transcendent hope, without forgetting the suffering that such hope was meant to answer.

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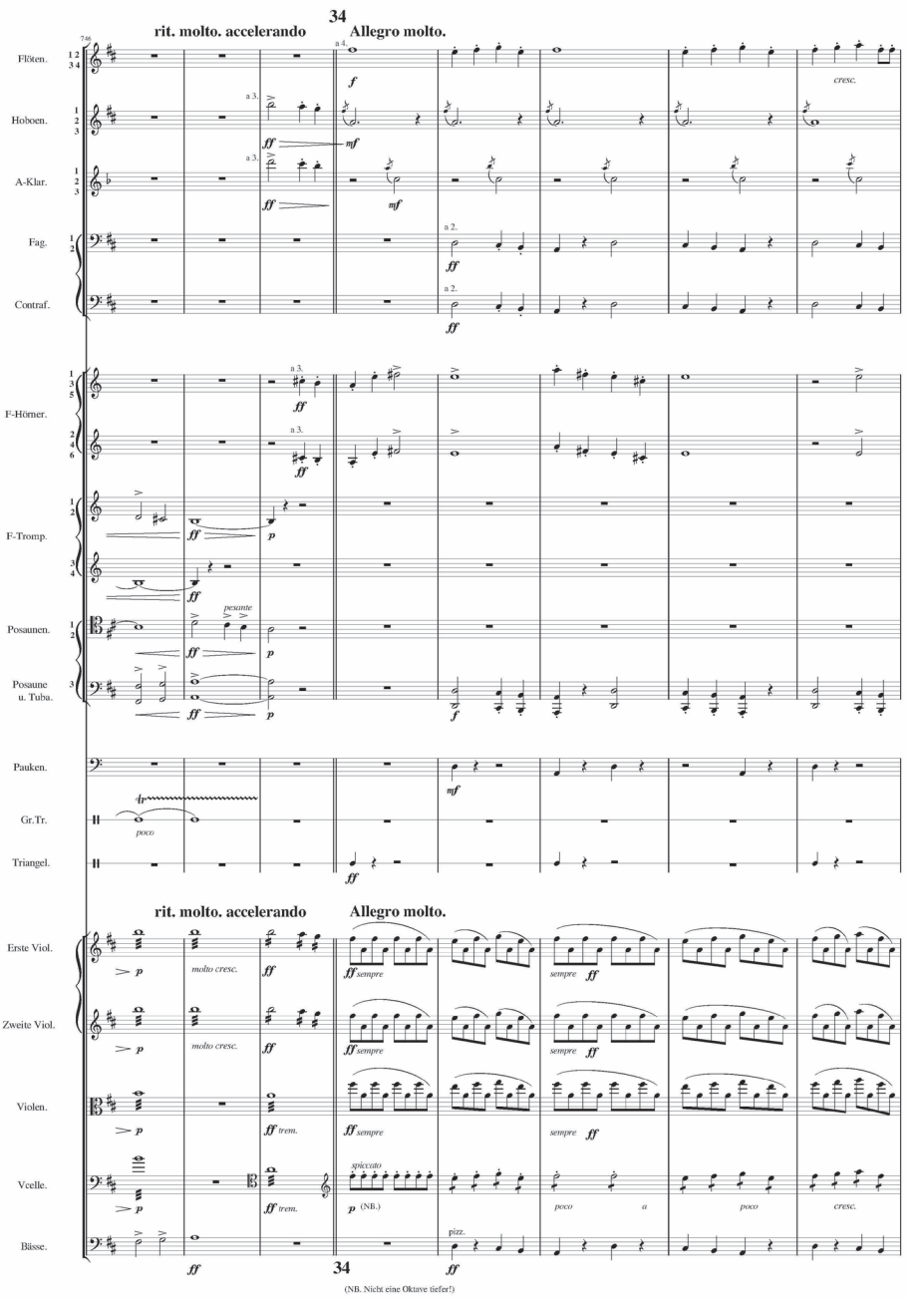
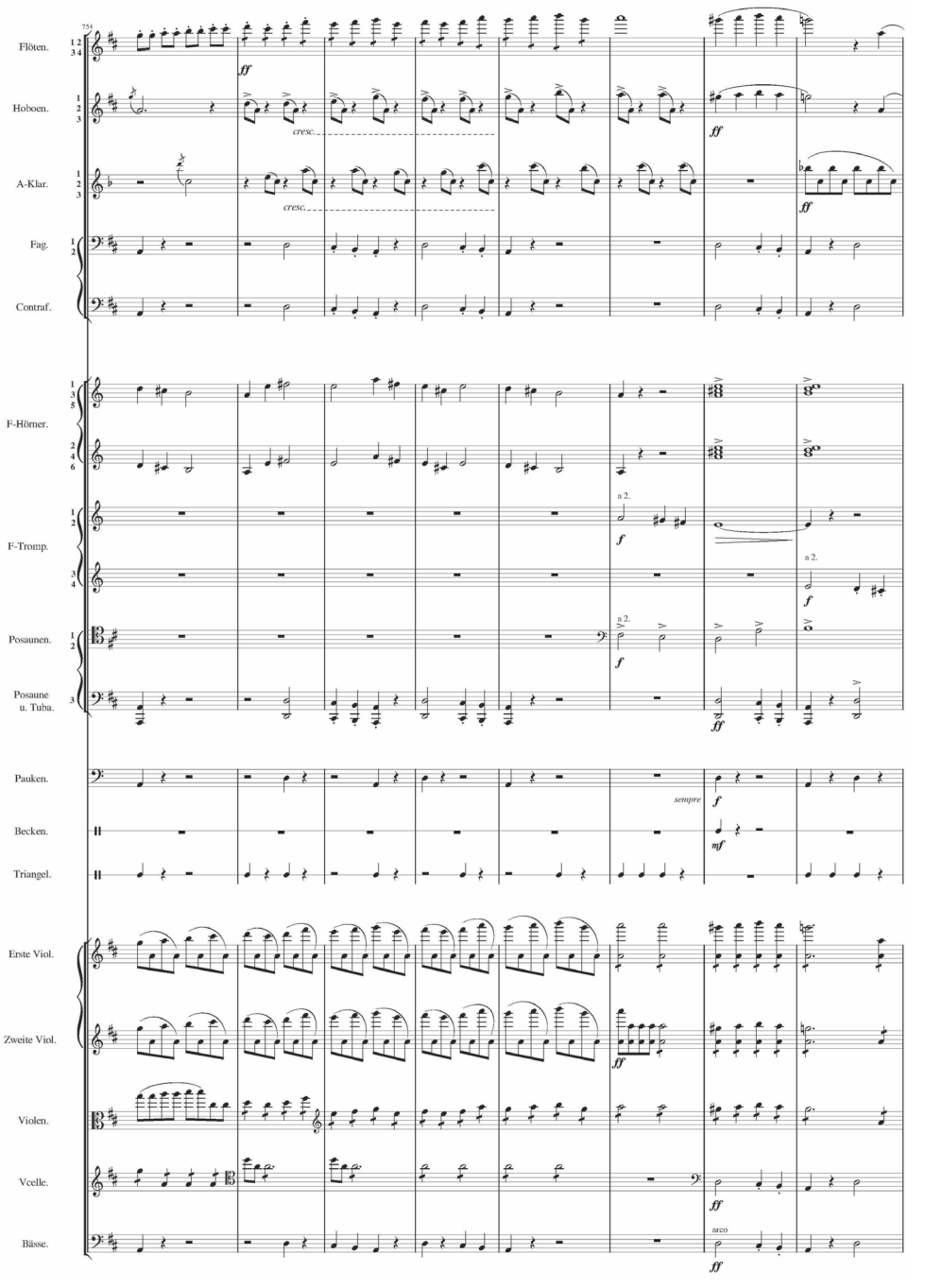
