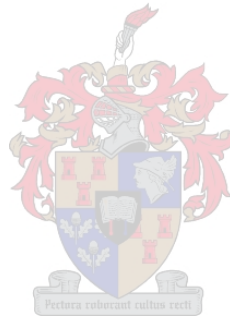


**NAIVETY AS AN AESTHETIC FACTOR IN GUSTAV
MAHLER'S *WUNDERHORN* SONGS**

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Declaration:

I, the undersigned, declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work, and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted to any University for a degree.

Signature

SUMMARY

This thesis sets out to investigate the aesthetic concept of naïvety with specific reference to the *Wunderhorn* Songs of Gustav Mahler. The term naïvety is found frequently in the early literature on Mahler, in fact Mahler even used it himself. To the present-day observer, however, it is not immediately obvious what the full meaning of the term is as used by these authors. The well known use of the term in the field of visual art proves to be of only limited help. Therefore the thesis attempts to trace the historical context of the term as far back as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Schiller is shown to be the most important author on the subject, he in fact develops the term to an aesthetic concept of great significance in his *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. Besides, the thesis examines the context in which *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, the most important anthology of German folk poetry, should be seen, placing it in the intellectual climate of early German Romanticism. Mahler's "discovery" of the anthology and his passionate interest in folk music are also investigated. The main body of the thesis concerns itself with the question of the applicability of the concept, as developed by Schiller, to music and specifically to Mahler's composition of *Wunderhorn* texts, which occupied the composer for the best part of his early career. It is shown that, in a general sense, the concept can be applied to instances of natural sound, children's music and folk music. These instances all have a strong influence on Mahler and are intergrated into his *Wunderhorn* style together with a very personal kind of realism, including such devices as the imitation of non-musical sounds, spatial movement, speech intonations and emotions or "inner nature". Mahler's idea of music as an image of nature or the structure of the world as a whole is also discussed. Subsequently, these characteristics are illustrated extensively by examples from the songs themselves. Finally, all the findings are drawn together in a lengthy concluding section.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis ondersoek die estetiese begrip naïwiteit met spesifieke verwysing na die *Wunderhorn*-toonsettings van Gustav Mahler. Die term naïwiteit kom dikwels in die vroeë literatuur van Mahler voor, trouens, Mahler het die term ook self gebruik. Vir die hedendaagse waarnemer is dit nie meer onmiddellik duidelik wat met hierdie term bedoel word nie. Die bekende aanwending daarvan op die terrein van die beeldende kuns is in dié verband van beperkte waarde. Daarom word daar in hierdie tesis gepoog om die term in sy historiese konteks tot so ver terug as die sewentiende en agtiende eeu te verstaan. Dit blyk dat Schiller die belangrikste bydrae tot die onderwerp gelewer het, trouens, hy het die term tot 'n belangrike estetiese begrip ontwikkel in sy *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. Verder word *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, die belangrikste versameling van Duitse volkspoësie, in die konteks van die intellektuele klimaat van die vroeë Duitse Romantiek geplaas. Mahler se "ontdekking" van die versameling en sy groot belangstelling in volksmusiek word ook onder die loep geneem. Die hoofdeel van die tesis ondersoek die vraag in watter mate die begrip, soos deur Schiller ontwikkel, op die musiek en dan spesifiek op Mahler se toonsettings van *Wunderhorn*-tekste toegepas kan word. Dit word aangetoon dat die begrip in 'n algemene sin aangewend kan word op voorbeelde van natuurklanke, kindermusiek en volksmusiek. Hierdie voorbeelde het almal 'n sterk invloed op Mahler en word in sy *Wunderhorn*-styl geïntegreer saam met 'n baie persoonlike benadering tot realisme, insluitende sulke middele soos die nabootsing van nie-musikale klanke, ruimtelike beweging, spraakintonasie en emosies of "innerlike natuur". Mahler se idee van musiek as 'n afbeeld van die natuur of van die struktuur van die wêreld as geheel word ook bespreek. Vervolgens word hierdie kenmerke op uitgebreide wyse aan die hand van voorbeelde uit die toonsettings self geïllustreer. Laastens word al die bevindings tot 'n omvangryke reeks gevolgtrekkings saamgevoeg.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis arose out of curiosity about a term. When I began work, I knew that I wanted to examine Mahler's settings of poems from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, but the exact focus of this examination was not clear. In the course of background reading, however, and particularly of discussions of Mahler's work by his contemporaries, I found myself constantly encountering and becoming more and more intrigued by descriptions of Mahler's works, especially the *Wunderhorn* songs, as "naïve".

What was meant by this term? It was clearly not being used in the modern sense to describe a character trait encompassing ingenuousness, ignorance, innocence, etc. often with a derogatory slant, and, at best, as something charming, but laughable. Rather, it seemed to be used as an aesthetic concept, one linked with medievalism, fantasy, fairy tales, the *Wunderhorn* itself, and furthermore with philosophical, even moral ideas: the pure, the original, the complete in itself, truth and the sublime.

At that time, I was only aware of one aesthetic usage of "naïve", that in the field of the fine arts. Here naïve art is taken to be the work of untrained artists (of whom the most famous is undoubtedly Henri Rousseau) whose painting and/or sculpture is characterised by childlike, undeveloped technique, but by beautiful, often fascinating imagery, and which has been both popular and influential since the start of this century.

Now this definition clearly did not apply to Mahler, a trained and highly skilled composer. Furthermore, the use of the term in the fine arts was only just coming into currency (in the critical works of Kandinsky, for instance) at around the same time that writers like Richard Specht, Paul Stefan and Bruno Walter were applying it to Mahler in a way which made it clear that they assumed that their readers would have such a complete understanding thereof

that no definition was needed.

And then, Mahler himself used the term long before Kandinsky and his followers began to apply it in the fine arts.

In the end, Dr Andries Gouws, of the Philosophy Department at U.S. pointed me in the direction of Schiller's essay *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, and the first step of the problem was solved.

This essay is generally considered* to be both Schiller's most important piece of aesthetic writing, and one of the most important, if not *the* defining work with respect to the term "naïve" as an aesthetic concept. It is certainly the last work of any weight to deal with the aesthetic implications of the term**, and thus holds a significant position in the aesthetic writings of the romantic period. And reading Schiller's work made it clear on what Mahler and his contemporaries were basing their ideas.

I have said that my discovery of *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* provided the *first step* in approaching the problem of what might be called Mahler's aesthetic naïvety, and I have used this phrase quite consciously. Understanding what Schiller meant by naïvety was only a preliminary to discussing the application of the term to Mahler's composition, and this latter and greater phase of the work on this thesis raised many problems.

Firstly, Schiller uses the phrase in the field of the arts specifically with reference to literature. Can it be successfully applied to music, and, assuming that it can - and the descriptions of Mahler's work as naïve mentioned above make that assumption a necessity - how is this

*Cf. both William Mainland and Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly's introductions to their editions of the work.

**Its wide ranging influence extends beyond the world of aesthetics and literary philosophy, even into the world of the post-war novel in John Le Carré's *The Naive and Sentimental Lover!*

application to make sense?

Secondly, Mahler composed the *Wunderhorn* songs and others wrote about them as naïve roughly a century *after* the publication of Schiller's essay. How is one to reconcile the writings of an early romantic philosopher/poet with the work of people whose aesthetic sensibilities were formed by a variety of influences, some of which Schiller could hardly have imagined?

Thirdly, this thesis was written roughly a century again after the composition of the *Wunderhorn* songs. Is there any point now in exploring the implications of Schiller's work in the context of Mahler's music? Otherwise framed, could I gain any insights from the application of Schiller to Mahler which I felt were worth sharing with others?

The more I studied *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* and the *Wunderhorn* songs in conjunction, the more I became convinced that there *were*, in fact, worthwhile insights to be gained from such a study, or, at the very least, that it raised questions interesting enough to be worth pursuing. These latter fell into two areas, both of which are discussed in the thesis.

The first area concerns the early Mahler criticism and attempts to define what exactly Specht, Stefan et al. meant when they described Mahler as naïve. This area is widened in an attempt to see whether these descriptions hold up in the face of the variety of influences on Mahler's aesthetic, as well as to discuss Mahler's putative naïvety in terms of later, relevant critical writings.

The second area concerns the direct study of the songs themselves. If one accepts that there is something about his music that made several of the foremost critics and musicians of the time describe it as naïve, what then is this quality? Do the songs actually sound naïve, and if they do, how and why? It is this area in particular which, for me, lifted the work from a dry critical comparison of the ideas of those long dead, into a far more interesting field, where something could be learned about the music itself.

It should perhaps be emphasised that there are limits to the objectivity of any work dealing with ideas and the application of those ideas to music. I have attempted in so far as possible, to give a faithful representation of the theories of Schiller, Mahler and other writers quoted. Where I have compared or applied the ideas of Schiller and others to those of Mahler, I have tried to do so within the confines of the context, and not to allow my own ideas to intrude. Where I have expressed opinions, I hope that these have been clearly delineated as such.

But in the discussion of Mahler's music, the situation becomes more blurred. In applying Schiller's theories to the *Wunderhorn* songs, I have had to rely on my own reactions to the music, both as a listener and, at times, as a singer. It is quite possible that aspects which I have heard in the music and linked to the concept of Schillerian naïvety may not be apparent to others, that readers of this thesis may, in fact, react to these songs quite differently to the way in which I have.

I can only say that this thesis is not intended as the presentation of absolute truths. I personally do not believe that any work which approaches music from any other standpoint than purely analytical can be so intended. Rather it is an attempt to present certain ideas pertaining to the *Wunderhorn* songs in what is hopefully a new light, to pose questions arising from those ideas, and to provide my own answers to at least some of the more significant of those questions.

A NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

It has been my policy throughout this thesis to use texts in the original language, wherever available, supplying my own translations of passages quoted in the end notes. This is, I feel, particularly important in the case of philosophical texts cited, where the terminology is often such that it defies a translation which exactly conveys the meaning intended.

Where texts originally in another language are quoted only in English, the originals were

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unavailable to me, and the texts are thus the translations of others.

1. GERMAN ROMANTICISM AND *DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN*

1.1. The concept "Romanticism"

"Nichts ist romantischer als was man Welt und Schicksal nennt. - Wir leben in einem kolossalen (im *Grossen* und *Kleinen*) Roman."¹ (Novalis)

The concept of Romanticism is a problematic one; the terms Romantic and Romanticism have passed through several changes of meaning between the mid-seventeenth century, when they were coined in England, and their present, rather vague usage. Originally, like Baroque, Romantic had a strong pejorative connotation, referring to the extravagancies of plot and style of the contemporary "romances" or novels². This negative meaning remained predominant throughout the Enlightenment: Goethe, for instance, described Romanticism as "kein Natürliches, Ursprüngliches, sondern ein Gemachtes, ein Gesuchtes, Gesteigertes, Übertriebenes, Bizarres, bis ins Fratzenhafte und Karikaturartige"³.

Gradually, however, this usage declined. The term Gothic began to replace Romantic in the context discussed above, while the latter term took on new meanings. By the mid-eighteenth century "romantique" was used in France as synonymous to interesting and picturesque, especially with regard to landscapes⁴.

In Germany, however, the term came to have increasingly complex connotations. These can, perhaps, best be explored with reference to various definitions of the term by those writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, now known as the Romantics. (The first use of the word "Romantiker" in this sense is found in 1803 in the writings of Jean Paul. Prior to this it could mean either a novelist or a character in a novel⁵.)

Novalis:

"Die Kunst auf eine angenehme Art zu befremden, einen Gegenstand fremd zu machen und doch bekannt und anziehend, das ist die romantische Poetik."⁶

"Das Leben ist etwas wie Farben, Töne und Kraft. Der Romantiker studiert das Leben, wie die Maler, Musiker, und Mechaniker Farbe, Ton und Kraft."⁷

Franz Grillparzer: "Doch wisst ihr auch, wass Romantik heisst?

Mustert die Muster in eurem Geist.

Romantik weicht von der Dichtung nie,

Sie ist ihre Mutter: die Fantasie."⁸

Jean Paul: "Das Romantische ist das Schöne ohne Begrenzung oder das schöne Unendliche ..."⁹

Clemens Brentano: "Alles was zwischen unserm Auge und einem entfernten zu Sehenden als Mittler steht, uns den entfernten Gegenstand nähert, ihm aber zugleich etwas von dem Seinigen mitgibt, ist romantisch."¹⁰

A number of the most important concepts pertaining to German Romanticism can be extracted from these quotations, as well as from the one at the head of this chapter. The idea that life is a great romance; that it is therefore the task of the writer to study life itself; the association of the romantic with the fantastic the strange and the distant on the one hand, and the eternal, the infinite and the beautiful on the other - all these are central to Romantic thought. What must be borne in mind, however, is that Romantic is not the only word quoted to have changed in meaning since the period under discussion.

One of the most striking examples of such a word, and one which warrants further explanation, so essential is the comprehension thereof to the comprehension of German Romanticism, is the term "Poetik" or "Poesie". The meaning of "Poesie" as used by the Romantics differs radically to the modern use of the word. Gerhard Kurz explains as follows: "Poesie hat nicht den modernen, literarischen Sinn, sondern bedeutet das schöpferische

Selbstverhältnis der Subjektivität und die schöpferische, universelle Sinnstruktur des Lebens selbst."¹¹

The implications of the term are further made clear in this "Fragment" by Friedrich Schlegel from the *Athenäum* (a literary journal published by August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel which made its first appearance in 1798¹²):

"Die romantische Poesie ist eine progressive Universalpoesie. Ihre Bestimmung ist nicht bloss, alle getrennten Gattungen der Poesie wieder zu vereinigen und die Poesie mit der Philosophie und Rhetorik in Berührung zu setzen. Sie will und soll auch Poesie und Prosa, Genialität und Kritik, Kunstpoesie und Naturpoesie bald mischen, bald verschmelzen, die Poesie lebendig und gesellig und das Leben und die Gesellschaft poetisch machen, den Witz poetisieren und die Formen der Kunst mit gediegenem Bildungsstoff jeder Art anfüllen und sättigen und durch die Schwingungen des Humors beseelen. Sie umfasst alles was nur poetisch ist, vom grössten, wieder mehrere Systeme in sich enthaltenden System der Kunst, bis zu dem Seufzer, dem Kuss, den das dichtende Kind aushaucht in kunstlosen Gesang."¹³

The understanding of this usage of the term is vital if one is to comprehend Romantic thought. The universal poetic concept is closely related to the concept of the "Unendliche", i.e. the eternal and infinite already mentioned (cf. page 2, Jean Paul). The "Unendliche" is also known as "Welt, Leben, das Göttliche, das Absolute, das Sein, der Geist, die Natur, das Universum"¹⁴. All these are, in fact, synonymous with the creative poetic totality.

For Schlegel and his contemporaries, poesy was one aspect of a driving force, a totality of all the elements of which worked through both nature and human nature (which came to be seen as synonymous) in the act of creation. According to the Romantic dictum, artists did not merely imitate nature; rather the creative force present in nature worked through them to produce art. The terms "poetic" and "poesy" covered not only what is now described as poetry, but could be applied to any work of art coming into existence by the process described above.

For the Romantics, human existence balanced between the "Endliche" and the

"Unendliche" and the idea expressed in the Spinozic maxim, "eins bin ich und alles"¹⁵ is found in the works of several writers. Novalis writes in this vein: "Wir träumen von Reisen durch das Weltall: ist das Weltall nicht in uns?"¹⁶, and Herder:

"Mich sing ich! Welt und Gott ein All! in mir!
Selbst bin ich Lied, und Welt und Phöbus mir!"¹⁷

This concept of creativity is illustrated in another fragment by Herder:

"Was ich bin Geist! ich Geist! - so bin ich Gott!
Ich denk', ich will, ich bins! Wie Gott, durch den ich bin,
Einst Geister rief aus dem Geisternichts
Und Körper rief aus dem Körpernichts
Ruf ich Gedanken aus dem Gedankennichts!
Ich wills! - es schafft sich Wirkung aus dem Nichts!
O Gott, was gabst du mir! - all deine Welt
Schaff' ich dir in mir nach! -"¹⁸

This fragment exemplifies another important factor in the Romantic concept of artistic creation. The Romantic concept is Christian (later specifically Catholic) and the principle "eins bin ich und alles", expressed by Spinoza, but taken up by the Romantic movement in general, is carried through to the act of creation - divine and human. Human creation is, in fact, analogous to the divine. Julia Wernly writes:

"... der Nachahmung handelt es nicht um Abpinselung der Wirklichkeit, sondern um künstlerische Nachbildung der Natur. Der Dichter ist in diesem Sinn ein 'Schöpfer'."¹⁹

One of the most important manifestations of the "Unendliche" is nature, and nature, not just as the aesthetic object, but as the aesthetic subject, the creative force. Human beings should be part of nature and nature in turn is within them. For Herder and his followers, nature and human nature are synonymous.

Further illustrations of these ideas are to be found in Herder's *Abhandlung über den*

Ursprung der Sprache, a work which was to have enormous influence on those who followed him. Herder perceived Nature as a great sounding whole, all of whose components - including humans - should vibrate in harmony:

"So wenig hat uns die Natur als abgesonderte Steinfelsen, als egoistische Monaden geschaffen! Selbst die feinsten Saiten des tierischen Gefühls (ich muss mich dieses Gleichnisses bedienen, weil ich für die Mechanik fühlender Körper kein besseres weiss!), selbst die Saiten, deren Klang und Anstrengung gar nicht von Willkür und langsamem Bedacht herrührt, ja deren Natur noch von aller forschenden Vernunft nicht hat erforscht werden können, selbst die sind in ihrem ganzen Spiele, auch ohne das Bewusstsein fremder Sympathie, zu einer Äusserung auf andre Geschöpfe gerichtet. Die geschlagene Saite tut ihr Naturpflicht: sie klingt! Sie ruft einer gleichfühlenden Echo; selbst wenn keine da ist, selbst wenn sie nicht hoffet und wartet, dass ihr eine antworte."²⁰

So sure was Herder of these ideas, that he could state as a natural law: "Ton der Empfindung soll das sympathetische Geschöpf in denselben Ton versetzen."²¹ Furthermore, he felt that if humans would only open themselves to the vibrations, the sound of nature, their lives would be greatly enriched:

"Nun lasset dem Menschen alle Sinne frei: er sehe und taste und fühle zugleich alle Wesen, die in sein Ohr reden - Himmel! welch ein Lehrsaal der Ideen und Sprache! ... die ganze, vieltönige, göttliche Natur ist Sprachlehrerin und Muse."²²

It should be noted that all beings which comprise the whole that is Nature were seen to experience these phenomena. What set humans apart was perceived to be their potential awareness thereof.

These ideas have their roots in the ideas of Rousseau, who called for a return to Nature, and who perceived the perfect human state to be that of the "noble savage", an idealized being, uncorrupted by civilization. The work of Herder, however, took these ideas much further: humans and human art did not have to return to Nature. People were already part of Nature - although most of them did not know it - and art and Nature should anyway be inseparable.

Given this context, it should be clear why the Romantics sought inspiration in what they perceived to be the natural states of human existence: in the world of childhood, and in the poetry and music of the simple people, "das Volk". Novalis wrote, for instance: "Wo Kinder sind, da ist ein goldenes Zeitalter."²³ Herder, in fact, saw it as the function of art to return people to the childhood state: "es war [die] Zauberkraft des Redners, des Dichters, uns wieder zum Kinde zu machen."²⁴ One is reminded also of the "dichtende Kind" whose artless sigh and kiss form part of Schlegel's definition of the "Universalpoesie".

The nineteenth century saw the dawning of what could be called the cult of childhood. Up till then childhood had been regarded merely as the preparatory stage to adulthood, and children were consequently usually either treated as miniature adults, or ignored altogether. With the rise of Romanticism, however, children became idolised (by the educated bourgeoisie, at least) as occupying an ideal state of being: that of innocence, purity and holy simplicity. This trend was not limited to Germany, but found expression in other parts of Europe, one of the most famous examples being, perhaps, Wordsworth's Ode "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood":

"Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!"

It should not be surprising, then, that writers often turned to the world of children for inspiration. Writers began for the first time to produce real, original children's stories, a development which reached a particular climax (in the nineteenth century at any rate) in the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen. Furthermore, many anthologies contain material intended for children, perhaps most notably the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* of the brothers Grimm.

The fact that this last mentioned work is a collection of folk material is not co-incidental. The Romantics idealised the condition of the peasantry, seeing it as the childhood state of human existence. The "simple folk", the "Volk", or at least the Romantic perception thereof, thus became of great interest and writers began assiduously collecting folk songs and folk tales.

Foremost among the early collections stand the two volumes of *Volkslieder* published in 1778 and 1779. It was, in fact, Herder who coined the word "Volkslied" in *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* which appeared in 1773, and it was in the summer of that year that he first applied himself to the task of compiling an anthology of folk songs from many lands, translated into the German language.²⁵

The cause of the five year delay before the publication of the first volume of *Volkslieder* can be traced to a very important fact: the actual peasantry of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries bore very little resemblance to the Romantic concept thereof, and folk songs often did not comply with the high standard of beauty and purity expected of true natural music. Herder had thus to establish for himself what constituted a "true" folk song (i.e. one that vindicated his theories) in order to select those suitable for publication, or, as he put it, "to separate the gold from the dross".²⁶

The problem facing Herder in terms of the difference between his expectations with regard to folk song and the actual state thereof is symptomatic of a much larger facet of Romanticism. In general, the world as perceived by the Romantic artist bore little resemblance to the real world of the time. In fact, the rise of Romanticism was virtually contemporary with the rise of industrialism, materialism, and the accompanying urbanisation and alienation of people from Nature.

In England, where the Industrial Revolution developed more quickly than on the Continent, writers seem to have been more aware of these factors. Wordsworth, in one of his best

known sonnets, wrote:

"The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
This sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
The winds that will be howling at all hours,
And are upgathered now like sleeping flowers;
For this, for everything, we are out of tune"

and his "Upon Westminster Bridge" is a celebration, not of a natural scene, but of the sleeping city of London.

Although the Industrial Revolution was slower to take root in Germany than in England, the results thereof began to be felt even here as a threat to Nature and future spiritual development. Given the aesthetic ideals of Romanticism in particular, it became increasingly difficult for the artist to turn to his/her own world as object (or subject as they saw it). When Novalis states, then, that "der Romantiker studiert das Leben", it should be understood that the "life" in question is largely his/her own invention.

1.2. The "neue Mythologie"

The effect of the phenomenon discussed in the preceding paragraphs can be seen in the desire of writers to create a "neue Mythologie" as Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling defined it in 1796²⁷. For this purpose they turned to the past, to medieval epics, the songs of the minnesingers, to folk songs and folk and fairy tales for inspiration. This trend had its origins in Britain, where the Edinburgh critic, Hugh Blair, published *Fragments of Scottish Poetry* in 1760²⁸. These were

purported to be fragments of a great Gaelic epic concerning the hero Fingal and recorded by the bard Ossian.

In actual fact they were a complete fraud, although Blair himself seems to have been quite unaware of this and to have published them in good faith. He had approached a young theologian and tutor, Michael Macpherson, to collect such lyrics and translate them from the Gaelic. How was he to know that Macpherson, although a Highlander, had no idea where to start looking for traditional Gaelic poetry and had simply composed the "translations" himself?

The Ossian fragments, followed by *Fingal* in 1762 and *Temora* 1763²⁹ must be regarded as among the most successful literary frauds of all time. Not that they were not identified as inauthentic, and denounced as such as early as 1763 by Samuel Johnson³⁰. Nevertheless, they were accepted at face value by readers all over Europe, and provided the inspiration for countless imitations as well as for paintings and musical compositions.

In Germany in particular, the Ossian influence was especially profound. In 1773 Herder published his *Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder alter Völker*³¹, a highly influential work in its own right, and the effects thereof and of the Scottish epics are clearly marked in the work of the so-called "Jenaer Kreis". This was a group of the foremost young German writers of their time, whose meeting place was the house of August Wilhelm Schlegel and his wife, Caroline. Here the Schlegel brothers, Dorothea Veit (daughter of Moses Mendelssohn and later wife of Friedrich Schlegel), Ludwig and Amalia Tieck, Friedrich Wilhelm Schelling, Novalis, and the physicist Johann Wilhelm Ritter assembled³². Their mouthpiece was the *Athenäum*, in which they were able to express the ideas which gave rise to their work, Novalis, in particular, using a characteristic fragment form.

It was in the *Athenäum* that the first thoughts about the new mythology were formulated. Novalis, for instance, wrote:

"Der Roman ist gleichsam die freie Geschichte - gleichsam die Mythologie der Geschichte. Sollte nicht eine Naturmythologie möglich sein? (Mythologie hier in meinem Sinn, als freie poetische Erfindung, die die Wirklichkeit sehr mannigfach symbolisiert usw.)"³³

That Novalis here writes of the novel is extremely important. The influence of the ancient epic, which had, in turn, given rise to an obsession with all things Medieval, was not expressed only in poetry, but also in prose. The fascination with the Middle Ages is embodied in English in the works of Walter Scott, themselves influential in Germany. In the works of the "Jenaer Kreis" it manifests itself particularly in Tieck's *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* and Novalis' unfinished *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*.

Especially in Germany, however, there was a turning to the old folk and fairy tales, which writers felt fulfilled the same function for their country as did the Ossian epics for Scotland. The fairy tale, in particular, came to play a special role in the development of the new mythology. In another fragment Novalis writes:

"Es liegt nur an der Schwäche unsrer Organe und der Selbstberührung, dass wir uns nicht in einer Feenwelt erblicken. Alle Märchen sind nur Träume von jener heimatlichen Welt, die überall und nirgends ist. Die höhern Mächte in uns, die einst als Genien unsern Willen vollbringen werden, sind jetzt Musen, die uns auf dieser mühseligen Laufbahn mit süßen Erinnerungen erquicken"³⁴.

The fairy tale had a special place in the universal poetic concept: "Das Märchen ist gleichsam der Kanon der Poesie - alles Poetische muss märchenhaft sein"³⁵ wrote Novalis. It was further seen to be closely connected to music, which was perceived to be one of the most important expressions of the creative force. Friedrich Schlegel wrote: "Ein Märchen kann und muss ganz musikalisch sein"³⁶; and Novalis:

"Das Märchen ist wie ein Traumbild ohne Zusammenhang. Ein Ensemble wunderbarer Dinge und Begebenheiten, z.B. eine musikalische Phantasie, die harmonischen Folgen einer Äolsharfe, die Natur selbst."³⁷

This rediscovery of the fairy tale resulted, not only in a renewed interest in existing fairy

tales, but also in the composition of new ones, so-called "Kunstmärchen". Among the "Jenaer Kreis" the most notable examples of this genre are to be found in the works of Tieck, Novalis and Brentano (who joined the group in 1798³⁸). Other writers also contributed to the genre, among the most important works being Friedrich de la Motte-Fouqué's *Undine*, and the tales of E.T.A. Hoffmann.

Although at a superficial level it may seem that the movement to create a new mythology was purely escapist, this was not the case. The Romantics did not see their task as the creation of an imaginary world into which one could flee from harsh reality. Rather they perceived their purpose to be the education of all people. "Wir sind auf einer Mission: zur Bildung der Erde sind wir berufen"³⁹, wrote Novalis. Nostalgia for the past (or the idealized picture of the past as the Romantics saw it), for legends and fairy tales was thus linked to the hope that through art the future could be placed in perspective⁴⁰.

1.3. The "Deutschromantik"

The precise nature of the mission of which Novalis was writing is best explored against the background of the historic events of the period in question and that immediately prior thereto. On the 14th of July 1789 the Bastille fell and France was plunged into revolution. The implications of the fall of the French monarchy, the founding of the Republic, and the rise of Napoleon which followed, were profound: waves of liberalism and nationalism spread through the whole of Europe.

Particularly to those countries under the Habsburg yoke, the events in France gave rise to the hope of freedom from tyranny. And in all countries, the call for liberty, equality and fraternity heralded the rise of a new order, a new way of thinking and of life. Napoleon, in

particular, became the symbol of Romantic genius, the embodiment of the "Great Man".

In Germany, too, these events inspired an upsurge in nationalistic fervour. However, while the events in France may at first have given rise to feelings of hope in the revolutionary German Romantics, that country soon came to be seen as a threat. The repulsion of the Prussians at Valmy in 1792, followed by the conquest of the Austrian Netherlands and the Rhine Frontier in 1797 represented a period of German humiliation at the hands of the French under Napoleon. This humiliation continued with the defeat of the Austrians at Ulm and the Austro-Russian Alliance at Austerlitz in 1805, and culminated in the shattering defeat of the Prussians at Jena in 1806 and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire.

It was in this climate of revolutionary fervour on the one hand, combined with national humiliation on the other, that the militant "Deutschromantik" came into being. This group (which included most of the members of the "Jenaer Kreis") saw as its purpose the familiarization of the German people with their own history and literature in order to create a German national identity and a spirit of unity in a people disunited by political boundaries.

Thus while earlier in the Romantic period writers had concerned themselves with the art of the people - with legends, fairy and folk tales and folk song in general - the writers of the "Deutschromantik" were concerned specifically with German folk literature as the national voice of the German people. Being German was seen as being an ideal state: "Das Volk ist eine Idee" wrote Novalis:

"Wir sollen ein Volk werden. Ein vollkommener Mensch ist ein kleines Volk. Echte popularität ist das höchste Ziel das Menschen."⁴¹

And "... Deutschheit ist echte Popularität und darum ein Ideal."⁴²

The shift in emphasis between the earlier Romantics and the "Deutschromantik" is clearly manifested in the anthologies of folk song collected by the two groups. Herder's two volumes of

Volkslieder have been seen to contain folk songs from several countries translated into German. Its cosmopolitan nature is already indicated in the introduction to Volume One, "Zeugnisse über Volkslieder": writers quoted include Montaigne, Milton, Philip Sidney, Addison and Burney, as well as Luther, Agricola, Gerstenberg and Lessing⁴³.

The high proportion of English writers is not surprising; the English folk song movement began earlier than its German counterpart, and Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765) in particular had a profound influence on German writers⁴⁴. Of the songs themselves, only about a quarter of those in Herder's anthology are of German origin. In contrast to this, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (*The Youth's Magic Horn*), compiled by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano and published between 1805 and 1808, contains no poem not German in origin.

1.4. Arnim and Brentano and Des Knaben Wunderhorn

Ludwig Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano met as students in Göttingen in 1801⁴⁵. Brentano (1778 - 1842), the grandson of the writer Sophie de la Roche, was acquainted with Goethe, Wieland and Herder⁴⁶, as well as being closely involved with the "Jenaer Kreis" from 1798. Arnim (1781 - 1831) also became involved with the group in that year, in his case through the composer and writer Johann Friedrich Reichardt⁴⁷.

One characteristic of the "Jenaer Kreis" was the intense friendships which grew up between its members. These friendships had a profound effect on Romantic thought and left a tangible heritage in the form of several works resulting from literary collaborations. The friendship between Arnim and Brentano was just such a relationship, and *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* must be numbered among the most important works on which members of the

group joined forces.

It seems clear that both Arnim and Brentano were interested in fairy tale and folk song before they met. In the case of Brentano, in fact, this interest had already resulted in his starting to collect folk literature. The preoccupation was further stimulated by their friendship, and, in particular, by a journey on the Rhine in the Summer of 1802. This was among the first of such journeys which were to become immensely popular with the young Romantics⁴⁸. Brentano wrote the following description of life on board the boat:

"Auf dem Postschiff ist ein herrliches Leben, ganz wie im Himmelreich, nur nicht umsonst, und etwas heisser. Die Rheinländer sind ein so edles Volk wie ihr Wein; sie haben ausser dem Sinn für Dichtung eine helle, klingende, hohe Stimme, besonders die Schiffer. In einen Mantel gehüllt, ohne Plan mit einem Freunde und einem Buche umherirrend, im Gesange der Schiffer von Tausend neuen Anklängen der Poesie berauscht, ohne Tag und Nacht zu sondern, frei von Sturm und Ungewitter, denn unser Gesang führte sie uns wie Bilder unsres Gemüts - so möchte ich wohl noch einmal leben; das Leben war frisch angebrochen wie die echte Quelle des Rheinischen Weins."⁴⁹

(This extract from a letter illustrates the difference between reality and the Romantic perception thereof. It is unlikely that the sailors would have given much thought to the "echoes of poesy" in their songs; in fact, either these were not very characteristic sailors, or Brentano was hearing what he wanted to in terms of the musical and verbal content of the songs.)

The enthusiasm of both Arnim and Brentano was kindled; their letters of the following two years reflect their growing interest in folk song. Finally, on 15 February 1805, Brentano wrote to Arnim:

"Ich habe Dir und Reichardt einen Vorschlag zu machen, bei dem Ihr mich nur nicht ausschliessen müsst, nämlich ein wohlfeiles Volksliederbuch zu unternehmen ... Es muss sehr zwischen dem Romantischen und Alltäglichen schweben, es muss geistliche, Handwerks-, Tagewerks-, Tageszeits-, Jahreszeits- und Scherz-lieder ohne Zote enthalten ... Es muss so eingerichtet sein, dass kein [Zeit-]Alter davon ausgeschlossen ist, es könnten die besseren Volkslieder

drinnen befestigt und neue hinzugedichtet werden."⁵⁰

Arnim replied: "Über das Volksliederbuch, denke ich sind wir lange einig, nicht ohne Dich und mit keinem Andern als mit Dir, möchte ich es herausgeben."⁵¹ In August of 1805, the first Volume of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* and in 1808 Volumes II and III and the appendix of "Kinderlieder" followed.

Included in Volume I was an article by Arnim, entitled "Von Volksliedern" and dedicated to Reichardt. In this article he (Arnim) outlined his and Brentano's purpose in producing the anthology:

"Wir wollen allen alles wiedergeben, was im vieljährigen Fortrollen seine Diamantfestigkeit bewahrt ... zu dem allgemeinen Denkmale des grössten neueren Volkes, der Deutschen ... Wir wollen wenigstens die Grundstücke legen, was über unsre Kräfte andeuten, im festen Vertrauen, dass die nicht fehlen werden, welche den Bau zum höchsten fortführen, und der, welcher die Spitze aufsetzt allem Unternehmen ... Es gibt eine Zukunft und eine Vergangenheit des Geistes, wie es eine Gegenwart des Geistes gibt, und ohne jene, wer hat diese?"⁵²

The nationalistic intention of the anthology, as well as the hope of the Romantics that, by taking what was good from the past, they could help to create a better future, are illustrated in this quotation. Especially the nationalistic element is also quite unequivocally stated in Arnim's "Aufforderung an alle Freunde deutscher Volkslieder" published in December 1805 in the *Reichsanzeiger*:

"Wären die deutschen Völker in einem einigen Geiste verbunden, sie bedürften dieser gedruckten Sammlungen nicht, die mündliche Überlieferung machte sie überflüssig; aber eben jetzt, wo der Rhein einen schönen Teil unsres alten Landes loslöst vom alten Stamme, andre Gegenden in kurzsichtiger Klugheit sich vereinzeln, da wird es notwendig, das zu bewahren und aufmunternd auf das zu wirken, was noch übrig ist, es in Lebenslust zu erhalten und zu verbinden. Der Krieg kann viele zerstören, der Frieden viele einschläfern, nur nicht die, welche in öffentlicher Tätigkeit das ... Treiben des Volkes leiten."⁵³

Virtually from the date of its publication, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* was the centre of a

great deal of controversy. On the one hand, some writers and critics were full of praise. Joseph Görres wrote:

"Es ist der Geist der Nation, der auf dem Ganzen ruht. Die Nation selbst hat in diesen Gesängen ihr Inneres aufgetan."⁵⁴

Goethe, too, praised the anthology highly:

"Von Rechts wegen sollte dieses Büchlein in jedem Haus, wo frische Menschen wohnen ... zu finden sein ... Am besten läge doch dieser Band auf dem Klavier des Liebhabers oder Meisters der Tonkunst, um den darin enthaltenen Liedern entweder mit bekannten hergebrachten Melodien ganz ihr Recht wiederfahren zu lassen oder ihnen schickliche Weisen anzuschmieden, oder, wenn Gott wollte, neue bedeutende Melodien durch sie hervorzulocken."⁵⁵

On the other hand, the collection came under fierce criticism, largely concerning the authenticity of the texts. Of all the songs in the *Wunderhorn*, only about a sixth are in their original form. All the others have been modified in some way - lengthened, shortened, "improved", rewritten entirely. In fact, some of the poems were not genuine folksongs at all: "Der Star und das Badwännelein", supposedly collected in the spinning room of a Hessian village, is actually a creation of Brentano, as is "Komm heraus, komm heraus, du schöne, schöne Braut".⁵⁶

The question of the desirability of making emendations to folk texts extended to a wider field than just the *Wunderhorn*: it involved all similar anthologies of the time. Writers like Jakob Grimm (who with his brother Wilhelm published the famous "*Kinder- und Hausmärchen*" in 1812) and Ludwig Erk took a strictly philological approach, whereby the text was sacrosanct. On the other hand, Arnim and Brentano, and most notoriously Zuccalmaglio took a free hand in altering texts, their justification being the idealization of the folk song⁵⁷. Their approach carried Herder's principle of selection one step further. Tismar writes:

"Volkspoesie und Kunstpoesie sollen darin verschmelzen. Das ist die ästhetische Utopie des Wunderhorns".⁵⁸

Viewed in these terms the *Wunderhorn* satisfies not only the nationalist ideal, but also,

by blending art and natural poetry, one of the criteria of the universal poetic concept as defined by Schlegel.

The strongest criticism of the *Wunderhorn* came from J. H. Voss, who in a review in the *Morgenblatt* accused Arnim and Brentano of forgery. Jakob Grimm too had fundamental problems with the anthology. He wrote to Brentano: "Historische Achtung vor diesen Liedern hattet ihr wohl keiner recht."⁵⁹ Arnim's attempt at justification - "Eine Geschichte des Volkslieds aus unserm 'Wunderhorn' zu entwickeln, scheint mir ebenso wunderbarlich, als die Mineralogie aus einem steinernen Gebäude zu studieren"⁶⁰ - met with no sympathy. "Sie lassen das Alte nicht als Altes stehen, sondern wollen es durchaus in unsere Zeit verpflanzen, wohin es an sich nicht mehr gehört"⁶¹, replied Grimm.

This final statement of Grimm lies at the heart of the controversy. For Grimm, folk songs were part of the past, for Arnim and Brentano they were part of the living present. The philological approach, by denying the right to modify folk songs, denied also one of the most basic facts of their existence, that they were anyway in a constant state of metamorphosis: a definitive folk song is a contradiction in terms. Grimm's criticism of Arnim and Brentano is not groundless, however. As Carl Dahlhaus writes, "it is doubtful whether the educated bourgeois who had gone out to hunt for folk songs actually possessed the qualifications to make a legitimate contribution to the traditional process of folk song and to modify the texts or tunes in a way that prolonged their lives."⁶²

While this controversy raged among those who devoted their energies to the collection of folk song, it had little or no effect on the general popularity of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. It became one of the best loved of all collections of German folk poetry, and can probably be regarded as the most important such anthology to come out of the Romantic period. In the field of Romantic music in particular, it was highly influential. Musicians took Goethe's suggestions

to heart: hundreds of arrangements and new settings of *Wunderhorn* songs exist, by, among others, Weber, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms. One composer, however, stands out in his fascination with the *Wunderhorn*. The inspiration of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* permeated all Gustav Mahler's work for a considerable period in his life, and the compositions arising therefrom eclipse the *Wunderhorn* settings by other composers in much the same way as the *Wunderhorn* itself eclipses all other Romantic collections of German folk song.

2. MAHLER AND *DES KNABEN WUNDERHORN*

Des Knaben Wunderhorn dominated Mahler's music from 1883 when he began work on the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* until 1901 when he completed "Der Tambourgsell". This period saw the composition of one song cycle (*Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*), two sets of songs on *Wunderhorn* texts (*Lieder und Gesänge Vols II and III; Des Knaben Wunderhorn*), two separate songs ("Revelge"; "Der Tambourgsell") and the first four symphonies, that is to say almost all the important music of Mahler's earlier compositional life.

2.1 Mahler's "discovery" of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

Writers seem unable to agree on exactly when Mahler first came into contact with the *Wunderhorn*. For some time the year 1888, as proposed by Guido Adler, was the accepted date for his discovery of the anthology¹ and this is reflected in the works of, for instance Paul Stefan² and Richard Specht³. In the light of musical evidence and more recent research it has become clear that this date is incorrect, however no consensus has been reached: Deryck Cooke gives circa 1886⁴, Paul Banks⁵ and Henry- Louis de La Grange both give 1887⁶ (although La Grange still gives 1888⁷ in the Appendix to *Mahler*), while Donald Mitchell considers the date to be some years earlier⁸. The matter is complicated by the fact that Mahler himself left no direct evidence in this regard and that the existing documentary and musical evidence is confusingly contradictory.

Possibly the most confusing factor with regard to determining when Mahler first got to know the *Wunderhorn* concerns the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*. By December 1883, when he began work on the *Gesellen* cycle⁹, Mahler definitely knew at least some of the poems: the

first song is based on the *Wunderhorn* text "Wann mein Schatz Hochzeit macht"¹⁰. It is surprising that this obvious piece of information went unnoticed for so long, especially as the acceptance of the later dates (in particular Adler's 1888) made the obvious similarities between the *Wunderhorn* and *Gesellen* texts a problematic one for several writers. Stefan for instance writes:

"Mahler hat diese Sammlung [DKW] erst mit achtundzwanzig Jahren kennengelernt und es ist merkwürdig wie die Worte, die er selbst mit seinen früheren Weisen fand, in der Stimmung und in der Form alten Liedern gleichen, ohne dass sie in eine Manier gezwungen wären oder dass die Anklänge störten. Es sind die vier Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen."¹¹

Specht and Bruno Walter faced the same problem:

"Die Texte zu diesen wundersam einfachen, unverschnörkelten, aus schwer beladener Jünglingsseele un gelenk und mit übertollem Herzen gesungenen Liedern sind von Mahler selbst; er kannte damals Des Knaben Wunderhorn noch nicht, aber sein ganzes Wesen drängte nach der Art wie sie in dem kostbaren Buch laut wird; drängte weg vom Literarischen, von aller Wortkunst und allen Reimspielen, drängte zum Naturlaut, zur kunstlos echten Empfindung. Dem, der diese anspruchslosen Dichtungen betrachtet, wird eines auffallen: die Verwandtschaft ihres ungemein echten, herzlich einfachen Tons mit den Wunderhorngedichten."¹²

"Mahler's verses... seem to be old fashioned, with a profound and sympathetic understanding, after the verses in *The Youth's Magic Horn*. Such, however, is not the case, for it is a fact that Mahler made the acquaintance of the Arnim-Brentano collection only a few years later".¹³

One possible solution to the problem is to take the view that, while Mahler only discovered the *Wunderhorn* as such in the late 1880's¹⁴, he was acquainted with individual poems anthologised therein at the same time when he composed the *Gesellen* cycle. This is the standpoint taken by La Grange who refers to Fritz Pamer's suggestion that Mahler "had consciously or unconsciously quoted from poems he had known in his youth or had read in a newspaper or an anthology... other than the *Wunderhorn*"¹⁵ to support his argument. He continues that "in any case these poems prove beyond a doubt that Mahler was already thoroughly acquainted with German folk poetry, of which he had made a thorough stylistic study"¹⁶.

This argument has the merit of providing an obvious and simple resolution of the anomaly, but unfortunately it contains contradictions which cannot be ignored. In the first place, it seems highly unlikely that anyone who had made "a thorough stylistic study" of German folklore would not have come into contact with the *Wunderhorn*. It was (and still is, for that matter) one of the standard works in the field.