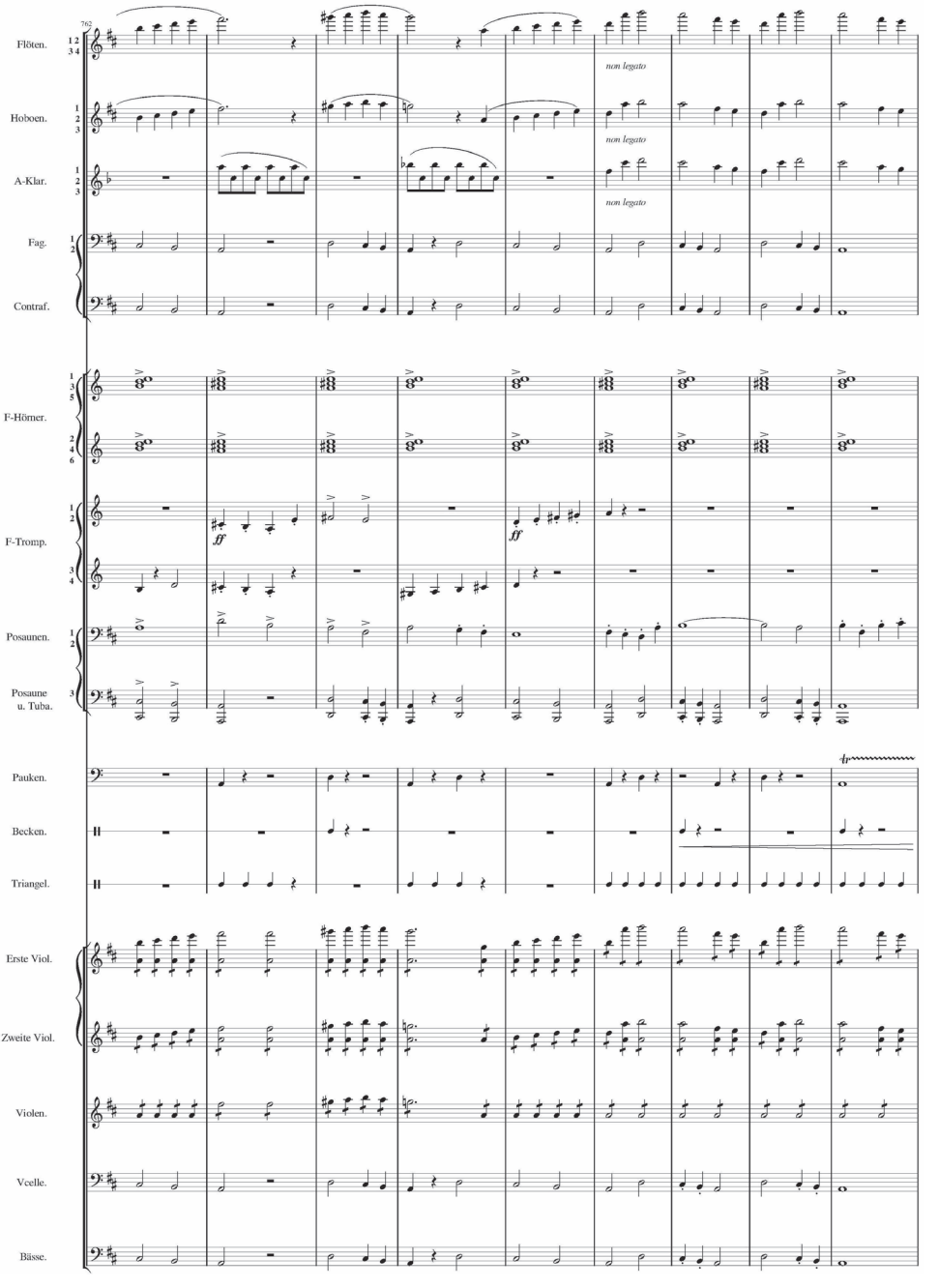
9 Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, 136.