A second contradiction arises from La Grange's handling of the poem or poems on which "Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht" is based. In his general discussion of the *Gesellen* cycle La Grange refers to Siegfried Günther's recognition in 1921 (Mitchell gives 1920¹⁷) of the similarity between the Mahler text and, according to La Grange, two poems from the *Wunderhorn*¹⁸. In his discussion of that song in particular, however, La Grange states that it is the *Wunderhorn* text that is based on two folk poems and, furthermore, that it is on the *Wunderhorn* text, and not on the originals, that "Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht" is based:

"Mahler has used the *Wunderhorn* text practically word for word, adding several verses of his own ... Except for a few word repetitions to strengthen the folklike character, and Mahler's addition of the bird, the two poems are identical."¹⁹

This does not necessarily mean, of course that Mahler could not have come across the *Wunderhorn* poem out of the context of the anthology, but it would seem to throw some doubt on the reliability of La Grange on this point.

Mitchell, on the other hand, rejects the possibility of Mahler's having first known individual *Wunderhorn* texts, partly on the grounds of the expertness of his imitation of the *Wunderhorn* style, but mainly because of the literary climate of his youth²⁰. He (Mitchell) cites close friends from Mahler's student days in Vienna (1875-1879) for whom the *Wunderhorn* was a matter of great interest and feels that it would have been peculiar, to say the least, had Mahler not come into contact with the anthology through, for instance, Josef Steiner and Richard Kralik:

"we cannot but conclude that Mahler absorbed the *Wunderhorn* with the very air he breathed as a student in Vienna, if, indeed he had to wait until then for his first acquaintance with the collection."²¹

This last phrase may be based on a remark of Mahler recorded by Ida Dehmel that "from his earliest childhood his relationship to the book had been particularly close"²². (It was Mitchell who was responsible for restoring Dehmel's diary entries to Alma Mahler's memoir of her husband²³.) Mitchell, in fact, goes so far as to trace the style, not only of the *Gesellen* songs, but also of *Das Klagende Lied* (1880) to the influence of the *Wunderhorn*.

His whole argument, however, stands directly in contradiction with another remark of Mahler made in a letter to Natalie Bauer-Lechner in 1893 concerning *Das Klagende Lied*: "You will ... see that at a time when I did not even suspect the existence of the *Wunderhorn*, I already lived in its spirit"²⁴. Although he refers to this letter, Mitchell makes no attempt to solve the problems it raises²⁵. Nevertheless, while it is beyond the scope of this thesis to attempt a solution, it seems that his arguments for the assumption that Mahler knew the *Wunderhorn* "in toto" before he began work on the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* are not without strong merits.

Whatever the case, establishing a precise date for Mahler's discovery of the *Wunderhorn* is less vital in this context than is attempting to ascertain why the collection held such an attraction for him and formed such an important stimulus for his work. In this regard it is necessary to ask the following question: did the world of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* create for Mahler a certain musical atmosphere in which various aspects of his compositional style were to manifest themselves, or was Mahler attracted to the collection precisely because it represented or even epitomised certain elements already existing in his musical world?

Only La Grange takes the former viewpoint:

"[In the *Wunderhorn* Mahler] discovered a naïve medieval universe peopled by soldiers and

children, animals and brightly coloured saints. A universe filled with humanity, love and sorrow, 'Sehnsucht' and eternal farewells, but filled also with a fresh humour that enchanted him. He had already touched on this universe three years earlier in the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, and its colourful naivety gave him the idea of a completely new kind of music, never before written."²⁶

It is difficult to see how La Grange reconciles this "completely new kind of music" with some of Mahler's earlier compositions, for instance "Hans und Grethe" from the first volume of *Lieder und Gesänge* and most notably *Das Klagende Lied*. On the musical evidence of these compositions alone it seems more acceptable that the *Wunderhorn*, rather than representing a new concept in Mahler's musical cosmos, provided him with an ideal vehicle for already existing ideas. This is even more the case if one assumes, as La Grange does, that Mahler did not know the *Wunderhorn* when he composed *Das Klagende Lied*, especially in terms of his already quoted remark to Bauer-Lechner.

That Mahler's interest in the *Wunderhorn* embodied "not... the introduction of a 'new' strand into [his] thought but, rather, the crystallization of a preoccupation that had long been established"²⁷, as Mitchell would have it, seems to have been the accepted view of most of his (Mahler's) contemporaries:

"Das Wunderhorn gab ihm die Worte, die er gesucht hatte. Seit er es kannte, brauchte er keine eigenen Worte für seine Weisen mehr zu finden."²⁸

"Als er dann... das Volksbuch Arnims und Brentanos gefunden hatte, war es ein Glücksfall für ihn; er war dessen überhoben, sein eigener Dichter zu sein, - hier sprudelte ihm entgegen, was er brauchte und er als erster hat diese bald bis zum Übermass ausgenützt, köstlich bildhaften, aus naiver Seele klingenden Liebes-, Landsknecht- und Gespenstergedichte der Musik gewonnen."²⁹

"When... [Mahler] made the acquaintance of The Youth's Magic Horn, he must have felt as if he had discovered his own native country. In it he found everything that agitated his soul and he

*Specht is mistaken here: many earlier settings of *Wunderhorn* texts exist by composers such as Weber, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms etc.

found it presented in the same manner in which he felt it: nature, piety, yearning, love, farewell, night, death, spectral doings, lansquenet manners, youthful spirit, nursery jokes, crisp humour - they all lived in him as well as in the poems."³⁰

Stefan, Specht and Walter are all writing from the viewpoint that Mahler discovered the *Wunderhorn* in 1888. That Mahler quite probably knew the anthology earlier, however, does not change the validity of these statements; Mitchell, for instance, rejects the word "discovery" as unsuitable to describe the beginning of Mahler's relationship with the book³¹. He also writes: "One doubts if the creative spark would have been blown into a flame by a volume of texts other than the *Wunderhorn* poems."³² Perhaps it would be safer to say that the flame thus kindled would have burned with a different aspect. To follow this line of thought further, however, would lead to useless speculation. If one accepts that the *Wunderhorn* did exercise a strong influence over Mahler and that it provided the catalyst for "the crystallization of a long established preoccupation", then one must investigate this preoccupation: Mahler's involvement with the world of folk music.

2.2 Mahler and folk music

The nature of Mahler's relationship with folk music, and, in particular, the role it played in his life before he came into contact with the *Wunderhorn*, is another area of some controversy. While writers for the most part agree that folk music and the military music which plays an important role in the *Wunderhorn* works, were prominent among his earlier impressions, they seem unable to reach consensus on either the type of folk music to which the young Mahler would have been exposed, or the extent of the influence of the music he heard as a child on his adult works.

Mahler himself attached great importance to childhood influences: Theodor Fischer writes that he "often stressed that, above all else, childhood impressions determine the nature of artistically gifted men"³³. Similarly Specht reports:

"Mahler hat mir... einmal die Äusserung getan, dass im künstlerischen Schaffen fast ausschliesslich jene Eindrücke endgültig fruchtbar werden und entscheidend sind, die in das Alter vom 4. bis zum 11. Jahr, also bis vor das Eintreten der Pubertät fallen; alles spätere werde nur selten zum Kunstwerk."³⁴

With this in mind he continues:

"Er hat seine Kindheit in einem mährischen Dorf verlebt, in dem eine alte Kaserne stand, und von den Soldaten die dort lagen, hat das Kind hunderte und hunderte von Volks- und Soldatenliedern gelernt, ja man hat seine musikalische Veranlagung daraus erfahren, dass das vierjährige Kind mehr als 200 solcher Lieder zu singen wusste; und wenn der kleine Gustav irgend einmal nicht im Haus zu finden war, so konnte man sicher sein, dass er entweder mit irgendeinem Regiment mitmarschiert war oder dass er auf irgendeinem Kaffeehaustisch stand und den dichtgedrängten Gästen seine Lieder zum besten gab."³⁵

According to Stefan, the songs that Mahler learned would have been those sung by Moravian servants:

"Die ersten Eindrücke bestimmen schon die allerfrüheste Zeit. Das mährische Gesinde, deutsches wie slavisches, singt gern und schön. Schwermütige Lieder wecken und schläfern ein. Die Signale der Kaserne tönen herüber. Die Regimentsmusik marschiert vorbei. Und der ganz kleine Knabe singt alles nach. Mit vier Jahren erhält er eine Ziehharmonika und spielt das was er gehört hat, ganz besonders die Märsche der Kapelle. Sie fesseln ihn so, dass er eines Morgens, in aller Hast angekleidet, den Soldaten nachhilt und den Marktfrauen, die ihn einholen, ein regelrechtes Konzert auf seinem Instrument gibt."³⁶

Mahler himself told the same anecdote to Natalie Bauer-Lechner, but without specifying the nationality of the songs he copied, or, in fact, whether they were folksongs at all:

"Apparently I was still a babe in arms when I copied little songs and sang them back. Then, when I must have been about three, I was given an accordion and by working out the notes of the

things I had heard I was soon able to play them perfectly.

"One day when I was not yet four a funny thing happened. A military band - something I delighted in all my childhood - came marching past our house one morning. I no sooner heard it than [sic] I shot out of the living room. Wearing scarcely more than a chemise - they hadn't dressed me yet - I trailed after the soldiers with my little accordion until quite some time later a couple of ladies from nearby discovered me at the market-place. By that time I was feeling a bit frightened and they said they would only promise to take me home if I played them something the soldiers had been playing, on my accordion. I did so straight away, up on a fruit stall where they set me, to the utter delight of the market women, cooks and other bystanders."³⁷

Fischer, a childhood friend and the son of one of Mahler's first music teachers writes that the "children would obviously always be there when the army marched out with fife and drum, staged exercises and played light music or at military funerals; we would blow childish imitations of signals which, as Guido Adler notes in his study, made such an impression that they crop up in Mahler's songs and instrumental works".³⁸ Also:

"Often we children would take part as spectators in folk festivities when townspeople and farmers - in summer in forest clearings, in autumn and winter in local pubs - would have music, dancing and singing. The dances were played by the authentic Iglau country band ('Bauernkapelle'; it consisted of three stringed instruments and a double bass with bow and handle). Among the peasant dances the 'Hatscho' stands out in its authenticity."³⁹

This last quotation would seem to suggest that the folk music to which the young Mahler was exposed would have been primarily Slavic in origin. This view is supported by several modern biographers. La Grange, for instance, tells that "the child heard the sad Slavic cradle songs that were to make such an impression on him and later so deeply mark his music"⁴⁰. Similarly H.F. Redlich speaks of the "nearly two hundred folk tunes caught from the lips of Slavonic servant girls"⁴¹. (Redlich is here basing the number on the report of Specht.) Fischer, however, feels that Specht exaggerated in this regard⁴² and, in the same vein, Mitchell wants to know who did the counting⁴³. Norbert Loeser writes somewhat poetically:

"Bohemen is van oudsher het muzickland bij uitnemendheid, de bewoners van dit deel van Europa verheugen zich in een aangeboren muzikaliteit, die zelfs het dagelijks leven met schoonheid en poëzie doordrenkt ... De zoon van Bernhard Mahler hoorde dus overal zingen, meestal melancholische, zwaarmoedige liederen, die horen bij een volk dat sinds eeuwen zijn zelfstandig bestaan heeft verloren en zich onderdrukt voelt."⁴⁴

These reports are based largely on that of Specht⁴⁵. Stefan, however, as has been seen, speaks of German and Slavic servants, Guido Adler of German and Czech folksongs⁴⁶, while Paul Banks writes that it was "primarily German folk songs which influenced the young composer, providing not merely material for direct musical quotation ... or the point of departure for an original melody ... but also the foundation of his folk style"⁴⁷.

According to Vladimir Karbusicky the reason for this confusion can be traced largely to lack of accurate knowledge about Mahler's early musical environment⁴⁸. He attacks the blind assumption of, for instance, Specht, Alma Mahler and H.J. Moser, that, because Iglau (where Mahler spent most of his childhood) lies in Moravia, the folklore which predominated in and around the town would necessarily have been Moravian. Both Karbusicky⁴⁹ and Banks⁵⁰ cite Iglau as a German "Sprachinsel". Karbusicky, however, draws the most complex and complete sociological sketch of a German town, with economic and political links to Bohemia, a dying miners culture, and Austrian garrison, and with strong Czech elements in the lower classes and the surrounding villages⁵¹. He also points out that, despite the fact that the majority of the population was German speaking, the most important musicians, including Mahler's first teacher, were Czech⁵².

The primary musical influences on Mahler would thus have been Czech, through lower class servants, not German as Banks would have it. Banks himself admits, somewhat contradictorily to his own argument, that Iglau was unique among the German "Sprachinseln" in what is now Czechoslovakia in its failure to preserve old German poetic and musical forms⁵³.

He further states that Mahler would have been influenced by Czech music from the surrounding countryside, especially that of the indigenous bagpipers⁵⁴. Mahler himself said to Natalie Bauer-Lechner:

"The Bohemian music of my childhood home has found its way into many of my compositions. I've noticed it especially in the 'Fischpredigt'. The underlying national element there can be heard, in its most crude form, in the tootling of Bohemian pipers [aus dem Gedudel der böhmischen Musikanten]."⁵⁵

The "böhmische Musikanten" would not all have been bagpipers, though these were common in the South and South West. Karbusicky gives the classical combination of these indigenous, travelling bands as a trio comprising violin, clarinet, usually E-flat, and double bass. Other common instruments were trumpet and viola. He further cites five dance melodies notated in villages in the Iglau area as authentic evidence that such groups were active during Mahler's childhood.⁵⁶

These ensembles would not, however, have provided the only instrumental folk music to which the young Mahler would have been exposed. The "authentic Iglau country band" of which Fischer writes would have been representative of "fiddle" ensembles to be found in both the German speaking and Czech population⁵⁷. That the German "Iglauer Fiedler" had a highly distinctive sound is attested to by Karbusicky. He describes as one of the oddities of the Iglau Germans the archaic musical style of the "Hochzeitsfideln"⁵⁸, according to Moser, "seit dem Mittelalter unverändert"⁵⁹. (This stands in direct contradiction to Banks' statement concerning the unique nature of the Iglau "Sprachinsel").

Karbusicky further quotes Ernst Klusen in a description of the composition and sound of the traditional Czech "fiddle" bands:

"Diese Musikanten spielen trapezformige flachbödige und flachdeckige Saiteninstrumente, von denen obere, die Klarfiedel und Sekundfiedel wie eine Geige, die mittlere, die Grobfiedel,

ebenso, aber ohne die hohe E Saite, und die Bassfidel, das Pläschperment, wie ein Cello gestimmt ist. Der Ton ist durchdringend, grell und scharf."⁶⁰

From its composition, as well as from the reference to the "Hatscho" and the rural setting, we can deduce that the "Bauernkapelle" described by Fischer would have been just such an ensemble.

Even from this fairly brief discussion it should be clear that Mahler's childhood musical impressions with respect to folk music would have been very varied. Despite the predominantly German nature of Iglau (in 1860 6% of the population were Czech, by 1870 18%⁶¹), the social distribution by which the Czechs were largely to be found in the servant class would have meant that much of Mahler's earliest contact with folk song would have been Czech. Frequent outings into the surrounding countryside would have increased his contact with the indigenous music of the region. This does not necessarily imply that he would have had no contact with German folksong - the family was after all German speaking - but to describe it, as Banks does, as the primary folk influence on his music is perhaps exaggerated.

Furthermore the indigenous influences would have been Bohemian Czech, not Moravian. Karbusicky cites many examples of folk melodies from the Iglau area which he associates with the "Gedudel der Böhmische Musikanten" and Fischer's reference to the "Hatscho" is also to a Czech dance. The fact that Iglau is in what was designated Moravia would not have affected the folk culture. As Karbusicky writes: "die Volkskultur respektiert bekanntlich die bestehenden politischen Grenzen kaum"⁶².

In contrast to the confusion surrounding the origins of the folk influences on Mahler, the question of the military music that the child would have heard is relatively unproblematic. The majority of writers accept that the band and signals of the Austrian garrison stationed in Iglau played an important role in his growing musical awareness, and this, as has been seen, is confirmed by Mahler himself (see p. 34).

Two dissenting voices are worth quoting, however. Firstly, in 1920 Max Brod claimed that Mahler's march themes showed the influence of traditional Hasidic tunes, not military music⁶³. The question as to how observant the Mahler family was, and thus to what extent the young Gustav would have come into contact with the music of the synagogue, is too complex to be explored here. It hinges on Bernhard Mahler's relationship to Judaism, a factor about which very little is known, and all recorded statements are hearsay. Thus Stefan Zweig reports that he was among those Jews "emancipated from narrow orthodoxy"⁶⁴, while La Grange feels that he was probably not a freethinker⁶⁵.

Whatever the case, the following can be said about Brod's statement. In the first place, Banks points out that Brod was an ardent Zionist and thus could hardly be expected to be objective on this point⁶⁶. Secondly, if these marches are Hasidic and not military in origin, then why are the texts to which Mahler connects them in the songs, always of a military nature? This alone should be enough to discount Brod's theory.

The second objection comes from the composer Ernst Krenek who had an uncle who grew up in Iglau at about the same time as Mahler. In an interview he denied that there was a garrison in Iglau at all until 1866 and stated that it was a Prussian, not an Austrian one. On being asked whether Mahler could have heard horn calls from the age of six, he replied:

"Probably. But that Prussian horn calls inspired him in his symphonies, I would rather doubt.

He just invented them. He didn't have to hear them."⁶⁷

The accuracy of such data about Iglau must be seen as questionable in the light of the evidence that it was, in fact, a military town - both Adler and Fischer, who also grew up there, confirm this. Nevertheless, the above quotation raises an important question, that of the extent of direct influence of Mahler's early musical impressions on his adult creative work. Like all questions involving the creative process, this cannot be approached in a simplistic fashion. To

suggest as Krenek does here that Mahler did not need to have actually heard horn calls to recreate them in his music, is somewhat controversial, and might even be seen as flying in the face of modern psychology and sociology.

It is widely accepted that the first years are the most important in the development of the human psyche, and this must be taken as particularly valid in the case of a composer like Mahler who was intensely aware of his background. Horn calls, both hunting and military, have become embedded in the vocabulary of art music, and thus, as Krenek would seem to imply, do not necessarily need to be imitations of "the real thing", however this does not preclude them from being just that. If Mahler himself recognised the importance of military music in his childhood, why not accept that this music may have been transmuted into his compositions as an adult.

2.3 Influence of early impressions

While it is clear that a statement like Krenek's is controversial, it is equally unsatisfactory to suggest, as some biographers do, that the folklike tunes, signals and military marches in Mahler's works are direct representations of the music he would have heard as a child. Such intimations are to be found, not only in the writings of Mahler's contemporaries and friends but also in more modern works, and it is quite possibly against such oversimplifications that Krenek is reacting. In 1950 Loeser writes:

"de liederen van het volk en de militaire muziek hebben voorgoed hun stempel op zijn muzikale inspiratie gedrukt. Zijn melodieën, vooral in liederen en in langzame symphonische delen, zijn dikwijls uit de sfeer van het Boheemse volkslied geboren, marsachtige rhythmies spelen in zijn oeuvre een belangrijke rol."⁶⁸

The process by which childhood impressions, and other external influences for that matter, are transformed into works of art is a highly complex one, and, furthermore, one which

differs from artist to artist. Nevertheless, certain concepts can be highlighted. Perhaps most important is the idea that the transformation of experience into art can be discussed in terms of a process of semanticization whereby the concrete material of the external world loses its original identity to take on new meaning in the context of the work of art. Thus, what may seem simple representation of objects, sounds, melodies and rhythms (depending on the medium of the artist) may actually hold a significance different, or even more profound in their new context in the language of the artist. Karbusicky writes:

"Der Mensch bildet seine Umwelt ab, erlebt sie aber nicht als Spiegelbilder. Eine Kopie der Wirklichkeit entsteht auf der niedrigsten Stufe der eingeschalteten Wahrnehmungsaktivität. Bei ihrer Entfaltung wird die zweite Möglichkeit einer Subjekt- Objekt-Relation genutzt; sie lösen sich in neuen Gestalten auf. Das Symbol verdeutlicht das Wichtige; es erschliesst, der Konvention entfliehend, die Wirklichkeit in unerwarteten Zusammenhängen. Die Verbindung mit dem Ausdruck, der dritten semantisierenden Möglichkeit einer Reaktion auf Umweltreize, gibt dem symbolischen Situationsbild die Prägung des Einmaligen, das Missverständnissen ausgesetzt ist. Werden bildhafte Elemente symbolisch in sprechenden Blickwinkeln zusammengestellt und mit der Kraft eigener seelischer Aktivität - des Ausdrucks - erhellt, so ist dies viel mehr als ein Abbild: man stösst bis zur schöpferischen Ursituation vor, in der das entscheidende 'Wort' fallen muss, das aus dem Chaos die erste Ordnung hervorbringt: der viel umfassende 'logos' im bekannten ... 'Am Anfang war das Wort'... hat eben auch die semantische Nuance von 'Verhältnis, Proportion, Art und Weise, Erwägung, Plan, Programm'."⁶⁹

In the case of elements assimilated in childhood (or the past of an artist in general), the artist, in this case the composer, does not function simply as a memory bank, storing material for later use. Rather, that which is stored is subject to constant semantic alteration dependent on the psychological activity of the individual person concerned. Images stored can thus be seen as simultaneously part of the objective world (present or past), and of the spiritual and mental being of the composer. In the latter context they may take on a special significance, either at the

moment of perception, or by a gradual or sudden process at a later date. At any rate, by the time such images undergo an aesthetic realization process in their transformation into the world of the artwork some form of semanticization or aestheticization process has in all likelihood already taken place.

Not all Mahler's early biographers were unaware that the process by which material from his early life was metamorphosed into its place in his adult work was a complex one. Guido Adler, for instance, writes:

"For Mahler, the German and Czech folksongs of his homeland were a solid anchor in his work as a composer. The military buglecalls, reveille and last post, exercise and drill motifs, were transformed in him to sound images that conveyed the figure of the old German foot-soldier. March rhythms accompanied his imagination throughout his life."⁷⁰

Whether or not Adler is correct in his analysis of the meaning of martial motifs in Mahler's music, the words "were transformed in him" point to an understanding that this music is more than simply representational. The same is to be said of Walter who writes of "the Romantic spirit of the military"⁷¹ rather than "military music" per se. Furthermore, of the folksong-like melodies he states:

"It should also be emphasised that, in the case of themes in the spirit of the folksong and belonging to the latter category, we never have to do with imitations, let alone, adaptations. It is a genuine popular tone which rises from Mahler's music and which ... corresponds to his nature."⁷²

2.4 Why Des Knaben Wunderhorn?

What does Walter mean when he says that the popular tone of these themes "corresponds to [Mahler's] nature? Answering this question brings one back to *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, or, more specifically, why Mahler was so attracted to this anthology. The profound influence of folk

song in general is not synonymous with a fascination with one particular collection of folk songs, although obviously the two factors are closely linked, and have their roots in the same facets of Mahler's character. Some exploration of the latter is therefore needed. It must immediately be added that what follows is not a full scale psychological analysis: that this is beyond the scope of this thesis should be clear from the fact that full length works are devoted to such analyses.

Furthermore, the value of such works remains debatable. Given the complexities of the human psyche, it seems dubious as to whether one could ever truly perform such an analysis in retrospect. What follows is thus a brief examination of certain relevant aspects of Mahler's personality which can be deduced from Mahler's writings and those of his contemporaries.

2.4.1 Mahler and Romanticism

"It seemed to me that I could see him through and through: could see the oppressive weight upon his soul placed there by the forbidden majesty of the rocky summits, could see his love of the tender flower, could see how in primeval depths of darkness he entered into the feelings of the beasts of the forest, [their] ... joys and animation, [their] ... shyness and drollery, [their]... cruelty and ferocity ... I saw him and I saw Pan within him." ⁷³

An understanding of what Walter calls Mahler's "Dionysian saturation with nature"⁷⁴ is essential to the understanding of certain aspects of both his character, and of his work. He (Mahler) was not, as Walter puts it, "a 'nature lover' in the usual sense of the word - let us say a garden enthusiast or a lover of animals"⁷⁵. The complexities of his relationship with Nature are, perhaps, best revealed in a letter to Josef Steiner written during the summer holidays of 1879 which Mahler spent on the Hungarian Puszta:

"Wenn mich der scheussliche Zwang unserer modernen Heuchelei und Lügenhaftigkeit bis zur Selbstentehrung getrieben hat, wenn der unzerreissbare Zusammenhang mit unseren Kunst- und

Lebens-verhältnissen imstande war, mir Ekel vor allem was mir heilig ist, Kunst, Liebe, Religion, ins Herz zu schleudern, wo ist dann ein anderer Ausweg als Selbstvernichtung. Gewaltsam zerreiße ich die Bande, die mich an den eklen schalen Sumpf des Daseins ketten, mit der Kraft der Verzweiflung klammere ich mich an den Schmerz, meinen einzigen Tröster. - Da lacht die Sonne mich an - und weg ist das Eis von meinem Herzen, ich sehe den blauen Himmel wieder und die schwankende Blume, und mein Hohnlachen löst sich in das Weinen der Liebe auf. Und ich muss sie lieben, diese Welt mit ihrem Trug und Leichtsinn und mit dem ewigen Lachen. O. dass ein Gott den Schleier risse von meinen Augen, dass mein klarer Blick bis an das Mark der Erde dringen könnte! O, ich möchte sie schauen, diese Erde, in ihrer Nacktheit, ohne Schmuck, ohne Zierde, wie sie vor ihrem Schöpfer daliegt, ich wollte dann hintreten vor ihrem Genius.⁷⁶

La Grange writes of this letter that it "breathes a passionate love of nature, not a 'literary' love, so often professed, if not practised, by the Romantics, but an indissoluble, profound attachment.⁷⁷ As should be clear from the previous chapter, this dismissal of the Romantic perception of Nature as "a 'literary' love" is hardly adequate. That La Grange has also misunderstood Mahler's concept of Nature is revealed by his (La Grange's) statement that "[Mahler] conceives [Nature] as a reflection of mankind, a grandiose and tragic entity".⁷⁸

In fact Nature is seen here as the Earth in its true manifestation, and as such it is a healing force. People should be part of this true state of existence, but all too often have torn away from it to a world of hypocrisy, of "Schein".⁷⁹ The natural world therefore does not exclude the human world entirely, but only insofar as the latter distracts from, impinges on, or even precludes the necessary profound relationship with this truth. Thus the church bells from the village form part of a peaceful evening scene by the river⁸⁰; the shepherd playing a melancholy folk tune on his shawm seems to be more part of the natural world than of those facets of the human world which Mahler rejects.⁸¹

While Mahler's ideas were obviously profoundly influenced by subsequent developments in human thought, his relationship with Nature brings him close to the world of the Romantics.

This affinity is further revealed in other sections of the letter to Steiner, which is full of references to the mythological. Related to the natural imagery is the primeval image of the Earth as Mother:

"O meine vielgeliebte Erde, wann, ach wann nimmst du den Verlassenen in deinen Schooss; sieh! Die Menschen haben ihn fortgewiesen von sich, und er flieht hinweg von ihrem kalten Busen, dem herzlosen, zu dir, zu dir! O, nimm den Einsamen auf, den Ruhelosen, allewige Mutter!"⁸²

In the passage above Mahler identifies himself with Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew (see also below). Other images are more whimsical though; the Erlkönig's daughter appears⁸³, and in the following fantastical vision Buxbaum (a Viennese cellist) is transformed into a kobold:

"Plötzlich steigt ein Tisch aus dem Boden, an ihm eine gespentische Gestalt, ganz in blaue Wolken eingehüllt: Es ist Melion, der den 'grossen Geist' besingt, und ihn zugleich mit echtem 'Dreikönig' räuchert! Und daneben sitzen wir wie zwei Ministranten, die zum ersten Male dem heiligen Amte dienen.

"Und hinter uns schwebt grinsend, mit Piqué-Karten bekleidet, ein Kobold, mit dem Angesichte Buxbaums, der uns mit furchtbarer Stimme, in der Melodie der Berlinischen Etuden zuruft: 'Beuget euch! Auch diese Herrlichkeit wird verschwinden!' Ein Wolkenstrom Melions bedeckt die Szene und die Wolken werden immer dichter und dichter, da plötzlich blickt, wie auf dem Raffaelschen Madonnenbild, ein Engelsköpfchen hervor, und unter ihm steht Ahasver mit seinen Leiden, und möchte hinauf zu ihm in seliger Nähe, doch der Engel entschwebt lachend, und er starrt ihm in unermesslichem Schmerze nach, dann nimmt er seinen Stock, und ziehet weiter, ohne Tränen, ewig, unsterblich!"⁸⁴

This passage, with its juxtaposition of grotesque humour, folkloristic and religious imagery, and the tragic figure of the wandering Jew, immediately brings to mind the writings of the Romantics, and, in particular, of E.T.A. Hoffmann. Mahler's affinity to Hoffmann is well documented: La Grange writes: "Hoffmann's humour - satirique, grotesque, extravagant, fantastic, grimacing, linked to the world of sorrow and to that of dreams - came to life again in Mahler's music."⁸⁵

Several of his (Mahler's) contemporaries even went so far as to compare him to Kapellmeister Kreisler as the latter appears in that writer's *Kreisleriana* and *Der Kater Murr*. Specht thus writes: "Er hatte etwas von Kapellmeister Kreisler".⁸⁶ Stefan is even more positive: "Kreisler's Wiedergeburt auf der Ebene des irdischen Lebens heisst Gustav Mahler"⁸⁷, and Walter also describes him as "the very incarnation of... Kapellmeister Kreisler"⁸⁸:

"He seemed to me ... the very archetype of a Romantic. His appearance, his blazing, indeed fantastical artistic zeal, his intensity, his grotesque humor, all struck me as the incarnation of one of E.T.A. Hoffmann's fantasy figures."⁸⁹

Whether Mahler was aware of these comparisons or not, he certainly had a deep admiration for the work of Hoffmann, not only for his stories, but also for his writings on music. In 1901 he wrote to Alma:

"If you will turn a sympathetic eye on Hoffmann's works, you will find a new light on the relation of music to reality; for music, mysterious as it is, often illumines our souls with a flash of lightning and you will feel that the only true reality on earth is soul. For anyone who has once grasped this, what we call reality is no more than a formula, a shadow with no substance."⁹⁰

Mahler's readings in the Romantics extended further than Hoffmann though. Floros cites among his favourite authors Hoffmann, Eichendorff⁹¹, Hölderlin⁹² and Jean Paul⁹³, and the last mentioned seems to have been his best-loved writer of prose. This is made evident in a remark to Bauer-Lechner: "Look at Jean Paul, who is, after all, such an extraordinary person, wittier and more extravagantly gifted than anyone else; yet who reads or even knows of him today?"⁹⁴, as well as in the following passage from Walter's biography:

"We often talked about the great novel [*Titan*] and the figure of Roquairol, especially, whose influence may be sensed in the funeral march of the *First*. Mahler asserted that, more or less, every gifted man carried within himself such a Roquairol - that is to say, a self-reflecting, decomposing, scoffing and imperilling spirit - and that he could gain the full mastery of his productive powers only after having overcome it. He felt very much at home in the wildly complicated humor of Schoppe. His

favourite work was *Der Siebenkäs*, which he pronounced to be Jean Paul's most perfect creation."⁹⁵

La Grange, in fact, compares Mahler, not only to Kreisler, but to Albano in *Titan* in his search for "for the absolute and the meaning of life"⁹⁶. He further points to the influence of Jean Paul on Mahler's early style of letter writing: "[His letters] echo Jean Paul's extravagances, his love of nature, his exaltations and his sudden shifts from the sublime to the grotesque."⁹⁷ (Mahler himself was later to write:

"I remember clearly the time when I tried to cultivate an elegant style and went to a great deal of trouble to write what are known as 'fine letters'. My correspondent was only a pretext, an excuse to express my thoughts ... One should never assume a pose, nor disguise oneself, inwardly or outwardly ..."⁹⁸)

The influence of the Romantics on Mahler as a composer should not be underestimated.

Walter writes:

"Romantic ... is his daring and unbounded imagination, the 'nocturnal' in him, the 'nature sound', as is also his inclination to extremes, to excesses, and to the use even of the grotesque in order to achieve the desired expression, but, above all, the intermixing of poetic and other subjects of conception with his musical imagination. It was a violently agitated world of music, passionate humanity, poetic imagination, philosophic thought, and religious feelings with which he wrestled."⁹⁹

The Romantic element must, furthermore, have played a role in Mahler's attraction to *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. In fact one might say that those factors which led him to find in the anthology the perfect vehicle for at least one facet of his musical thought, were among those which led Arnim and Brentano to compile it in the first place. For Mahler, for instance, as for Arnim and Brentano, the poetry and music of the "Volk" formed part of the natural world. In 1905 he wrote to Ludwig Karpath of the *Wunderhorn* that "diese Poesie [unterscheidet] ... sich [wesentlich] von jeder anderen Art 'Literaturpoesie' und [könnte] beinahe mehr Natur und Leben - also die Quelle aller Poesie - als Kunst genannt werden."¹⁰⁰ If one reads this in the context of an earlier statement in a letter to Richard Batka (1896) - "[Meine Musik] ist immer und überall

Naturlaut!"¹⁰¹ - it should to some extent clarify Mahler's preoccupation with the anthology.

The concept of the folk song as "natural" music, however, is not, of course, exclusively applicable to the *Wunderhorn*. If this had been the only criterion, then there seems to be little or no reason why Mahler should not have turned to another anthology for inspiration. It is here that the content of the poems, with their broad humor, grotesquerie, images of the divine in worldly contexts, and even deep tragedy, possibly appealed to those very elements in Mahler which must already have been stimulated by, for instance, his reading of Hoffman and Jean Paul. Ironically, much of this quality of the *Wunderhorn* is as a result of the emendations, alterations, rewriting and insertion of original poems by Arnim and Brentano, which remove the anthology from the field of true natural poetry, and of which Mahler seems to have been unaware. In Mahler's work, however, the poems can, in fact, be seen to function as true folk poetry. One is dealing here, not with what the poems actually are, but with what the composer perceives them to be. Mahler's acceptance of the *Wunderhorn* as the voice of the people in their natural state raises the poems to that level in the context of his work.

2.4.2 Mahler's personality

The influence of folk song and the Romantics, however, can be seen at least in part, as external manifestations of the same inner motivation which led to Mahler's fascination with the *Wunderhorn*. Identifying them is important, but it does not fully answer the question of in what way "a genuine popular tone... corresponds to Mahler's nature".

Otherwise stated, why does Stefan say that the *Wunderhorn* gave him the words he needed; what does Specht mean by "hier sprudelte ihm entgegen, was er brauchte"; in what way was Mahler's discovery of the anthology like the discovery of "his own native country"? In order

to answer these questions one needs to go a little more deeply into the composer's personality. This type of investigation, as has been discussed, is problematic, especially if one is reliant mainly on the accounts of others for information. The complexity of the problem only increases if one takes into account that those who know a person truly well are often least likely to give a reliable, objective account, precisely because of the depth of their involvement.

This is certainly the case with Mahler. Numerous descriptions and discussions of his character by his contemporaries exist, but these often conflict. Some are, in fact, so disparate that they hardly seem to concern the same person. Perhaps one of the most telling statements is that by Specht: "Ich glaube nicht, dass es einen Menschen gegeben hat, der Mahler wirklich gekannt hat."¹⁰² Similarly Stefan writes: "Man hat ihn nicht verstanden, so lange er lebte wenigstens; man hat ihn kaum gekannt, oft gar nicht kennen lernen wollen."¹⁰³ These aspects should be borne in mind with reference to the discussion which follows.

"In diesen Wunderhornliedern", writes Specht, "in ihrer stillen Einfalt und ihrem trauten Humor hat Mahler sein ganzes Kindergemüt offenbart".¹⁰⁴ Numerous references to the childlike side of Mahler's character are to be found in the writings of those who knew him. In some, like the remark of Specht just quoted, this aspect of Mahler's personality is seen as a positive element, in others, less so. Specht again illustrates this.

"Er war wirklich ein grosses Kind. Dieser oft unheimlich scharfsinnige Mensch, der durch die funkelndsten Paradoxen, geschliffensten Antithesen und schneidendsten Ironien des Dialogs gleich einer unbefangenen natürlichen Gesprächsfunktion überraschen und wehrlos machen konnte, vermochte es noch mehr durch die reine, unberührte Kindlichkeit seines Wesens. Er war jäh vertrauensvoll und jäh misstrauisch wie ein Kind. Dieses Misstrauen konnte sehr leicht geschürt werden; durch ein hingeworfenes Wort eines Böswilligen, ja durch ein scheinbar unabsichtliches Lächeln oder einen Blick; aber es konnte dann kaum jemals getilgt werden, und gerade damit ist viel an ihm und an anderen gesündigt worden. Und vor allem: er war liebebedürftig wie ein Kind. Er brauchte Liebe, Verstehen, Zärtlichkeit wie wenige andere, und gerade an ihn, der doch wieder durch

Schroffheit, durch abweisende Launenhaftigkeit und Sprunghaftigkeit von sich wegscheucht, wagte diese Empfindung selten heran; hatte nur selten den Mut zu dem: 'nein, nein, ich liess mich nicht abweisen', dem er aus wunden, rufendem Herzen die rechten, unvergesslich standhaften und rührenden Töne gegeben hat. Wozu freilich kam, dass es sich im Alltag gern bevormunden und beeinflussen liess; dass er, ganz in seinem Traum und seiner Welt entrückt, das 'Praktische' des täglichen Lebens, also auch seinen Verkehr, anderen zu bestimmen überliess und nicht immer jenen, die in selbstloser Liebe das für ihn Beste taten."¹⁰⁵

Specht here seems to isolate two different aspects of Mahler's personality. First he speaks of the "pure untouched childlikeness of [Mahler's] being" (my italics), the kind of simple innocence that could be related to the previous quote about the *Wunderhorn* songs. The greater part of the discussion is devoted, however, not to this aspect, but to a kind of childishness that could make him gullible, credulous and someone of whom it was easy to take advantage.

This is not the only report of this element of Mahler's character. His sister Justine is known to have worried about the excursions which he made into the country alone on his bicycle, because of his propensity of losing everything with him and because of the way people with spurious hard luck stories were able to do him out of his money¹⁰⁶. On the other hand, contradictory descriptions do exist. Klemperer, for instance, describes him as "a thoroughly realistic and cheerful person, energetic, vigorous, kindly, helpful, and well aware of what to expect from the world."¹⁰⁷ And surely Mahler must have had some degree of worldly knowledge to survive as director at the Vienna Opera?

Nevertheless, too many reports of the childlike or childish side of Mahler's nature exist to be entirely discounted. What is in question is whether this aspect of Mahler's character is in any way expressed in his creative work. With respect to the negative, childish side, the fact that Specht sees Mahler's gullibility as being in part connected with his sometimes near total withdrawal "into his dream, his world" is of the utmost importance. Like a child, Mahler seems

to have been extremely egocentric, and this was inextricably bound up with his creative genius, although it inevitably interfered with his personal relationships.

Walter, for instance, states that "Mahler... was too much centred in himself, in his work, and in his strongly agitated inner life, and he gave too little thought to persons and things".¹⁰⁸

"He, who was full of the faculty of love, as is proved by his music, loved humanity but, in common with, we might say, all productive minds, he often forgot man. When he did perceive him he became accessible to his needs; but usually his gaze was directed inwards."¹⁰⁹

Much the same is noted by Specht:

"Er konnte jahrelang mit Menschen verkehren, ihnen Freundschaft und Hilfsbereitschaft erweisen und wusste dabei gar nichts von ihren eigentlichen Lebensverhältnissen, von ihren Sorgen und Hoffnungen. Trug man sie zu ihm, so half er, in jener Güte des Egozentrischen, der fremdes Leid nicht sehen mag, - und vergass es. Musste er vergessen. Er hatte sein Werk zu tun."¹¹⁰

Both Specht and Walter, thus, see Mahler's problems in the field of human relationships as a direct consequence of his creative genius: it was because "his gaze was directed inwards", because "he had his work to do", that Mahler's behaviour towards the world around him often seemed eccentric or even inappropriate in the terms of that world. Their argument would seem to suggest that they feel that this aspect of his personality was rather an expression of Mahler's involvement in his work, than that it is likely to be expressed therein. As Walter writes, the music rather expresses his love for humanity than Mahler's (at least sometimes) inept handling of his fellow human beings.

But what about the childlike - as opposed to childish - aspect of Mahler's personality, what Specht calls the "pure, untouched childlikeness.... of being"? There seems to be hardly a writer among Mahler's contemporaries that does not link this element of Mahler's character to his work, and especially to the *Wunderhorn* Songs and Symphonies and several writers see Mahler's affinity to folk song, fairy tales and the fantastic as closely linked to the childlike

element in his personality. Specht, for instance, sees the everyday manifestation thereof in his relationship with children and, in particular, in his storytelling ability:

"Wer aber die fromme Unberührtheit und die unbefangene Wahrhaftigkeit seines Wesens erleben wollte, musste ihn mit Kindern sehen ... Wer ihn ... mit seinen Kindern sprechen hörte oder spielen sah, brauchte gar keines seiner Werke zu hören, um seine mit den tiefsten kosmischen Dingen verknüpfte Genialität zu spüren. In den rasch erfundenen Geschichten, die er seinen kleinen Mädchen erzählte, war - von den Beziehungen zu diesen Kindern ganz abgesehen - eine Weisheit, ein Naturgefühl, ein Verstehen des Kindergemüts und eine Lebensoffenbarung, die sich in den schlichtesten Vorgängen und Symbolen des Märchens mit einer Phantastik und einer Klarheit ausdrücken, die dem Fassungsvermögen der Kinder vollkommene Befriedigung und Vergnügen an all dem Fabulieren gab, das ihrem Verstand und ihrer Empfindung doch ganz nahe war."¹¹¹

That Specht sees this as an essential part of Mahler's creative spirit is revealed in his description thereof as "[gesegnet] von allen Dämonen der Ekstase, von aller kindlichen Reinheit eines Naturwesens."¹¹²

For Stefan it is precisely that aspect of Mahler's character that enabled his acceptance of the fairy tale, his affinity to folk music and the *Wunderhorn* which caused the lack of understanding of his (Mahler's) music by his contemporaries:

"Georg Göhler ... meint, der Mangel an Phantasie führe unsere Zeit dazu, dem phantasiereichen Künstler Mahler fremd zu bleiben. Das ist ein Stück Erkenntnis. Aber die ganze tut uns Not. Was der Zeit fehlt, ist nicht so sehr die Phantasie wie der Mut zur Phantasie, der Mut zum Erlebnis, zum Gedanken, zur Dichtung, zur sehnsuchtsvoll erträumten, einsiedlerischen und doch frohen Einheit des Lebens mit der Kunst. Die Technik hat uns unterjocht. Wir fliegen in Wirklichkeit, aber in Wahrheit können wir uns nicht aufschwingen. Novalis und die Seinen haben es noch gekonnt. Uns ist die Fähigkeit des Schauens, die gotteingeflösste Gewissheit von der Erhabenheit der idealen Welt über die des Scheines gelähmt, wir sind vom Rausch der Tatsachen geknechtet. Das Reine, das Ursprüngliche, das Naïve, das in sich geschlossen Vollkommene ist uns unfassbar geworden. Wir glauben nicht an die Realität des Märchens; und nun tritt uns das Märchen fast zum Greifen nahe. Es tritt uns nahe: es verstimmt uns. Die Zeit ist selber nicht imstande, naiv zu sein; muss sie nicht heben.

der ihr zum trotz naiv ist, Volkslieder singt, das Wunderhorn in sich gestaltet, übersehen, ungeachtet lassen, und schliesslich mit der griesgrämigen Anerkennung, die sie für das 'Können' hat, verachten?"¹³

Similarly Adler ascribes what can be described as little short of revelatory properties to the childlike aspect of Mahler's personality: "So wie [Mahlers] Verstand eindrang in die Werke Kants ... so erhielt sich sein Gemüt den naiven Märchenglauben, eine schwärmerische Märchenseligkeit, und er sah mit verklärtem Künstlerblick in den Himmel, der sich ihm öffnete."¹⁴

Both of these last two quotations have one word in common in their descriptions of Mahler: the word "naïve". This seems to be in keeping with the descriptions of the childlike aspect of Mahler's nature. Naïve comes into both English and German from the French "naïf", which in turn derives from the Latin "nativus" from "natus", meaning "born". The state of naïvety would thus originally have meant a state not developed since birth, a newborn innocence, and this is carried into modern definitions. The Oxford English Dictionary, for instance defines "naïve" as "natural, unaffected, simple, artless" and gives a second definition attaching a pejorative connotation to the word: a naïve person is often perceived as being gullible, credulous, ingenuous or silly.