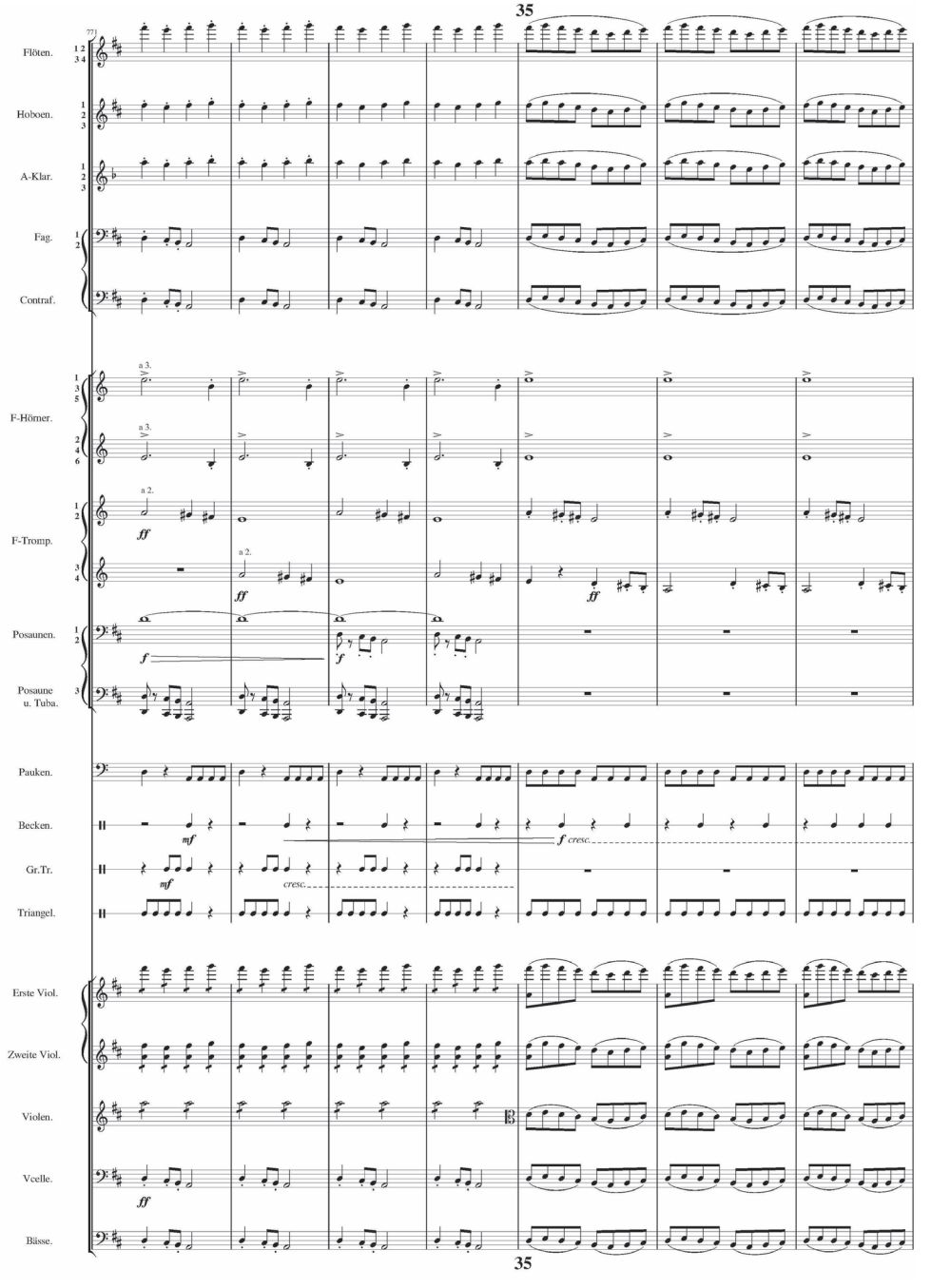
10 "hier geht es ... um eine Musik, in der das Scheitern der Transzendenz zur ästhetischen Erfahrung wird." Federico Celestini, "Fünfte Symphonie," in *Gustav Mahler. Interpretationen seiner Werke*, eds. Peter Revers and Oliver Korte, vol. 2 (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2011), 49.