Closer examination of the quotations using the term in the context of Mahler and the *Wunderhorn*, however, reveals that these definitions do not fully encompass the meaning of the word as used by Stefan and Adler. Why, for instance does Stefan speak of "the naïve, the complete in itself", and what does he mean by saying that the "age itself is not capable of being naïve"? And why should Mahler's belief in fairy tales "transfigure his artistic vision" and enable him to see "a heaven open itself to him", as Adler would have it?

References are also to be found to the naïvety of the *Wunderhorn* poems. Specht speaks of "köstlich bildhaften, aus naïver Seele, klingendes Liebes-, Landsknecht- und

Gespenstergedichte", and even among the modern writers La Grange describes the contents of the anthology as "a naïve medieval universe". These writers are clearly using the word in a sense which seems to be related to the philosophic or the aesthetic, and it is this which makes their use of the term so interesting in the context of this discussion.

The purpose of this section has been to establish what it was that so attracted Mahler to an anthology of folk poetry that it could form an important inspiration for all of his works for around eighteen years. In order to do this one must establish a link between the aesthetic world of the *Wunderhorn* and Mahler's own personal aesthetic.

The importance in Mahler's life of the Romantic universe of which the *Wunderhorn* was a manifestation of one aspect, has already been discussed. It seems that Specht, Stefan and Adler are citing what one might call Mahler's aesthetic naïvety, and a connection between this aspect and the aesthetic naïvety of the anthology might be an even more specific link between the composer and the collection. Stefan states it quite unequivocally: "Diese Lieder sind ihm am meisten eigen, denn sie sind wirklich naïv."¹⁵ It would thus seem sensible at this point to examine the term "naïve" in some detail, to establish whether there is a specific aesthetic usage of the term, and, if so, whether and how it may be connected with Mahler's *Wunderhorn* works.

3. NAIVETY AS AN AESTHETIC CONCEPT

3.1. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Naïvety is one of the central concepts in French and German aesthetics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It can be seen as a specialized development of the root meaning of the term, (innocence as in the newborn), and is closely connected to the aesthetics of nature as developed, for instance by Rousseau. As has been mentioned, the ideas of Herder, Novalis, the Schlegels et al, had their roots in the theories of thinkers like Rousseau, and, in fact, many of the concepts to be discussed under the heading "naïvety" were also very influential on those writers in whose work romanticism was defined and exemplified.

The use of the word "naïve" as an aesthetic term has its roots in France in the works of, for instance, D. Bouhours and J. de La Bruyère¹. For French writers the naïve was at once connected to and distinct from the natural. Bouhours writes: "Toute pensée naïve est naturelle; mais toute pensée naturelle n'est pas naïve."² The distinction lies in the connection between the naïve and the spiritual. La Bruyère states that that which is naïve when said by an "homme d'esprit" is a "sottise" in the mouth of a fool³. Naïvety comprises an air which is at once simple, ingenuous, and reasonable⁴.

Among the most important French writings on naïvety are those of A. H. de la Motte, who links naïvety closely to the world of feelings. Thus, what is that which is natural is the opposite of anything contrived, mannered, or forced, that which is naïve stands specifically in contrast to anything considered or calculated. This leads la Motte to perceive a possible connection between the sublime and the naïve insofar as both represent "l'expression toute nue du sentiment".⁵

This link between the sublime and the naïve was taken up and expanded on by the Germans. Christoph Martin Wieland, for instance, defines the "erhabene Naive" as "die wahre Unschuld einer Seele, die sich immer entblößen darf, ohne beschämt zu werden"⁶, while Moses Mendelssohn (who introduced the concept into German aesthetic writings in his "Über das Erhabene und Naive in den schönen Wissenschaften") sees naïvety of moral character in the "Einfalt im Äusserlichen, die, ohne es zu wollen, innerliche Würde verrät"⁷. Mendelssohn further distinguishes between "eine Naivität", a sudden and isolated naïve action, and "die Naivität", a state of constant naïvety.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the usage of the term was well established, within fairly limited boundaries. For writers like those quoted above, naïvety comprised an attitude that was noble and simple and free from artifice. However, these same qualities meant that the line between the naïve and the ridiculous was very narrow⁸, as simplicity of character could easily lead to behaviour considered unacceptable, even laughable, according to the sophisticated and artificial social code which governed the life of the upper classes of the period. The exploration of the concept reaches fruition in the works of Kant, in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (§ 54), and especially in Schiller's *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*.

3.2 Kant and Schiller

3.2.1 Kant's definition of naïvety

In the context of the discussion above Kant's definition of naïvety - "der Ausbruch der Menschheit ursprünglich natürlichen Aufrichtigkeit wider die zur anderen Natur gewordenen Verstellungskunst"⁹ - should come as no surprise. In defining naïvety, Kant does not move that

far from the conventions of the time. Rather, he uses the term in much the same way as his predecessors, but incorporated into his own categorisation.

Thus, for Kant too, naïvety is connected with the expression of the natural in the human spirit. This has important moral implications: an "outbreak" of the type described above is of a temporary nature, but while it lasts the "schöne, aber falsche Schein" is suddenly reduced to nothing¹⁰.

For this reason, naïvety brings about a dual reaction in the observer: "Man lacht über die Einfalt, die es noch nicht versteht, sich zu verstellen, und freut sich doch auch über die Einfalt der Natur, die jener Kunst hier einen Querstrich spielt."¹¹ The fine line between the naïve and the ridiculous is apparent here - the naïve person is likely to behave in a way amusing to those who do not understand it for what it is - but Kant makes it clear that laughter at naïvety indicates a lack of comprehension of that which Wieland, for example, saw as the sublime aspect of the condition.

Thus the latter reaction, in particular, has important implications:

"Dass aber etwas, was unendlich besser als alle angenommene Sitte ist, die Lauterkeit der Denkungsart (wenigstens die Anlage dazu), doch nicht ganz in der menschlichen Natur erloschen ist, mischt Ernst und Hochschätzung in dieses Spiel der Urteilskraft."¹²

In terms of the use of "naïve" as an aesthetic term, Kant is emphatic. For him, naïve art is a contradiction in terms:

"Eine Kunst naïv zu sein, ist ... ein Widerspruch; allein Naivität in einer erdichteten Person vorzustellen ist wohl möglich, und schöne obzwar seltene Kunst. Mit der Naivität muß offenherzige Einfalt, welche die Natur darum nicht verkünstelt, weil sie sich darauf nicht versteht, was Kunst des Umganges sei, nicht verwechselt werden."¹³

3.2.2 Schiller's *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*

That Schiller called his famous essay *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* should be enough on its own, to indicate that his concept of naïvety differed in important aspects to that of Kant. In fact, this essay takes a far more complex view of the term than that of any other writer of the period and is the central work in its category.

The key to the work's complexity lies in the point that, unlike Kant, Schiller was not only a philosopher, but also a creative writer. In discussing aesthetic terms, he was thus not merely defining a concept, but also describing and even justifying his own artistic existence. The essay is more than a reaction to Kant's work on naïvety. It is also an attempt by Schiller to justify his place in the artistic canon.

In order to understand this, it is necessary to understand Schiller's relationship with Goethe, as it was this rather than his reaction to Kant which explains the justification for the essay, and helps the reader understand why Schiller felt it necessary to redefine the term naïve. Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly goes so far as to describe the work as "a monument to the friendship between two great writers [Schiller and Goethe]"¹⁴.

For Schiller the question of whether or not art could be naïve was never in doubt. Before he started work on the essay he had already drawn a distinction between what he called the "speculative spirit and the intuitive spirit". This distinction is carried into the essay, with the word "intuitive" being replaced with the word "naïve", while "sentimental" takes the place of "speculative"¹⁵.

Schiller had an enormous admiration for Goethe, whom he saw as an intuitive, and hence naïve writer. He (Schiller) was, however, aware that his own *modus operandi* was quite different. Goethe himself wrote: "It wasn't Schiller's way to proceed with a certain unconsciousness and

as though by instinct; rather he had to reflect on everything he did."¹⁶ It was this conflict, between Schiller's esteem for what he saw as naïve writing, and the necessity to justify his own work, arising from reflection rather than intuition, which led to the formulation of the ideas expressed in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*.

This is communicated in a letter to Wilhelm von Humboldt written on the 26 October 1795, in which he states that the essay is an attempt to answer the following question: "Given my distance from the spirit of Greek literature [which Schiller considered naïve¹⁷], to what extent can I still be a poet and indeed a better poet than the extent of that distance seems to allow."¹⁸

According to Watanabe-O'Kelly, the implication in the question "I am not a naïve poet; is it possible that I can still be a good one?" is "Does [the fact that I am not naïve] mean that I am necessarily a worse poet than Goethe who *is* naïve"¹⁹. If one reads Schiller's essay with this in mind, then one's understanding of at least a large part of what he was trying to say becomes clear.

Schiller's starting point in his discussion of naïvety is Kant's definition (not surprisingly, seeing that Kant was regarded as one of the foremost, if not *the* foremost thinker of his day). Like Kant, Schiller perceives naïvety as the victory of the natural over artifice and affectation: "Zum Naiven wird erfordert, daß die Natur über die Kunst den Sieg davontrage"²⁰. Schiller thus begins his essay by defining what he perceives to be the human relationship to nature:

"Es gibt Augenblicke in unserm Leben, wo wir der Natur in Pflanzen, Mineralen, Tieren, Landschaften, sowie der menschlichen Natur in Kindern, in den Sitten des Landvolks und der Urwelt, nicht weil sie unsern Sinnen wohlthut, auch nicht weil sie unsern Verstand oder Geschmack befriedigt (von beiden kann oft das Gegenteil stattfinden), sondern bloß weil sie Natur ist, eine Art von Liebe und rührender Achtung widmen."²¹

This sort of love of, and respect for nature can only occur under special circumstances:

"Diese Art des Interesses an der Natur findet nur unter zwei Bedingungen statt. Fürs erste ist es durchaus nötig, daß der Gegenstand, der uns dasselbe einflößt, Natur sei oder doch von uns

dafür gehalten werde; zweitens, dass er (in weitester Bedeutung des Worts) naiv sei, d.h. daß die Natur mit der Kunst im Kontraste stehe und sie beschäme. Sobald das letzte zu dem ersten hinzukommt, und nicht eher, wird die Natur zum Naiven."²²

Nature itself, therefore, has the potential to become naïve when art is shown up badly in contrast with it.

When regarded in this way, nature is seen as "nichts anders als das freiwillige Dasein, das Bestehen der Dinge durch sich selbst, die Existenz nach eigenen und unabänderlichen Gesetzen"²³. This leads Schiller to the conclusion that this sort of delight in nature is a moral phenomenon rather than an aesthetic one:

"Daraus erhellt, dass diese Art des Wohlgefallens an der Natur kein ästhetisches, sondern ein moralisches ist; denn es wird durch eine Idee vermittelt, nicht unmittelbar durch Betrachtung erzeugt; auch richtet es sich ganz und gar nicht nach der Schönheit der Formen ... Es sind nicht ... [natürliche] Gegenstände, es ist eine durch sie dargestellte Idee, was wir in ihnen lieben."²⁴

Schiller makes it quite clear that the state of nature is not only the original human state, but also one to which people should aspire: "Sie sind, was wir wären; sie sind was wir wieder werden sollen."²⁵ He also illuminates the fundamental ways in which humanity has changed from the natural state: "Wir sind frei, und sie sind notwendig; wir wechseln, sie bleiben eins."²⁶ According to Schiller, the path back to nature is one of reason and freedom²⁷.

Schiller further states that because this interest in nature is rooted in an idea, it is only possible for people who are receptive to ideas, that is to say, those of moral character²⁸. He continues, however, that, because of the human predisposition to the moral, nature should affect all people in the way in which he has explained, even the most insensitive²⁹. The sensitivity to nature is, however, the strongest in those who are closest to it, i.e. children and childlike people³⁰. The latter would include primitive people and the simple peasants, the "Urvolk" and "Landvolk" of his original exposition of nature.

Schiller here is shown to be a predecessor of the writers quoted in the first Chapter of this thesis who idealised the state of childhood.

"Unsre Kindheit ist die einzige unverstümmelte Natur, die wir in der kultivierten Menschheit noch antreffen, daher es kein Wunder ist, wenn uns jeder Fußstapfe der Natur außer uns auf unsre Kindheit zurückführt."³¹

According to Schiller, the attraction of children arises, not from their apparent weakness, but rather from that strength which lies in their being closer to the perfect state of humanity.

"Das Kind ist daher eine Vergegenwärtigung des Ideals, nicht zwar des erfüllten, aber das aufgegebenen, und es ist also keinesweges die Vorstellung seiner Bedürftigkeit und Schranken, es ist ganz im Gegenteil die Vorstellung seiner reinen und freien Kraft, seiner Integrität, seiner Unendlichkeit, was uns rührt."³²

The child, thus, becomes a representation of the abandoned ideal.

As already mentioned, these qualities are also characteristic of those whom Schiller describes as childlike people. The use of the word "childlike" is significant: like Kant, Schiller recognises that the phenomenon of naïvety raises mixed reactions, in that it represents the childlike ("kindlich") which is connected to the natural, as well as the childish ("kindisch") which has pejorative connotations³³.

Schiller states that this is due to the contradiction between judgements of reason ("Vernunft") and common sense ("Verstandes")³⁴. Our common sense views naïvety from a supposedly superior vantage point, and tells us that it is foolish. As soon as we realise that the naïve way of thinking is actually one of truth, innocence and inner greatness, our mockery turns to admiration³⁵. This results in mixed reactions to naïvety similar to those described by Kant: where before one had laughed at the childish aspect thereof, we now must respect the childlike element and lament the fact that we cannot find that element in ourselves³⁶: "So entsteht die ganz eigene Erscheinung eines Gefühls, in welchem fröhlicher Spott, Ehrfurcht und Wehmut

zusammenfließen."³⁷

Up to this point, Schiller's work has expanded on that of Kant, rather than differing from it. He, however, takes the definition of naïvety further than Kant, distinguishing between two different types of naïvety:

"Zum Naiven wird erfordert, dass die Natur über die Kunst den Sieg davontrage, es geschehe dies nun wider Wissen und Willen der Person oder mit völligem Bewußtsein derselben. In dem ersten Fall ist es das Naive der Überraschung und belustigt; in dem andern ist es das Naive der Gesinnung und rührt."³⁸

This division of naïvety into two sub-categories is an important point. Kant's definition treats naïvety as a single phenomenon, and Schiller finds this limited and thus unsatisfactory. According to Schiller, Kant's definition concerns only the "Naive der Überraschung"; the moral aspect of naïvety, the "Naive der Gesinnung", is not represented in Kant's explanation.

According to Schiller both types of naïvety provoke laughter, or at least a smile, in the observer, but he stresses that in both cases, nature must be right, art, i.e. artifice or affectation, wrong³⁹. This latter point is of the utmost importance. For naïvety of either type to occur, it is essential that nature triumph over art, not as a dynamic force, but as a moral power:

"Es wird also erfordert, dass die Natur nicht durch ihre blinde Gewalt als dynamische, sondern daß sie durch ihre Form als moralische Größe, kurz, daß sie nicht als Notdurft, sondern als innere Notwendigkeit über die Kunst triumphiere. Nicht die Unzulänglichkeit, sondern die Unstatthaftigkeit der letztern muss der ersten den Sieg verschafft haben; denn jene ist Mangel, und nichts, was aus Mangel entspringt, kann Achtung erzeugen."⁴⁰

It is, perhaps, necessary at this point to stress that Schiller's view of this triumph is not at all simplistic:

"Ich sollte vielleicht ganz kurz sagen: Die Wahrheit über die Verstellung; aber der Begriff des Naiven scheint mir noch etwas mehr einzuschließen, indem die Einfachheit überhaupt, welche über die Künstelei, und die natürliche Freiheit, welche über Steifheit und Zwang siegt, ein ähnliches

Gefühl in uns erregen."⁴¹

For Schiller, as for Kant, the concept naïvety may only be applied to those who are not children, and yet remain somehow childlike or childish. While the behaviour of children may seem naïve, it is only so in hindsight i.e. when viewed from an adult (not naïve) perspective: "Das Naive ist eine Kindlichkeit wo sie nicht mehr erwartet wird, und kann ebendeswegen der Kindheit in strengster Bedeutung nicht zugeschrieben werden."⁴²

A person of naïve disposition, on the other hand, is one who is no longer a child, or in the childlike state of primitive peoples or the peasantry, but is impervious to artificiality or affectation. Such a person judges things only according to their simple nature, and is thus exempt from the expectation of others of judgements which presuppose a knowledge of distance from nature⁴³. In the case of such a person, Schiller states, we should feel respect and satisfaction, both moral satisfaction, and satisfaction at a moral object. Instances of naïvety of surprise, however, merely lead us to respect nature⁴⁴.

Naïvety of disposition is also a necessary characteristic of all true genius⁴⁵. This again is an expansion on Kant, who defines genius as follows:

"Genie ist das Talent (Naturgabe), welches der Kunst die Regel gibt. Da das Talent als angebormes produktives Vermögen des Künstlers selbst zu Natur gehört, so könnte man sich auch so ausdrücken: Genie ist die angeborne Gemütsanlage (*ingenium*) durch welche die Natur der Kunst die Regel gibt."⁴⁶

William Mainland explains this distinction as follows:

"Kant restricts his considerations of genius to the limits of aesthetics and the practise of the fine arts. Schiller does not choose to stay within these limits, but the characterization found in Kant informs his own more general and more ardent description."⁴⁷

For Schiller, the innate nature of genius links it intrinsically with naïvety. True genius must be naïve, because it is free of all artifice, weakness or affectation and is guided only by

nature, by instinct⁴⁸. A further important characteristic is the ability to expand nature, a factor unique to the genius: "Nur dem Genie ist es gegeben, außerhalb des Bekannten noch immer zu Hause zu sein und die Natur zu erweitern, ohne über sie hinauszugehen."⁴⁹ Schiller admits the last-mentioned may occur even among the greatest geniuses, but puts this down to external influences, which can only affect them when nature abandons them⁵⁰.

As noted by Mainland, Schiller's list of geniuses is not confined to the aesthetic field, although he includes a number of writers and artists ranging from Sophocles to the "moderns", e.g. Dante, Raphael, Shakespeare and Fielding. He, however, expands the concept to include scientists (e.g. Archimedes), statesmen and generals (e.g. Julius Caesar, Peter the Great). Schiller stresses that, in all these cases, the childlike quality of the naïve genius manifests itself, not only in the work of those whom it characterises, but also in their private life and behaviour⁵¹.

Naïvety does not only express itself, however, in character and manner of thought, but also in the mode of expression of that thought⁵². While this is presumably true of all naïvety, Schiller explores it most thoroughly in the case, again, of genius. Unlike the pedant, whose thoughts and words Schiller describes as hard and stiff as if nailed to the cross of grammar and logic⁵³, the genius expresses noble thoughts with naïve grace: "es sind Göttersprüche aus dem Mund eines Kindes."⁵⁴

This naïve manner in which genius expresses itself is further characterised by freedom and inner necessity, springing directly from the idea to which is being referred: "Eine solche Art des Ausdrucks, wo das Zeichen ganz in dem Bezeichneten verschwindet, und wo die Sprache den Gedanken, den sie ausdrückt, noch gleichsam nackend lässt ... ist es, was man in der Schreibart vorzugweise genialisch und geistreich nennt."⁵⁵ This clearly has important aesthetic implications.

These expansions on the term "naïve" do not, however, make it any easier for Schiller to justify his own position, and it is in the aesthetic field in which he is the most innovative, creating

an entire new category, the sentimental. (German: "sentimentalisch". This is an eighteenth century alternative for "sentimental" which has now fallen into disuse in all areas except Schiller study.)

For Schiller, the distinction between naïve and sentimental poetry lies in the poet's relationship with nature in which all poetry has its roots. He describes nature as "die einzige Flamme, an der sich der Dichtergeist nähret"⁵⁶. This poetic spirit is itself an eternal and essential element of humanity. Even when people distance themselves from that which Schiller calls the "Einfalt, Wahrheit und Notwendigkeit der Natur"⁵⁷, the way back to it lies open for them. More than that, people, and especially poets, are, in fact, driven back irresistibly by the force of their moral being, and for this reason moral drive and poetic ability are intimately interconnected.

Against this background one may understand Schiller's definitions of the naïve and sentimental poet:

"Der Dichter, sagte ich, ist entweder Natur, oder er wird sie suchen. Jenes macht den naiven, dieses den sentimentalischen Dichter."⁵⁸

The naïve poet is part of nature and exists in a condition corresponding to the perfect human state: "[er wirkt] als ungeteilte sinnliche Einheit und als ein harmonierendes Ganzes"⁵⁹. In his discussion Schiller distinguishes between real ("wirkliche") and true ("wahre") nature. The latter is the subject of naïve poetry. True nature is characterised by "eine innere Notwendigkeit des Daseins"⁶⁰, and, in the case of human nature, by essential nobility. Real nature, on the other hand, exists everywhere; in the context of human nature it is characterised by moral baseness and manifests itself in poetic trivialities⁶¹.

Because the naïve poet is part of nature, there is no distinction or contradiction between instinct and reason, between spontaneous and learned ability, in naïve poetry. The poet's creation is governed by the criteria of nature itself and the resulting works are always imitations of reality:

"Seine Empfindungen sind nicht das formlose Spiel des Zufalls, seine Gedanken nicht das gehaltlose Spiel der Vorstellungskraft; aus dem Gesetz der Notwendigkeit gehen jene, aus der Wirklichkeit gehen diese hervor."⁶²

Interestingly, this seems to stand in direct contradiction to Schiller's definition of the naïve genius who is capable of expanding nature, without leaving the limits set by nature. In fact, Schiller's section on genius contains more than one apparent contradiction: he also refers to the sentimental genius, after stating quite unequivocally "[n]aiv muß jedes wahre Genie sein, oder es ist keines"⁶³.