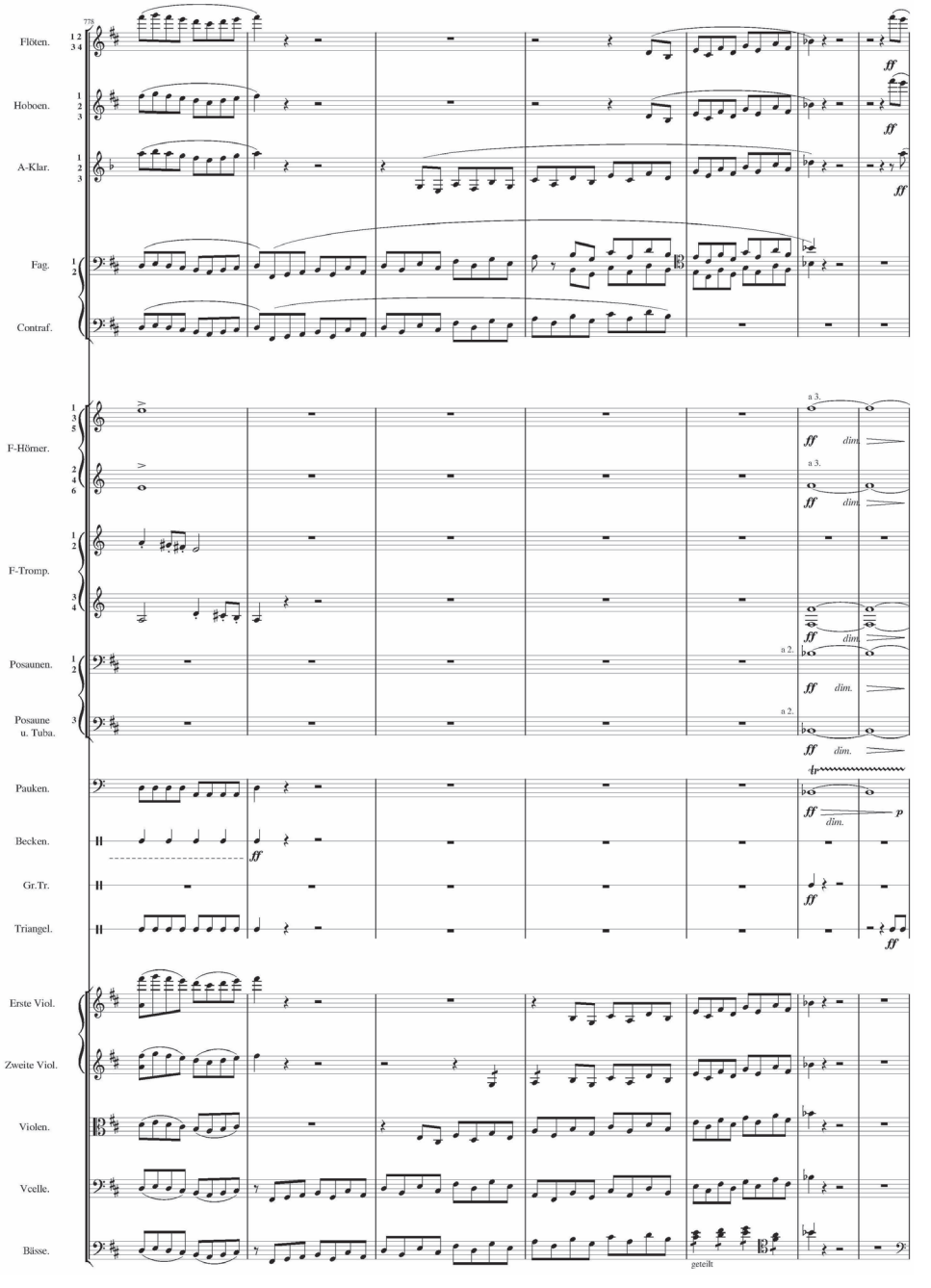
Example 15. Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, 5. Rondo-Finale, mm. 748–91