This could be put down to different usages of the word genius as a creative artist and as a talented individual, but as Schiller's list of geniuses includes both types of genius, defining exactly when which meaning is appropriate becomes problematic. According to Watanabe-O'Kelly, Schiller's use of terminology (especially with reference to naïve-sentimental) is not always consistent⁶⁴ and perhaps this should just be put down to such an inconsistency.

Naïve poetry is one form of expression of the naïve personality. This personality has important implications in terms of the poet's place in society. Schiller notes that naïve poets seem out of place in an era based on artifice. While they may be refreshing to fellow artists or to connoisseurs, they will be rejected by their epoch and remain outsiders in society⁶⁵.

The sentimental poet has left the perfect state of harmony with nature occupied by the naïve poet, and has taken on the trappings of culture and civilization: "so ist jene sinnliche Harmonie in ihm aufgehoben und er kann nur als moralische Einheit, d.h. als nach Einheit strebend sich äußern."⁶⁶ In the sentimental poet's striving for unity with nature, reality is elevated to the level of an ideal, and the poetry takes on the form of representation ("Darstellung") of that ideal⁶⁷. Schiller exhorts the reader: "Aber wenn du über das verlorene Glück der Natur getröstet bist, so lass ihre Vollkommenheit deinem Herzen zum Muster dienen."⁶⁸

The aesthetic process which takes place in the creation of sentimental poetry is, in fact, a far more complex one than that which takes place in the context of naïve poetry. Because the sentimental poet cannot imitate reality, he must reflect on the effect that the object has on him. and in the process the object takes on the quality of an idea. Thus, where the naïve poet needs external stimulus in order to create⁶⁹, the sentimental poet's material comes from within himself, from the world of ideas and ideals:

"[Das sentimentalische Genie] ... fängt seine Operation erst da an, wo [das naïve Genie] die seinige beschließt; seine Stärke besteht darin, einen mangelhaften Gegenstand aus sich selbst heraus zu ergänzen und sich durch eigene Macht aus einem begrenzten Zustand in einen Zustand der Freiheit zu versetzen."⁷⁰

Because of this, there is a constant conflict between the limits placed on the sentimental poet by nature on the one hand, and the idea which is infinite on the other⁷¹. Sentimental poets may react to this conflict in one of two ways: they may either mourn the gulf between the real (as manifested in nature) and the ideal (as manifested in their work), or criticise the real. The first option gives rise to an elegiac mood, resulting in elegy and idyll⁷². The second results in satire, either jocose or castigating⁷³. It is important to note that Schiller is discussing emotions here, not genres.

Schiller links the emergence of nature, both as idea and subject matter, to the disappearance of nature as an essential experience in human life⁷⁴. This ties in with the moral character of poetry. The poet is either the preserver (in the case of the naïve), or the witness and avenger (in the case of the sentimental) of nature:

"Die Dichter sind überall, schon ihrem Begriffe nach, die Bewahrer der Natur. Wo sie diese nicht ganz mehr sein können und schon in sich selbst den zerstörenden Einfluß willkürlicher und künstlicher Formen erfahren oder doch mit demselben zu kämpfen gehabt haben, da werden sie als die Zeugen und als Rächer der Natur auftreten. Sie werden entweder Natur sein, oder sie werden die verlorene suchen. Daraus entspringen zwei ganz verschiedene Dichtungsweisen, durch welche das

ganze Gebiet der Poesie erschöpft und ausgemessen wird."⁷⁵

This re-emphasises the moral role of the poet whose work is a manifestation of the irradicable drive in all humans that impels them back to nature⁷⁶.

It is interesting that neither naïvety nor sentimentality need be a constant factor in any poet: "Nicht nur in demselben Dichter, auch in demselben Werke trifft man häufig beide Gattungen an".⁷⁷ As an example where both phenomena are manifested in a single work Schiller gives Goethe's *Leiden des jungen Werther*.

It is very tempting to view the naïve and the sentimental simply as the thesis and antithesis in a dialectic, but this is not what Schiller intends. He is attempting something rather more challenging. He explains that, in dialectic terms, the sentimental does not fill the place of the antithesis, but of the synthesis of the naïve and the reflective. This is made clear in the following quotation:

"Das Gegenteil der naiven Empfindung ist nämlich der reflektierende Verstand, und die sentimentalische Stimmung ist das Resultat des Bestrebens, auch unter den Bedingungen der Reflexion die naive Empfindung, dem Inhalt nach, wieder herzustellen. Dies würde durch das erfüllte Ideal geschehen, in welchem die Kunst der Natur wieder begegnet. Geht man jene drei Begriffe ... durch, so wird man die Natur und die entsprechende naive Stimmung ..., die Kunst als Aufhebung der Natur durch den frei wirkenden Verstand ..., und endlich das Ideal in welchem die vollendete Kunst zur Natur zurückkehrt, ... antreffen."⁷⁸

At the same time, the synthesis of the naïve and the sentimental results in the ideal of perfect humanity:

"Denn endlich müssen wir es doch gestehen, dass weder der naive noch der sentimentalische Character, für sich allein betrachtet, das Ideal schöner Menschlichkeit ganz erschöpfen, das nur aus der innigen Verbindung beider hervorgehen kann."⁷⁹

This seems to raise a contradiction, unless the sentimental is both the synthesis of the

naïve and the reflective, and at the same time the antithesis of the naïve, where the synthesis is the ideal. Watanabe O'Kelly, however, explains this paradox by stating that the sentimental is the ideal⁸⁰. She cites Schiller's own statement that "nature makes man one with himself, art separates and divides him, through the ideal he returns to unity", and saying that "it is therefore paradoxically only by being sentimental that we moderns can regain naïvety"⁸¹.

By this argument, the reasoned, reflective approach through which the sentimental poet (for example Schiller himself) who is both divided from nature, and aware of this division, strives to recreate a state of unity with nature through the elevation of reality to the ideal, is not inferior to the simple imitative approach of the naïve poet. In the case of the sentimental poet the creative act is also a moral act, involving the recognition of a state of imperfection and the resultant striving to regain that perfection. Furthermore, the sentimental poet has a far wider range than the naïve poet who is tied, so to speak to reality:

"Aber wenn es der naive Dichter dem sentimentalischen auf der einen Seite an Realität abgewinnt und dasjenige zur wirklichen Existenz bringt, wozu dieser nur einen lebendigen Trieb erwecken kann, so hat letzterer wieder den großen Vorteil über den ersten, daß er dem Trieb einen größeren zu geben im stand ist, als jener geleistet hat und leisten konnte. Alle Wirklichkeit, wissen wir, bleibt hinter dem Idealen zurück; alles Existierende hat seine Schranken, aber der Gedanke ist grenzlos."⁸²

It should by now be clear how *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* functions as Schiller's aesthetic self-justification. Certainly he is not in the perfect state of unity with nature demanded for true naïvety, but in recognising that he has left that state and striving to achieve it through the creative act, his work is elevated to a level above that of the artist who creates simply by reason and consideration. And according to Watanabe-O'Kelly "the failure to which the endeavours of the sentimental poet are ultimately doomed is more noble and admirable [than the perfection achieved by the naïve poet]"⁸³.

4. POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS OF SCHILLER'S CONCEPTS

Why concentrate on Schiller's concept of naïvety? As has been shown, Schiller developed the concept further than any writer had previously and as far as it has been possible to ascertain, he was the last thinker before the mid twentieth century* to really concern himself with the problems surrounding the term. The development of the concept began to be a serious part of aesthetic thought, as has been shown, during the enlightenment, and became more important with the evolution of the theories of nature which were eventually to form the basis of early romantic thought.

By the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, these theories of nature had themselves undergone a great change in emphasis. Philosophers like Schopenhauer and Nietzsche were not concerned with the same type of problems that had concerned writers like Schiller, although their ideas were rooted in those of their predecessors and form the next step in the same line of development of thought. While they might have discussed the human relationship with nature, they did not do so through the concept of naïvety.

Furthermore, as has been stated, Schiller himself was extremely influential among his contemporaries and those writers who immediately succeeded him. It seems, therefore, fair enough to test his theories on the works of the early romantics, not just in the field of literature, but also in the other arts, and especially music. In the case of music, the ideas of romanticism took a while to take hold: composers like Schumann and Mendelssohn were influenced by the ideas current in the school of thought discussed in Chapter One, as well as (and in fact, to a

* The only other writer traced who used the term was Wust in his treatise *Naïvety and Piety* (1964). For purely chronological reasons it should be clear why Wust's work falls outside the ambit of this thesis.

greater extent than) those of their immediate contemporaries.

The following section will thus attempt to investigate whether it is possible to identify the phenomenon which Schiller called naïvety as an aesthetic factor in existing artworks, especially in those of his contemporaries and more or less immediate successors, and, if so, what makes a work (or part thereof) naïve.

4.1. Literature

As has already been mentioned, Schiller was one of the most important influences on the romantics, not only through the theories discussed above, but also through his other writings, both theoretical, and, possibly even more importantly, his creative writing, especially his plays. While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyse in full Schiller's contribution to the romantic movement, it is interesting to examine the links between the ideas discussed in Chapter One, and those found in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*.

Chronologically speaking, Schiller is a contemporary of Herder and thus one of the immediate predecessors of the romantic school which included the Jenaer Kreis, and it is therefore not surprising that many of his ideas should have a clear resonance in their work. One of the most obvious connections between the romantics and Schiller is in their approach to nature. In fact, Schiller just precedes the romantics in a long line of aesthetic development which has the artist's relationship to nature as its focal point. Schiller's ideas should thus be seen as influencing the romantics, but also as part of the same stream of thought, evincing the same sort of ideas as his contemporaries and immediate successors.

As stated in the first chapter, Herder and those who followed him viewed nature as one aspect of that creative force which they called "Poesie". In their view the act of creation was

elevated to a mystical level: artists, including poets, did not imitate nature, so much as nature, as part of the creative force, the "Unendliche", the divine etc. worked through them to create art. This view seems to have links with Schiller's concept of the naïve poet, whose creations arise from a state of unity with nature.

Although it might be seen as simplistic to describe Herder, and others like him, as naïve poets, it might be said that at least an aspect of their work, or working method could be described as naïve. Although their *approach* to poetry is rooted in ideas about nature and thus cannot be described as entirely naïve, the poetry itself comes into being out of a direct communion with nature (at least in the perception of the poets). The result is inspired, intuitive creation, rather than the product of pure intellect, and would thus seem closer to naïve than to sentimental poetry, (the latter being the result of reflection, immediately distancing it from nature, even when nature is its subject).

This is perhaps the very distinction that Schiller was drawing between his work and that of Goethe, when he describes the latter as a naïve poet, himself as sentimental. That his ideas in this context should not be oversimplified has already been stressed, and is re-emphasised by Watanabe-O'Kelly who writes that Schiller saw Goethe as a naïve poet who can only remain so by being sentimental¹. This statement perhaps neatly encapsulates the apparent paradox found too in the case of Herder: a poet whose intellect is conscious of nature in a way which does not hinder, and may even enable the natural inspiration of his creative act.

As already mentioned, the romantics share Herder's view, seeing nature as a mystical creative force working through them, e.g. Novalis' question "ist das Weltall nicht in uns?". Close study of quotations from the writers to be found in the first chapter of this thesis reveals, however, that they do not seem to have enjoyed the consciousness of their ideal state in quite the same way in which Herder did. Novalis, for example sees life (an aspect of nature) as a subject

for study, while Friedrich Schlegel distinguishes between "Kunstpoesie" and "Naturpoesie" in his definition of romantic poesy.

It is interesting that in this definition Schlegel makes it clear that it is the task of poesy to re-unite these and other genres which have become estranged. This task presumably falls, too, to the poet (or other creative artist) as the vessel so to speak of the creative force. This assigns a moral role to the poet, perhaps making it a development of the same broad strand of thought as Schiller's definition of the sentimental artist, whose task it is both to bear witness to nature, and, in the process, to bring humanity back into its ideal state of unity with nature, although of course there are differences in the approaches of this case, as there are in the context of the discussion of Schiller and Herder.

Like Schiller, too, the romantics identify children, primitive people and peasants as having a special place as those who have not (yet) left the state of unity with nature. For Schiller, the child is the manifestation of our lost ideal state; for Herder, one of the functions of the poet is to return us to the childhood state. For Schiller, children represent the "Unendliche"; for Schlegel, the "dichtendes Kind" is an essential part of the "Universalpoesie" which itself is a manifestation of the "Unendliche".

This fascination with childhood, starting in the mid-eighteenth century, developed first by Schiller, Herder and their contemporaries, and then by the later Romantics, led for the first time to a real interest in children's literature. The most famous works to emerge from this tendency were undoubtedly the *Kinder und Hausmärchen* of Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm and the fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen. It would be a mistake, however to assume that all children's literature is automatically naïve: as has already been shown, a very special set of circumstances has to exist before one can speak of naïve literature.

An examination of the fairy tales of Andersen provides an excellent illustration of this

point. Andersen's motives in writing the stories do not conform in any sense to Schiller's ideas: "I get an idea for grown ups and then tell my tale to the little ones, while remembering that Mother and Father will be listening and must have something to think about."² Thus his stories are full of irony, satire and caricature, which may be missed by children altogether. "Children understand only the trappings"³, he said himself. Several of the stories (e.g. *The Ugly Duckling* and *The Nightingale*) are allegories relating to his own experience as a writer.

Andersen's impetus as a writer may have been rooted in his obsession with his childhood environment and early life⁴, but he does not write from a childlike, or even a nostalgic viewpoint, (though this may be missed by anyone not Danish who reads some of the appallingly sentimentalised translations which unfortunately predominate). Children may appreciate the excellent stories, the bizarre and fantastic events and descriptions, the complete lack of compromise in not always providing a happy ending (Victorian adaptations and Disney notwithstanding!), the humour and the tragedy.

But when rereading them as an adult, while all the qualities above are still striking, what is perhaps the most remarkable is the sophistication of the style and the ideas, and the way in which the stories function on many levels simultaneously, from the literal to the satiric and symbolic. In no sense does one have the impression of naïvety. For that one has to turn to other writers, perhaps most notably the brothers Grimm, whose anthologies rate, with Andersen's, among the greatest Classics of romantic children's literature.

Perhaps because both are anthologies, and because they are introduced to children at roughly the same age, there is a tendency to bracket together the work of the brothers Grimm on the one hand and Andersen on the other. In actual fact, there are fundamental differences between the books which are often ignored because of this. Unlike Andersen, the Grimm brothers were not involved in creative work, but in collecting. As such their anthology goes beyond the category

of pure children's literature, as it is intended as a serious philological document as well as a book of stories from which children could gain pleasure and establish a sense of cultural identity.

In this respect, i.e. as a collection of authentic folk literature, the stories in the collection perhaps come closer to Schiller's definition of naïvety than all the works cited thus far, be they the poems of Herder or the stories of Andersen. As already explained, the peasantry or "Volk" were regarded as the childhood state of humanity. It is thus the same factor, which led Schiller to explore the "Volk" as naïve, at least in the eyes of those whose own distance from nature made them conscious of the existence of naïvety, and which resulted in the many anthologies of folk literature collected by the romantics, starting with Herder himself and including the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*.

In this anthology, one is presented with the oral tradition of a people whom the anthologists perceived to be in the state of unity with nature which they regarded as perfect, loyally and literally recorded. It is possible to analyse the motives of the collectors as falling under the heading of sentimentality. They were themselves not naïve, and were motivated by the desire to preserve what they saw as the natural literature of their people as a testimonial to its greatness. (Once again one is reminded of Schiller's exhortation to poets to be the witnesses and even avengers of nature.) But the stories themselves - the fables of peasants seen as perfect in the eyes of educated literate people - seem to conform entirely with Schiller's definition of one type of literature which can be called naïve.

This is borne out in reading the stories. They have a simplicity, a freshness, a spontaneity and a naturalness to them; at no point does one sense the sophisticated hand of a professional artist at work. The humour is obvious, sometimes even coarse, rather than subtle; the moral - where there is one - clearly stated, not oblique.

A large proportion of the tales are about ordinary people, sometimes in an everyday

environment (Clever Elsa, for instance), others transplanted into circumstances of magic and/or grandeur (like the heroine of "Mother Holle", or the girl in "Rumpelstiltskin"). Others are about the nobility, although these may well be poor people rewarded for virtue (e.g. Cinderella), and even a princess born may be enchanted by a humble spinning wheel. Another major group of stories are animal tales and in these too the animals behave very much as their creators/narrators might have been expected to do. In this sense the stories have a kind of a naïve reality about them, as the daily life and wish fulfilment imaginings of the German "Volk" spring into life.

What one finds in the Grimm fairy tales is the oral tradition of a people captured in print. The controversy surrounding the advisability of this method has already been discussed, but, certainly in the case of these stories it seems to have been a success. Whether or not the stories would have been lost without the efforts of Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm is a moot point, but certainly the brothers have ensured their future as vibrant literature for a wider ranging audience than they could probably ever have imagined.

The other anthology discussed in detail when the subject of folk literature was first raised in this thesis is, of course, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. At this point, it is interesting to examine the *Wunderhorn* according to the theories laid out by Schiller in *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*. As shown, the anthology forms part of the same trend in German literature as Schiller's essay, and is thus an interesting testing ground for his ideas.

At first glance the connection between Schiller's essay and the anthology should be obvious. Schiller makes it clear that the "Volk" are at one with nature, and their poetry (or songs) are the instinctive expressions of that unity. Taken at face value, the poems collected in the *Wunderhorn*, like the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, are not artworks arising from considered thought, but simply reflect the day to day life and the oral history of their unknown creators. In other words, one could define the *Wunderhorn* as naïve.

Furthermore, there is a difference in perception of the poems between that of the "Volk" themselves and that of Arnim and Brentano. The peasants who create and sing folk songs do not generally credit themselves or their songs with any of the special virtues that the romantics saw in both. This factor has already been mentioned in the context of the irreality of the romantic attitude to the "Volk".

In Schillerian terms one might tie this into the concept that naïvety is in the eyes of the beholder. The "Volk" would not consider themselves or their songs naïve. It takes people who are not themselves naïve (Arnim and Brentano) to understand what they see as the essential childlike state of the "Volk" - what one might call their naïvety - and thus perceive the essential perfection of their poetry.

However, to view the anthology simply in these terms avoids a very important point i.e. the extent to which the Arnim and Brentano "recreated" material or even created poems from scratch in order to satisfy their criteria of the perfect folk song. As has been shown, this tendency in the romantic folk song movement dates back to well before the pair began their work, in fact to the very earliest folk song collections (the *Ossian* epic and Herder's volumes of *Volkslieder* for instance). It raises interesting questions in terms of the naïvety of the individual poems and of the anthology as a whole.

As set out in the first chapter, about one sixth of the *Wunderhorn* poems are original, unadulterated folk songs. These can be classified as naïve poetry fulfilling all the criteria laid out at the start of this section. But what about the others? The poems which the collectors altered, and especially their own creations, are hardly the work of innocent peasants, at one with nature. In fact, the very point that Arnim and Brentano were capable of perceiving the "Volk" as being what Schiller would have defined as naïve would seem to preclude them - in Schillerian terms - from the definition themselves.

There are at least two possible ways of approaching this problem. The first, and perhaps the simplest, is to look to Schiller's idea that naïvety and sentimentality could exist in the same person. One might accordingly take the view that when Arnim and Brentano collected folk poetry, they were functioning as sentimental people, perceiving the perfection of the lost ideal of nature and acting on the desire to preserve nature and avenge her loss. When, however, they wrote their own poems, they entered into that state of unity themselves, composing naïve poetry. This would explain why, to anyone not themselves an expert on German folk song, it is virtually impossible to tell the original folk poetry in the *Wunderhorn* from the creations of Arnim and Brentano.

Unfortunately, this explanation, though neat, does not altogether correspond with certain factors surrounding the anthology and the circumstances of its collection. In the first place, if Arnim and Brentano were genuinely functioning as naïve poets when they altered existing folk songs, and composed their own, why did they not acknowledge these as such, but rather attempt to pass them off as genuine, even giving fictitious sources for their creations.

In the second place, and this is perhaps even more important, what about the motivation for the collection? It has already been stated that Arnim and Brentano's justification for altering texts was the idealisation of the folk song. Here it is interesting to return to Tismar's analysis of the "*Wunderhorn*":

"Volkspoesie und Kunstpoesie sollen darin verschmelzen. Das ist die ästhetische Utopie des Wunderhorns."

This quotation can now be understood in the context, not only of Schlegel's ideal of the re-unification of art and natural poetry, but also possibly in the Schillerian sense of the sentimental poet trying to bring poetry back to its natural roots and thus showing the way to those roots to humanity. One is reminded of Schiller's theory that in sentimental poetry reality is

elevated to the level of an ideal, and the poetry takes on the form of representation ("Darstellung") of that ideal.

The imitation folk poetry in the anthology could thus be viewed not simply as forgery, but rather as the representation of the ideal of poetry which results from the state of unity with nature. As Schiller himself suggests, the correct course of action for the poet to take, is to take the perfection of nature to heart as a model. This is not the same as the imitation of nature practised by the naïve poet. Arnim and Brentano's aims in the compilation of the anthology, and their perception of the special place of folk poetry preclude them from that possibility.

This is a far more likely explanation for writing "folk poetry", than to simply accuse Arnim and Brentano of wilful fraud (even if the two may not have described themselves as sentimental poets). It is further supported by the anthologiser's own description of their goals, i.e. to lay the foundations of a collection, containing a balance of the mundane and the romantic, and thus preserving the spirit of the past for the enlightenment of present and future generations.

One might thus sum up a Schillerian definition of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* as follows: at face value the anthology seems to be an example of a collection of naïve poetry. Closer examination, however, reveals that only some of the poems in the anthology are, in fact, genuine folk poetry and thus naïve. The remainder of the poems, those written or adapted specially for the anthology, are the creations of poets not themselves naïve, but who are attempting to prevent the natural from being lost in their creations. This seems to correspond to Schiller's definition of sentimental poetry.

There is, however, one further aspect to be considered. In time, as the polemic around the *Wunderhorn* died down, and the work's popularity remained steadfast through several generations, its readers stopped questioning the validity of the poems as folk poetry. Rather, just as Arnim and Brentano had intended, the anthology became accepted by its readers who saw the

poems as simple folk songs, reflecting and preserving a life which was rapidly disappearing, the simple, supposedly natural life of the "Volk".

As such, it became the inspiration for writers, artists and composers, who seem to have accepted the poems at face value. In this context, it is as though the anthology becomes again a collection of naïve poetry, as if the poems become natural poetry. This may be seen as fulfilling the aims not only of its collector-creators, but also the moral obligations of the poet, who, in Schiller's terms, has brought the ideal of nature back to nature itself.

4.2. Music

It should be hardly surprising that many of the ideas discussed, both in the section on naïvety as an aesthetic concept, and in the first chapter, should also have strongly influenced the development of music. Like the other arts music does not come into existence in a vacuum, but is composed by human beings who are generally aware of the aesthetic tendencies of their era⁷. This is perhaps true of romantic composers to a particular degree, because of the changing social trends which to some extent caused, and were certainly intensified by the French Revolution and its aftermath.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (the Baroque and Classical eras) the position of the composer was a fairly menial one corresponding to that of a servant to a royal court, an aristocratic house, the Church or the burgers of a free city. In the first two cases, the musicians, even the "Kappellmeister", were generally required to wear livery, indicating their fairly low social status. Among the first to attempt to break out of this mould were Mozart, for whom the

⁷I use the word "era" rather than "time" here intentionally because of the fact that musical eras often do not coincide exactly with the same eras in the other arts.

experience was financially disastrous, and Beethoven, who might be described as the first really successful freelance composer.

By the start of the nineteenth century, the entire social structure of Europe was changing radically, as the new middle class grew in power and influence. It was from this class, from the ranks of the educated bourgeoisie, that the majority of

Romantic composers came, and this factor has important implications in terms of their aesthetic awareness. These composers, in the main, had a far better general education than their predecessors, and were thus, in many cases, much more widely read and erudite in areas other than music.

Perhaps two of the best examples of this phenomenon are Mendelssohn and Schumann. The latter's father was a writer, publisher and bookseller, giving the young Schumann access to a wide variety of literature, and leading to a lifelong love of words which expressed itself in his work both as a composer and as a journalist. Mendelssohn is often presented simply as the son of a banker, but his family also included Moses Mendelssohn (his grandfather) and Dorothea Veit, with her connections to the "Jenaer Kreis". For both of these composers, as for many of the other romantics in the field of music, their work was the embodiment of ideas which they discovered through reading, or through personal acquaintance with writers, philosophers and artists.

It should be noted that these trends were not limited to music. Across all the arts, as has already been seen in the case of literature, links were forged with philosophy, politics and religion which had not existed or at least not in the same form or to the same extent in previous eras. One new development, however, was the fact that the status of music as an art was raised. Where formerly music had been granted a lowly position in the hierarchies of the arts drawn up by philosophers like Kant and Hegel, music now began to be seen as the ideal art, especially in

Germany.

At the same time music's social function underwent a radical change. Whereas until the middle of the eighteenth century music was generally functional, whether as dance music, background music (e.g. table music or street music), accompaniment to ceremony either sacred (e.g. the mass) or secular (e.g. military parades) and so on, in the nineteenth century the dominant aesthetic demanded that music be art for art's sake, and the concert hall became the main venue for the new style. This tendency began to emerge in the late eighteenth century, but really came into its own during the romantic period, in keeping both with the general aesthetic and the new social order of the time.

All these developments went hand in hand with the evolution of a broader musical language. (It should be stressed that the aesthetic and technical developments under discussion were inextricably linked.) The demands of the new "intellectual" approach, the aesthetics of nature, genius and freedom, the social changes as well as the nationalism that swept Europe, all necessitated an extension of the musical language. This was to affect all areas of composition.

In harmony the field of sound was broadened, especially in terms of modulation and the use of dissonance. In the case of the former, both the type of modulations used, the keys to which a composer might modulate and, in fact, the number of modulations and thus keys in any piece were greatly extended. Enharmonic modulation, previously quite rare, and modulation or simply changing to fairly distant keys became the norm.

In the choice of chords, as well as keys, composers began to expand the boundaries of the harmonic language which had dominated European music since the Baroque. As mentioned above, composers began to experiment with dissonance, developing a style far more chromatic than in the Classical era. Whereas the harmonic style of the latter was based on infrequent use of dissonance, immediately resolved, romantic composers used dissonant chords far more freely

and often delayed the resolution thereof. Progression from one dissonance to another became common.

The melodies supported by the new harmonic language, naturally also underwent great changes. In this field, however, perhaps the most important factor was the growing importance of vocal music, and especially of the "Lied". Thus, while the eight bar periodic structure of the melody for the most part went unchanged, the dominant style became more lyrical with more extended motifs than are generally found in Classical melodies. As mentioned, the chromaticization found in the new harmonic language also made an impact on melodic writing, with intervals used that might have been avoided in the relatively simple style of the later eighteenth century.

As might be expected, the periodic structure maintained in melodies also dominates the metric organisation of the music. Once again, however, the approach is far freer than the Classical norm, with irregular rhythmic and metric patterns occurring within the eight bar period. At times even the periodic structure may be blurred.

According to John Warrack the extensions of the boundaries that had governed compositional technique in the eighteenth century can be put down to the demands of romanticism that the individual follows his/her emotional impulses⁵. This approach is actually only one aspect of what one might call the natural aesthetic as applied to music. Carl Dahlhaus takes a more complex view, identifying six categories by which music can be said to imitate nature:

1. the simple imitation of non-musical sounds;
2. the imitation of spatial movement (up-down etc.);
3. the musical imitation of speech intonations;
4. the depiction of emotion or "inner nature";

5. the use of abstract symbolism

6. the idea of music as an image of nature or the structure of the world as a whole.⁶

He sees the changes in attitude to these categories as being important in the development of aesthetics from the Baroque through the Classical and Romantic periods. Thus, for instance, to remain with the idea of music as the depiction of emotion, or the movements and passions of the human spirit, the following pattern can be traced. The Baroque doctrine of affections concentrated on the effect of the emotion on the listener and on the pictorial depiction of affections or rhetoric gestures. In the mid-eighteenth century the emphasis shifted to the representation of the movements of the emotions, i.e. to the internal experience of the composer and performer, especially in the *Sturm und Drang* school and the North German *Empfindsamer Stil*. By the mid-nineteenth century the concept had taken on a mystical aspect with the idea that music can comprehend emotions which only it can depict, and can thus reveal a reality which otherwise would remain hidden⁷.

As has already been mentioned, the dominant aesthetic of the time was concerned, not with the imitation of nature, but with art for art's sake. In fact, the question of the validity of realist music was a source of controversy throughout the romantic period. This controversy, however, had its roots in the fact that some composers were writing music that could be described in one way or another as realist. It is this music which is of the utmost importance to this thesis, as it is in this area that one can explore the possibility of applying Schiller's idea of naïvety to music.

At the very simplest level, Schiller's theory of naïvety can be summed up in the sentence already quoted: "Zum Naiven wird erfordert, dass die Natur über die Kunst den Sieg davontrage ..." As already explained, "Kunst" here refers to artifice, rather than art in the aesthetic sense, though the majority of art, excluding primitive and folk art, would fall into this category. Only

art which is created while the artist is in a state of unity with nature (whether permanent or temporary) can be counted naïve.

Furthermore, such art must be realist, the naïve artist being limited to imitating nature, rather than extending it through the world of his/her ideas and ideals. As soon as nature becomes an ideal for the artist instead of the only reality, he/she leaves the realm of naïvety. Thus, while not all music which imitates nature in whatever way, is naïve, it is this field which one must investigate if one is to discover whether naïvety can exist as an aesthetic factor in music at all.

4.2.1. Natural sound

The most obvious expression of the natural in the music of the first half of the nineteenth century can perhaps be seen in those works which literally imitate or attempt to imitate nature. The imitation of natural sound in music is possibly as old as music itself and through the centuries composers have used natural sound as material in their compositions, although to differing aesthetic purposes. The phenomenon may take the form of the literal imitation of natural, "non-musical" sound, e.g. birdsong or the sound of running water, or may attempt rather to create an atmosphere suggesting the natural, in romantic terms one could say the spirit of nature.

Among the earliest examples of direct imitation of natural sound in a nineteenth century work is the scene by the brook in Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, the Pastoral. In the decades following the composition of this work many other composers followed Beethoven's lead in this respect, not just in symphonic works, but in other genres too. Schubert, for instance, uses non-musical sound in several of his song accompaniments, ranging from the whirring of Gretchen's spinning wheel to the many manifestations of the brook in the "Müllerin" cycle, or the galloping

hooves and rushing wind in *Der Erlkönig*. Among the most famous examples in the symphonic oeuvre of the first half of the nineteenth century must be the storm scene in Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*, and the sea sounds in Mendelssohn's *Fingal's Cave*.

As mentioned, imitation of the natural was also seen in terms of the creation of an atmosphere suggesting nature, rather than the literal imitation of natural sound. Here again, Mendelssohn is an important protagonist: the beginning of the *Scottish Symphony* does not literally represent Holyrood House and the story of Mary Queen of Scots any more than the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music is a precise depiction of the forest, fairies and lovers of Shakespeare's work. Similarly, Schumann's *Spring Symphony* does not contain the sounds, especially bird calls, which other composers (for instance Britten) have used to represent that season.

Nevertheless, the informed listener will usually admit to being fully aware of the extra-musical world which the composer is trying to create, especially if cultural milieu of that listener is the same as that of the composer. Even those who do not know exactly what the "picture" or "story" of the music is supposed to be, may pick up the general atmosphere of the work.*

From the very start of the romantic period in composition the imitation of nature in whatever form was held by some to be suspect, and by the middle of the century the question of whether music is or is not - or should or should not be - an imitation of the natural world became extremely important in the context of the polemic surrounding the relative merits of absolute and programme music.

As stated there are a variety of ways in which composer's chose to approach the problems

*Exactly how this process takes place, i.e. the cultural and psychological considerations which make it possible for us to hear extra-musical elements in music, especially in terms of the "vaguer" areas of atmosphere, "pictures" or programmes is a vastly complicated field of study in its own right, and falls outside the gamut of this thesis.

which the imitation of nature raised. Beethoven's Sixth Symphony has already been mentioned, and it is interesting that, as justification in case of possible accusations of empty "Tonmalerei", he felt it necessary to state that the work was "more the expression of feeling than painting"⁸.

This phenomenon, the use of natural sound to evoke the feeling, the emotion or mood which nature invoked in the composer, is not limited to Beethoven. In 1829 Mendelssohn wrote to his father from Scotland: "In order to make clear what a strange mood has come over me in the Hebrides, the following occurred to me"⁹. What follows in the letter is the first twenty-one bars of what was eventually to become the *Fingal's Cave Overture*. This extremely evocative piece is thus not merely descriptive in its imitation of the sea, the wind and the desolation of the isolated islands. It is also a reaction: an attempt to put into music the feeling which Mendelssohn experienced when surrounded by the landscape. The *Scottish Symphony*, too, is founded on such a feeling.

It is no accident that this feeling or mood was connected specifically with Mendelssohn's music inspired during and by his visit to Scotland. Like many of his contemporaries, Mendelssohn was much influenced by the *Ossian* epics (as indicated by the title *Fingal's Cave*), and his visit to Scotland was a pilgrimage to that country, then still considered wild and enormously romantic. He must thus have been particularly open to the feeling of engulfment by the power of nature as a present muse, (as opposed to something lost and to be striven for), which is a necessary characteristic of naïve art.

It is this feeling, both as experienced by Mendelssohn, and most importantly by the listener who senses powerful evocation of nature, as much as the descriptive music of *Fingal's Cave*, or the atmospheric music of the *Scottish Symphony*, which determines what one might describe as the naïvety of that music. This does not mean that Mendelssohn was always naïve as a composer or a person, or that the works in question are necessarily naïve in their entirety. It

does, however, seem undeniable that the sense of the natural in which Mendelssohn found himself immersed in Scotland, is communicated through this music to a remarkable degree. The fact that the music arose from this immersion might lead one to describe the relevant passages as naïve - in the sense that they are the intuitive creation of one inspired by nature - rather than as the products of intellectual reflection or artifice.

This type of naïvety in music is analogous to that which Schiller speaks of when he equates naïve and intuitive artists. As in the case of poetry or prose produced in a state of inspiration so complete that nature can have been said to triumph over art, the resulting musical compositions do not necessarily sound simple or childlike in form or content. Rather, they present nature as the only, all-encompassing reality, and their realism draws one into the natural world, so that one shares the composer's sense of unity with that world, if only for the duration of the piece.

Not that, of course, the mere presence of realism in music in this, or any other context, ensures its naïvety. All naïve art may be realist by definition, but the corollary, that all realist art is necessarily naïve does not follow at all. As Schiller makes clear, a very special set of criteria has to exist before one can speak of true naïve art. In music, as in any other art, the composer must imitate nature because he/she is in a state of unity with nature, whether permanent or temporary - the music must be a manifestation of that state and, ideally, this should communicate itself to the receptive listener.

Interestingly, this is the effect that Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony had on at least one listener. In discussing the work with Natalie Bauer-Lechner, Mahler used the following explanation:

"From the very first movement [of the Pastoral Symphony] ... one needs to know how *naïvely* Beethoven meant this picture: to know what he felt when he breathed the fresh air, saw the sun and

the open sky, and was surrounded by the brooks and meadows." (my italics)¹⁰

The fact that Mahler here stresses Beethoven's "feeling" does not only reinforce Beethoven's own self-defence against possible accusations of "Tonmalerei"; for a composer to produce music that is truly naïve (as Mahler himself puts it) that composer must feel at one with nature, and this feeling should be audible in some way to the audience. It is this, communicated to the listener in this case at least partly through the literal imitation of natural sounds, as much as the use of natural sound in itself, which determines the music's naïvety.

4.2.2. Children's music

It is not only in the field of the imitation of natural sound, however that one must search for the manifestation of naïvety as an aesthetic factor. As has already been discussed in the context of literature, the romantics perceived two groups of people with whom they had contact as being intrinsically naïve: the peasantry or "Volk", and children. It should therefore come as no surprise that children's music too began to take on a new aspect and to grow in importance.

Before beginning a serious discussion about children's music, it is necessary to define exactly what is meant by this term. The most obvious definition would be the music that children make up themselves, however, with the exception of the work of a very few child prodigies (of whom Mozart is probably the most striking example) very little attention has been paid up till now to music composed by children. Even now, this music is usually only regarded seriously in the field of education. While the analysis thereof might well form an interesting sideline to a discussion of musical naïvety, it will not be discussed here, particularly as it was not accorded much importance in the period under discussion.

For the purposes of this thesis, then, children's music can be seen to fall into two basic

categories: music written by adults for children to play, and music which in some way concerns childhood, but is written by adults primarily with adults in mind. It should be noted that these categories are not watertight and often overlap.

Both these categories are well represented in the works of romantic composers. While music had been written for children before, this was largely of a purely didactic nature. While the value of such music is often determined (even in the period under discussion) by the effectiveness of its didactic function, a large body of music in this category composed in the nineteenth century was also filled with musical charm. In such works the composer enters (or attempts to enter) the imaginative world of the child in order to create music which will truly appeal to children, as well as educating them, both technically and musically. Perhaps the most important example here is Schumann's *Album für der Jugend*.

The short, simple pieces which make up the two volumes of this collection are revolutionary in the history of children's tutors. These are no boring technical exercises, and there is never any feeling that the composer is looking down on his pupils. It is more as if he is sharing with them the pleasures of playing the piano. This music is ideal for children not just because it is technically simple, but also because of its attractiveness. It is as if Schumann remembers what it was like to be a child and is able to use this as a source of inspiration in the material he writes for children to play.

Does this make these pieces naïve? On the one hand, one could say that Schumann's empathy with childhood conforms to the criteria of the naïve artist, and certainly the simple and natural style of the pieces in the *Album für die Jugend* could be described as sounding naïve. On the other hand, one might see the function of the book as preventing that description. These are not pieces evoking childhood; they are pieces specifically written for children to play and as such must indicate some sort of adult perspective. Whatever the case, Schumann undoubtedly was able

to understand the world of children to an extraordinary degree, and it is this which makes the collection so successful.

The second category of children's music under discussion is that of music about childhood. It is the nostalgia which informs so much romantic children's music in this category which is possibly the most important factor in determining whether or not it can be classed as naïve. If music is written in such complete sympathy with the world of childhood, that for a time at least, one has the sense that the composer has returned (if not in technical ability!) to that world, and is writing from a childlike viewpoint, then the music can truly be called naïve.

As soon, however, as the composer regards childhood from an adult perspective, with nostalgia for a lost state of idealised innocence, then that naïvety disappears and one may find oneself dealing with exactly that phenomenon which Schiller describes as sentimentality. This is especially true where the composer, by this act, is deliberately attempting to give the audience the opportunity to re-enter, if only temporarily, this lost state. This is possibly less so in examples where the music is written in an attempt to woo adults with pretty musical "pictures" of sweet children playing little games. This "chocolate box" approach does not result in Schillerian sentimentality, but simply in sopiness.

Schumann, too, is the composer of one of the most famous evocations of childhood ever written: the *Kinderszenen*. The *Kinderszenen* are extremely important as a manifestation of the ideas under discussion. While technically fairly simple and thus often given to children to play, these pieces are not primarily intended for this function. Rather, they are attempts to recreate the lost state of innocence discussed above.

The *Kinderszenen* seems to be one of those works in which both naïvety and sentimentality can, perhaps, be found. All the pieces sound simple, deceptively so, for it is an expertly constructed composition, but the simplicity seems to function at different levels in the

different sections. In the majority of the pieces, one feels that Schumann is truly re-experiencing the sensations of childhood. There seems to be no feeling of nostalgia or adult commentary about, for instance *Hasche-Mann*, *Glückes genug*, *Wichtige Begebenheit*, *Am Kamin*, *Fürchtenmachen*, or even *Träumerei*, although this last-mentioned has suffered more, perhaps, than any other from sentimentalised (not in the Schillerian sense!) performance, as well as by being given to children to play.

In only three of the pieces, does Schumann seem to step back from his involvement in the childhood world, and in only one of these three is this overt. The three pieces in question are *Bittendes Kind*, *Kind im Einschlummern*, and the final piece *Der Dichter Spricht*. It is, perhaps, significant that in the first two pieces under discussion, Schumann uses the word "Kind" in the title, seeming to suggest that these are to be approached as descriptions of childhood experiences, rather than as the experiences themselves. It is interesting to note at this point that Schumann's titles are always intended as guides to interpretation. This seems to be the case in *Bittendes Kind* in particular: the nostalgic adult perspective seems even clearer here than in *Kind im Einschlummern* which could equally be a description of a child falling asleep, as it could be a representation of the feeling of drifting off into slumber (in fact, the ending would seem to suggest this latter interpretation).

But it is in *Der Dichter Spricht* that one finds perhaps a perfect illustration of sentimental art in the Schillerian sense. Schumann is now standing back from direct involvement in the childhood world. He is now the poet, the romantic creator, and as such he speaks directly to his audience. What does he say? Typically, possibly in keeping with the new idea that music can express that which cannot be put into words, this is not revealed verbally. But there can be little doubt that Schumann intended this last piece as something of a commentary on what has gone before. As composer, one might say naïve composer, he has re-experienced a lost world, and

allowed his audience to join him there. Now, in the guise of the sentimental poet, he sends them away with a final word on that world, its nature and importance.

4.2.3. Folk music

The link between children and the "Volk" as the childhood state of humanity has already been discussed in some detail, as has the influence of folk song on romantic poets like Arnim and Brentano. Given the importance of the concept of the "Volk" as people in the ideal state of unity with nature, and the interest in folk song as an expression of this state, it is not surprising that this extended through all the arts. In music in particular, folk music became a major source of inspiration to composers.

As early as the mid-eighteenth century the movement away from the complexities of Baroque to a more "natural" style of writing led to attempts at a fusion of folk and popular melodies into art music genera. "Il faut que la musique se rapproche de la nature" ("music must return to nature") wrote Rousseau, and his own *Le devin du village* used folklike music in order to effect this return. This tendency was, in fact, represented in the indigenous comic opera genres not only in France but in England, Italy and Germany. The characters of these operas were simple peasants living close to nature in a state of vernal innocence. This is manifested in the simplicity - both in technical terms and in character - of the music*.

This tendency was not limited to opera. In Germany in particular, composers of the North

*An important exception is to be found in the English ballad opera, the original comic opera genre. Here the characters, especially in the prototype *The Beggar's Opera* are not simple innocents, but thieves and rogues and the libretto contains sharp political satire. The sequel was, in fact, considered morally so shocking that it was banned by the authorities.

German School like Reichardt and Schulz used the same principles in the writing of songs, and their work formed the foundation of German *Lied* composition in the nineteenth century. Interestingly, the simple character of these early songs made them extremely popular, not only among professional musicians, but also among people with little or no formal musical education and they quickly passed into the canon of folk song.

This trend continued into the nineteenth century and can be seen to culminate in the works of certain romantic composers. The emphasis in romantic music is, however, somewhat different. As has been mentioned the romantics went further than Rousseau -rather than music having to return to nature it was perceived as being ideally an inseparable part thereof. Thus, in keeping with the romantic aesthetic of nature, many attempts to create "natural music" in the field of art music by using folk material were made. Composers like Mendelssohn, Schumann and Brahms began to incorporate elements of folk music into their works, to write pieces "*im Volkston*", to arrange folk songs and to set folk texts to music.

The question of the setting of folk texts to art music, as well as the arrangement of existing folk songs and the composition of original songs in the folklike style is of particular interest. This is partly because the resulting works comprise a large amount of all folklike music written by the romantic composers, and, perhaps especially, because these works are complete in themselves, where instrumental music in the folk style often exists as part of larger works e.g. symphonic poems or operas.

In the case of songs "*im Volkston*", composers genuinely tried to reproduce as closely as possible an authentic folk style even in original settings of folk texts or in entirely original imitation folk songs. Both melody and accompaniment were kept simple, especially the former. As in the case of genuine folk songs the melody, even in original settings, could generally function quite independently from the accompaniment. Where existing melodies were modal this

was preserved in the harmonisation and modal touches were often added to original melodies, giving an archaic feel. The usual strophic structure was most often preserved intact.