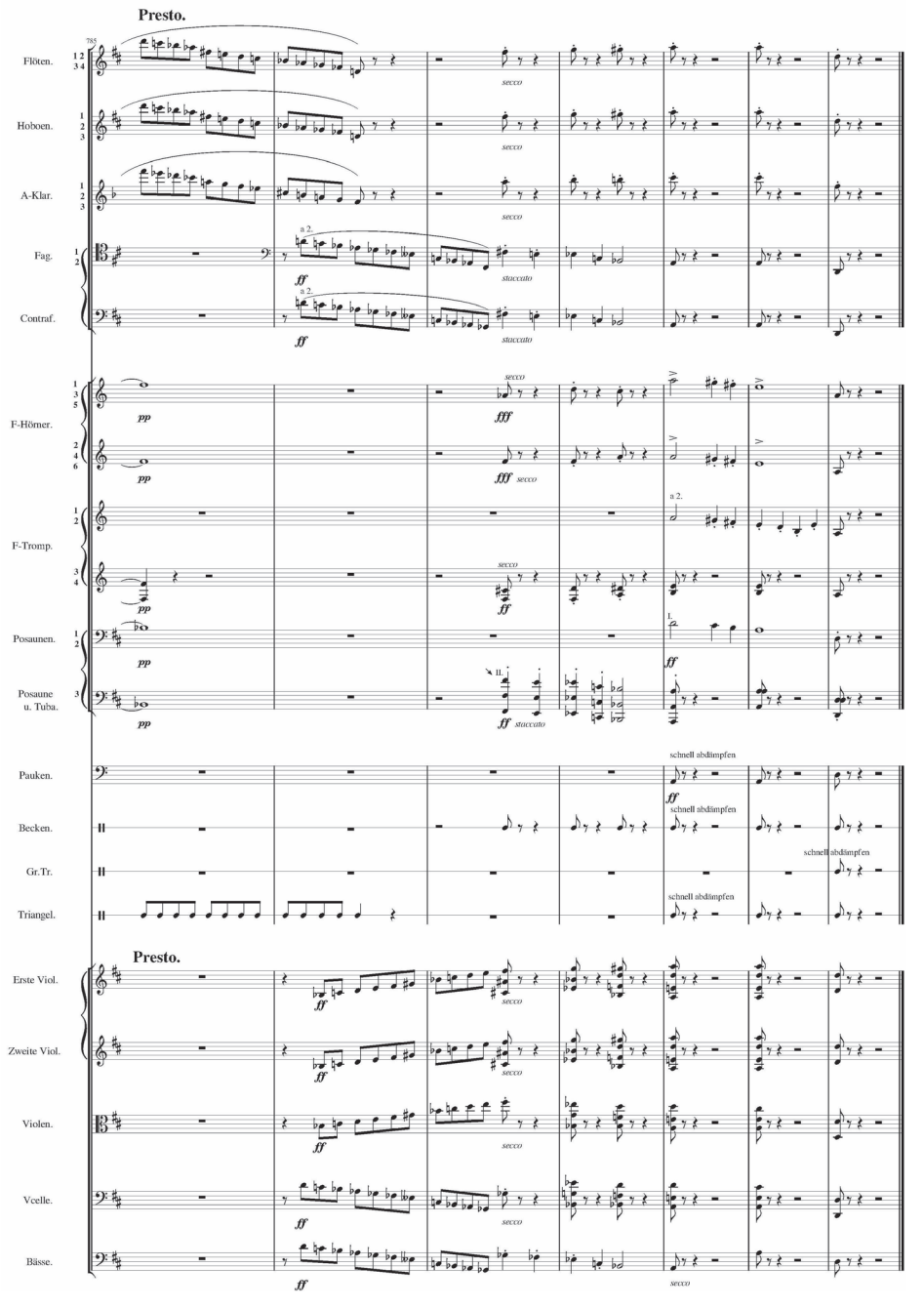



Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Becken.
Triangel.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
cresc.
a 2.
sempre
arco


762
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
non legato
non legato
non legato
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
ff
ff
Pauken.
Becken.
Triangel.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.


35
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Becken.
Gr.Tr.
Triangel.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
a 3.
a 2.
ff
f
mf
cresc.
f cresc.
35


778
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Becken.
Gr.Tr.
Triangel.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
a 3.
a 2.
ff
dim.
p
geteilt


Presto.
785
Flöten.
Hoboen.
A-Klar.
Fag.
Contraf.
F-Hörner.
F-Tromp.
Posaunen.
Posaune u. Tuba.
Pauken.
Becken.
Gr.Tr.
Triangel.
Presto.
Erste Viol.
Zweite Viol.
Violen.
Vcelle.
Bässe.
secco
staccato
a 2.
schnell abdämpfen

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BIOGRAM

Karol Berger is the Osgood Hooker Professor in Fine Arts, Emeritus, at the Department of Music, Stanford University. His books include *Musica Ficta* (1987), *A Theory of Art* (2000), *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow* (2007), and *Beyond Reason: Wagner contra Nietzsche* (2017). *Music for the Age of Uncertainty: The Symphonic World of Gustav Mahler* is forthcoming (2024). He is the recipient of the Glarean Prize (2011) and the Humboldt Research Award (2014), and a member of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Academia Europaea.

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ABSTRACT

Mahler and the Taking Back of the Ninth

The last word of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, composed in 1901–02 and premiered in 1904, is ironic, mocking even, certainly not pompously triumphant. What is mocked here is the whole tradition of victorious symphonic scenarios epitomized by Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the "per aspera ad astra" tradition that had symphonists propose stories of suffering triumphantly overcome. The Finale also puts into question Mahler's own past. For the first time, the composer writes here a symphony that does not aim at a transcendence and sublimity, but accepts the comic immanence of the earthly existence. The aspiration to transcendence fails, but is not forgotten, and neither are the negative aspects of human existence that gave rise to this aspiration

KEYWORDS Gustav Mahler, Fifth Symphony, Second Symphony, Ludwig van Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, the "per aspera ad astra" tradition, Friedrich Schiller, *Ode to Joy*, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust*, neo-classicism, rondo-finale

STRESZCZENIE

Mahler i odwołanie Dziewiątej Symfonii

Ostatnie słowo *v Symfonii* Mahlera, skomponowanej w latach 1901–1902 i wykonanej po raz pierwszy w 1904 roku, jest ironiczne, szydercze wręcz, na pewno nie pompatyczno-triumfalne. Wyśmiewana jest tu cała tradycja triumfalnych scenariuszy symfonicznych, uosabianych przez IX Symfonię Beethovena, tradycja „per aspera ad astra", która kazała symfonikom proponować historie o zwycięsko przezwyciężonym cierpieniu. Finał stawia też pod znakiem zapytania wcześniejszą twórczość Mahlera. Po raz pierwszy kompozytor pisze tu symfonię, która nie dąży do transcendencji i wzniosłości, lecz akceptuje komiczną immanencję ziemskiej egzystencji. Dążenie do transcendencji zawodzi, ale nie zostaje zapomniane, podobnie jak nie są zapomniane negatywne aspekty ludzkiej egzystencji, które to dążenie zrodziły.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE Gustav Mahler, V Symfonia, II Symfonia, Ludwig van Beethoven, IX Symfonia, tradycja „per aspera ad astra", Friedrich Schiller, *Oda do radości*, Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Faust*, neoklasycyzm, rondo-finale

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