A typical example of this style is Brahms' setting of the *Wunderhorn* text, "Der Überläufer"¹¹. In this song Brahms retains the strophic form of the original text absolutely, with the single exception of the added words "*Mein'n Schatz*" at the final cadence at the end of the third stanza (the fourth stanza is omitted). Both melody and harmony are exceptionally simple. The setting of the words is syllabic with single deviation being the tiny melisma in bar 10 (and thus bar 28) and the movement is predominantly by step with the minor third also figuring strongly. An archaic touch is added by the flattened seventh (the piece is in the aeolian mode)*. The accompaniment is virtually entirely homophonic and follows the melody closely except in the bass at bars 13 to 16 (and 31 to 34).

The appropriation of folk music into the realms of art music is, however, not unproblematic, as the removal of the former from its original context radically changes its function and meaning. This can, perhaps, best be grasped if one compares some of the essential aspects of folk and art music:

1. Folk music performs an important function within a community: it accompanies the patterning of life and the seasons and helps to define the socio-cultural identity of the group. Individual pieces also perform specific functions e.g. dance music, working songs, children's songs (often with a didactic element), narrative songs, especially ballads, non-liturgical religious music, and so on.

While from a sociological viewpoint art music (especially from the second half of the

*While the use of modal inflections could be seen as part of the broader harmonic palette available to Romantic composers, the choice of such archaic means to set what Brahms would have seen as an archaic text is unlikely to have been a coincidence.

eighteenth century onwards) can be seen to perform a function as part of the concert life of a society, the intended function here is rather purely aesthetic: art for art's sake.

2. In keeping with its social function, folk music has a broad popular appeal*. In its original context it is performed by non-professionals for a largely musically uneducated audience. (The term professional here refers to persons who have undergone formal, highly technical training - many folk musicians achieve a high level of skill in their field.) Music, especially vocal, is often intended for group performance by the community. For these reasons the majority of folk songs are structurally simple with reference to both music and words. This simplicity also extends to the meaning of most folk songs.

Art music, on the other hand, is intended primarily for performance by professionals and demands often a certain level of understanding of the given medium from its audience. For this reason it tends to a high degree of complexity, both with reference to its technical difficulty and to its musical content and meaning.

3. Folk music is transmitted orally and is thus subject to constant modification. This metamorphic aspect is one of the fundamental criteria of its existence.

Art music is written down. As such (given the considerable differences which changes in performance practice may make to a work as an acoustic entity) its text - both musical and verbal in the case of vocal music - is fixed for the future.

4. Folk music has its roots in the distant past. Neither the music, nor the words, in the case of songs, can be traced to any specific individual. Even when the prototype *can* be traced to a known composer (as is the case with many German folk songs which can be attributed to

*The definition in *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* distinguishes between folk music as a rural and popular music as a largely urban phenomenon. In the eighteenth and at least the early nineteenth century when urbanisation was not very far advanced (as was the case in Germany) the distinguishing line between the two is often rather vague.

composers of the second half of the eighteenth century, and especially of the Second Berlin School), the process of mutation which it undergoes removes it from its specific source.

Furthermore, the fact that folk song in particular cannot be traced to a specific source means that it is impossible to ascertain whether the words and music originated simultaneously, or whether one was created before the other. The two exist as an indissoluble, organic whole. (In this regard, it should be remembered that folk song forms the largest body of folk music.)

Art music can be traced directly to a particular composer. In the instance of vocal music the writer of the literary text is also usually known. An art song is almost always a setting of an already existing poem. While the music is thus usually entirely dependant on the words for its meaning, the words have a life of their own without the music.

Given the above comparison, what are the implications of appropriating elements of folk music into the context of art music?

1. Of primary importance is the removal of folk music from its original social context. The meaning of folk music is to a large extent determined by its socio-cultural function and this function is destroyed when the music is transplanted into a context whose function is primarily aesthetic. Folk music now becomes music whose meaning resides in its very being, without any extra-musical frame of reference. What this meaning actually is, is determined to a large extent by the composer's aesthetic attitude and intentions, but, as has been seen, in the case of the romantics it was largely concerned with the creation of natural music.

2. This change of function has important implications in terms of the inherent simplicity of folk music. Whereas in its original context folk music's simplicity is connected to the ability of the performers and the demands of the audience, this simplicity now gains a meaning of its own as part of the essential being of folk music. Composers of art music writing in the folklike style do not compose simple music because they are unable to cope with more complex

procedures, because the performers are technically less proficient, or the audience ignorant of the subtleties of art music. Rather, this simplicity is consciously used as a means of communicating the music's naturalness as opposed to the artificiality of their more usual medium*.

3. The notation of folk music removes the element of metamorphosis which is vital to its existence as such. A notated folk song faces the possible danger of becoming little more than a museum piece, an object of scholarly analysis or, in the case of folk music transplanted into the field of art music, into something whose meaning, as discussed above, is considerably different to that which it was in its original context.

4. With respect to vocal music in particular, the whole question of the setting of folk texts to art music holds interesting implications. One way of looking at the setting of any verbal text is to see that setting as the realisation of what the composer perceives to be the meaning of the text in music. In the case of the art song, a composer has extensive means for the musical interpretation of the text at his/her disposal: the melodic structure, choice of key, harmony and modulation, metric and rhythmic elements. As has been shown, the range and subtlety of all these available to romantic composers was vast. The choice of a simple folk text, and the use of uncomplicated, archaic musical means as an interpretation thereof, thus must be seen as significant in the context of the aesthetic of composers like Schumann, Mendelssohn or Brahms.

This is perhaps particularly notable with respect to the strophic format and accompaniment style of these songs. While the accompaniments may not always sound exactly like genuine folk music, neither do they provide any of the subtle text interpretation often found in art song. Similarly the choice of the strophic setting, without even the option of a varied

* It is interesting to compare the folk movement of the late 1960s and early '70s: here again the folk idiom was used to communicate simplicity and naturalness as virtues, and was an important medium in the rebellion against the materialistic mores of capitalist society.

accompaniment for each verse, hinders anything but the most basic representation of the words in the music, e.g. the use of minor keys for sad and major for more cheerful songs. At an even more fundamental level, one could regard the aspects like the choice of modal melody and harmony as a reference to, and interpretation of the archaic nature of the texts.

The process of writing folk songs in an attempt to write natural music, as well as that of arranging existing folk songs by adding accompaniments or altering melodies to make them seem more archaic, can be seen as very similar to the work of Arnim and Brentano in altering and rewriting texts for the *Wunderhorn*. Like them, composers such as Brahms and Schumann were trying to create an aesthetic utopia where art and folk music could co-exist and combine producing a new, natural music, and the same type of problems arise in defining whether this music is naïve or sentimental.

On the one hand, one could argue that this music must be seen as sentimental, on the grounds that the composers concerned were not simple peasants living in harmony with nature, but members of the educated bourgeoisie idealising both the "Volk" and their relationship with nature, and trying to produce music which would communicate their (the composers') ideas and ideals to the audience.

On the other hand, there are a number of factors which make it possible to argue for a definition of these songs as naïve in at least some cases. Firstly, as has been seen, it is possible for a composer (or any other artist, for that matter) to produce both sentimental and naïve works. The fact that Mendelssohn was a well educated bourgeois and composer of much pure art music, did not prevent him "feeling" the atmosphere of the Hebrides, and communicating that feeling to his listeners. Even more to the point in this case, Schumann seems to have been able to a great extent to re-experience the sensations of childhood and reproduce them musically in the greater part of the *Kinderszenen*. Why then, should these same composers and others not have written

and arranged folk songs in, at least from their viewpoint, a naïve state of mind and feeling.

Furthermore, these songs can be described as realist. Dahlhaus defines realism as the objective representation of social reality set in the present or in a concrete past, extending to areas previously considered unsuitable for art and breaking the traditional rules of stylization¹². The exact imitation of folk song seems to conform to all these criteria. In Schillerian terms the results would surely fall more into the category of imitation of nature than extension thereof through the artist's imagination, especially where the songs sound exactly like folk music?

This last point is extremely important. Perhaps the most significant point about the romantic folk song arrangements and imitation folk songs in this regard is what they sound like, the impression that they make on the listener. As with the poems in the *Wunderhorn*, it is often extremely difficult, if not impossible, for someone who does not know which is which to distinguish between a genuine folk song arranged by one of the romantic composers, and one of the latter's own creations "im Volkston". All sound equally naïve: simple, natural, folklike.

In fact (and again there is a common element here with the *Wunderhorn*) several of these songs moved into the popular repertoire. Alfred Einstein records the "particular satisfaction" of Brahms in his song, *In stiller Nacht*, being published "under the folklike anonymous label"¹³. Even among those songs published under his name, how many parents sing the *Wiegenlied*, or children *Sandmännchen* without realising the provenance of these songs. It is as though these, and many other songs like them have so fulfilled the criteria for naïvety, that, no matter whether their creator wrote them in a mystic state of unity with nature, or from a sentimental, nostalgic viewpoint, the reality of the songs themselves is, or has become naïve.

4.2.4. Carl Dahlhaus and musical naïvety

It must be noted at this point that according to Carl Dahlhaus musical naïvety is impossible: "The natural world in music ... is always 'second nature' using the term with the implications set out by Hegel in his *Ästhetik*"¹⁴. When one perceives music as sounding entirely natural, "this quality is not due to naïvety fostered by closeness to the elemental origins of [natural sounds] so much as to an intellectual capacity for reflection which conceived or conjured up the musical picture of nature as a conscious exception to a stylistic norm: it is a cultivated, second nature which confronts culture in a spirit of nostalgia and elegy."¹⁵

Dahlhaus is writing here from a very specific viewpoint which is made clear both in *Realism in Nineteenth Century Music* and in *Between Romanticism and Modernism*. Both these books are concerned with realism as an important, but peripheral strand in the music of the second half of the nineteenth century. In the latter volume, in particular, Dahlhaus concentrates on the fact that, while the period under discussion was one characterised by a positivist spirit, and in literature and the visual arts by realism and later impressionism and symbolism, music remained stubbornly romantic: "The central trends of the age were represented in music by peripheral works, while the central musical works were representative of the periphery of the age."¹⁶

Against this background it is understandable that he should regard realist music as an act of rebellion against the musical norm, and also as a conscious act. As soon as a composer decides to write "natural" or realist music consciously, rather than because he/she is seized by nature and simply composes in the consequent state of unity with nature, the resulting music can no longer be called naïve.

Now the music discussed as naïve up to this point has almost entirely belonged to the

early romantic period in music i.e. the first half of the nineteenth century when the aesthetic gap which was to open between music and the other arts (indeed with the late nineteenth century world view) was not nearly so pronounced. It is hard to see Schumann or Mendelssohn at odds with their age, or their compositions as rebellious. At the time at which they were writing, surely they were far more representing the norm, or at least one of the norms of their aesthetic age? And if they were not rebelling, is it not at least a moot point as to whether their works, and those of Schubert and Berlioz and Weber and other composers of music which is at least sometimes realist or natural were conceived while inspired and possessed by nature (i.e. naïve) rather than as the result of reflection (sentimental).

The one composer of the latter half of the century who has been discussed so far has been Brahms, and if he was not representative of the spirit of his time, it should also be remembered that he was also regarded as an arch-conservative musically speaking. In his folksonglike works in particular, he can be seen as very much still part of the same school as Schumann and Mendelssohn. Whether this music was written in conscious rebellion against romanticism or whether it is rather a continuation of the earlier romanticism of the above-mentioned composers is thus a debatable point.

Perhaps more important, however, is the question as to whether, if music cannot be naïve, any other art form can either. Is any artist in any field really capable of being seized by nature? Does any art form (with the possible exception of folk art as perceived by the sentimental intellectual) really conform to Schiller's criteria of naïvety? How much of anyone's perception of a work of art or the creative process which brought it into being is dependent on the cultural milieu of both the artist and his/her audience?

Dahlhaus says that, in a piece of music (the examples that he quotes are all taken from the *Ring* cycle) when we hear "nature speaking" it is not in fact nature itself, but the composer's

intellectual projection of what he/she perceives to be the sound of nature realised in music. Could one not say the same about all realisations of nature in art? And, is it not a shared cultural background, even a language if you like, which makes it possible for the artist's audience to perceive these projections as natural.

Take, for instance, the example of poetry. The following lines are taken from a poem called *Inversnaid* by Gerard Manley Hopkins:

This darksome burn, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-fróth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

To a reader who is at home in English, these verses wonderfully conjure up the sound and rhythm of the running water of the stream. The comprehension of the poem is intensified by an understanding of nature poetry in the nineteenth century, the background of Hopkins himself, his highly idiosyncratic approach to poetic rhythm (sprung rhythm) and so on. Given the evocative nature of the sound of the words, and even only a superficial knowledge of the other factors discussed above, it might occur to one to examine this poem in the kind of terms discussed in this thesis.

But what would be the effect of the poem on someone who spoke no English, had never seen or heard a fast running stream between rocks, did not know about Hopkins' relationship with nature and so on? It would be interesting to read the poem to a person like this (and probably just the lack of English would be enough to prove the point) and see if they still heard the water

running through the poem.

It would also be a useless if not rather silly exercise - the ideas under discussion are not absolutes, and they are also not concrete and thus are not materially provable. One has to approach the interpretation and application of Schiller's ideas in a state of trust. If an artist believes themselves to in a certain state in the course of the creative act, if their belief forms an important element in the meaning of the finished work, and if, what is more, that element can be perceived and understood as such by others, then one must accept the importance thereof in the comprehension of the work, even if one does not oneself believe that the original state is possible.

4.3. The visual arts

It should be possible to examine naïvety as a possible aesthetic concept in the context of the visual arts in much the same way as has been done in the cases of literature and music. In the field of fine arts, however, the term "naïve" is already used in a very specific way. It thus seems necessary to explore this definition, comparing it to the usage of the term as applied in the rest of this section and to see whether any similarities exist between the term "naïve art" as used in the fine arts, and the Schillerian definition of the term.

The phrase "naïve art" is usually used to classify the creations of untrained painters sculptors etc. who have little or no connection to the world of professional artists. While such people have existed for centuries, the word is generally applied to works dating from the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the prototype, and probably the most famous naive artist

being Henri Rousseau (1844-1910).*

Beyond this outline definition it is not easy to define exactly what constitutes naïve art. The situation is problematic largely because naïve artists tend to work independently of one another and it is thus difficult to speak of a homogenous style or a school of naïve painting or sculpture. This independence, combined with lack of professional training is, in fact, one of the most important elements which give naïve art its special character. Howard S. Becker tries to describe this character, writing that as naïve artists "have no professional training, their work characteristically looks naïve, childlike, the way children draw until they learn more sophisticated techniques, if they do, or just stop drawing."¹⁷

For some writers the similarity between the works of naïve artists and the art of children extends beyond the superficial similarities arising from lack of refined technique, but has its roots in the artists' perceptions of reality. Wassily Kandinsky, one of the first major artists to recognise the importance of naïve art, writes that the "child is indifferent to practical meanings since he looks at everything with fresh eyes and he still has the natural ability to absorb the thing as such."¹⁸ This is what gives the art of children its "enormous unconscious power"¹⁹, a quality which Kandinsky recognises also in the paintings of Rousseau. In a similar vein Oto Bihalji-Merin writes:

"For those who inhabit the landscape of consciousness of the naïve, what they themselves portray is the only true and possible reality ... Untroubled and spontaneous they create out of the urgings of the heart ... [Naïve art's] unique quality consists not only of a decorative artlessness and narrative simplicity, but even more of a symbol laden imagery and a childlike delight in discovery."²⁰

Implicit in this quotation and essential to the understanding of naïve art is the idea that

*Rousseau or "le Douanier" as he was known to his contemporaries, was a customs official (hence the nickname), who in his spare time produced paintings considered to be of great influence on the development of art in the twentieth century.

the artist does not consciously create naïve art, and, in fact, does not imitate any form of existing art whatsoever. The latter aspect is, perhaps, one that sets naïve artists apart from artistic amateurs, who often attempt to recreate that which they admire in the work of professionals. This factor contributes to naïve art's truth and integrity, elements which must be taken into account when assessing its aesthetic status.

The exact status of naïve art is, in fact, difficult to define; Oto Bihalji-Merin writes of "forces which in classical terms are not yet art": "with a sense of the world as yet unshaken by the ratio, naïve art instinctively and with a wealth of images reflects primal observations of simple communal experience"²¹. By emphasising the communal Bihalji-Merin places naïve art close to folk art; in fact, he regards naïve art as the successor to true folk art which has been destroyed by the advance of industrialism:

"Folk art implies long history and inheritance; it rests not on the achievements of individual taste, but on the conceptual world of custom and tradition. It lives as long as the necessary social and psychological community is unchallenged. In modern civilization the old social structures are surely dissolving.

"Folk and peasant arts are losing their original inner substance and are becoming merely decorative coverings for a lost message."²²

This "inner substance" is still to be found in naïve art: "The disintegrating folk art flows into a layman's art which combines the last influences of the collective with the timeless need for play, and with the eternal childlike will to create - into the art of the naïves."²³ The connection between naïve art and folk art is also noted by Kandinsky, who places naïve art, folk art and children's art in conjunction with each other as part of what he calls "the great realism" as opposed to "the great abstraction". Kandinsky was writing in 1912 when abstract art was first gaining importance, and it is interesting that he, like De Balthus, sees realism and naïvety as linked as an opposite to the growing dominant trend.

This realism is connected to the indifference to "practical meanings" already mentioned in the context of children's art:

"In rendering the shell of an object simply and completely, one has already separated the object from its practical meaning and peeled forth its interior sounds. Henri Rousseau, who may be considered the father of this realism, has pointed the way simply and convincingly."²⁴

While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore fully Kandinsky's intricate and complex analysis of the abstract and realistic in art, it should be noted that the poles of total realism and abstraction are shown to be opening "two ways that lead to one goal"²⁵ and "in the end...[the] two poles are equalized."²⁶ Thus the "'artistic' reduced to a minimum must be considered as the most intensely effective abstraction"²⁷ and the "'representational' reduced to a minimum must in abstraction be regarded as the most intensely effective reality."²⁸ (Here Kandinsky's ideas do not correspond with those of Dahlhaus who sees realism in music as a rebellion against romanticism.)

These arguments are, of course, idiosyncratic to Kandinsky, but as such they have proved very influential, and hold important implications for the discussion of realism in art in general and in naive art in particular.

In terms of this discussion naïvety can be seen to mean at least two things with respect to the visual arts. In the first place, naïve art may be taken to be the work of people who are themselves naïve, both in the sense that they are artistically unschooled, and, in many cases, because in their personality and character they have retained something of the simplicity and artlessness of a child. In the second place, and arising from these factors, their work itself, as Becker puts it, "looks naïve, childlike, the way children draw". This refers both to the simplicity of style and lack of technique, and to the subject matter.

It should further be noted that in the terminology of the visual arts "naïve" has a strong

positive connotation; none of the negative associations often linked to the word in common usage are applicable to naïve art. Many writers (including to a great extent Bihalji-Merin) in fact tend to idealize the work of the naïves, placing it virtually above criticism. "Naïve" in this context thus comes close in meaning to innocence or to simplicity in the old quasi-religious meaning of the latter word. One of the phrases used to describe the naïve painters, for instance, is "Painters of the Sacred Heart", a nomenclature which even Bihalji-Merin rejects as "ostentatious and sentimental"²⁹. Nevertheless, the power of the truth and integrity of genuine naïve art, as well as its charm, and the fascination of some of its strange and fantastic manifestations, cannot be denied. Nor can one dismiss its undoubted influence on many of the most important professional artists of the twentieth century.

At this point it is interesting to compare the ideas discussed in this section up to now with those of Schiller. Similarities between the definitions of naïve art above and the Schillerian concept "naïvety" should immediately be apparent. Kandinsky, for instance, one of the first writers to use the term, brackets it with children's art and folk art and discusses it as part of the "great realism". At the very least, this would seem to be similar to Schiller's definition: we are dealing here with art "unsullied" by artifice, and, as such, with art which is only capable of being realist.

This is seen as a virtue. Kandinsky, again, (and it was Kandinsky who probably had the greatest influence on later writers attempting to define naïve art) writes of the "enormous unconscious power" of the art of both children and the naïves, and virtually every writer consulted used words like "truth" and "integrity" in their discussions of naïve art. This seems to correspond with Schiller's emphasis on the moral implications of naïvety, both as a character trait and as an aesthetic category.

Unfortunately it has not been possible to ascertain whether Kandinsky ever read Schiller's

essay, but, if he did not, it seems very likely that he could have come into contact with the idea of naïvety as defined by Schiller through others during his years in Munich and Berlin when he was in close contact with many intellectuals. The term does seem to have still been in use in the Schillerian sense around the turn of the century, and the similarities between Kandinsky's definition and Schiller's seem too close for pure co-incidence.

Of course it would be facile to suggest that Schiller, or at least those ideas of Schiller with which Kandinsky may, directly or indirectly, have come into contact, was the only influence on his (Kandinsky's) thought (or that of his followers for that matter). His writings reveal a variety of influences. Nevertheless, the field of naïve art can be seen as one where, even into the twentieth century, the ideas which Schiller propagated may have survived.

5. MAHLER AND NAIVETY

"Diese Lieder sind ihm am meisten eigen, denn sie sind wirklich naiv."

"Ganz falsch wäre es, je Sentimentalität, Pathos oder Ironie in die Lieder Mahlers hineinzutragen. Manche Komponisten behandeln das Volkstümliche mit einer an sich sehr feinen und überlegenen Ironie; Mahlers Lieder sind nicht auf diese Art ironisch. Der Künstler geht in ihnen auf, er steht nicht über seinen Weisen oder über seinen Text. Es sei wiederholt: Mahler, der Wissende, Ordnende und Leitende, ist als Schaffender naiv."¹

The main motivation behind this thesis has been an attempt to establish what Specht, Stefan and others mean when they describe Mahler, his music, and most particularly the *Wunderhorn* songs as naïve, and, in doing so, to try to gain new insight into the *Wunderhorn* songs, and the creative process that produced them. The information provided in the first four chapters should give a basic understanding of the concepts involved. It is now time to apply them to Mahler and to the *Wunderhorn* songs, and to see whether, in fact, the writers who see Mahler's work as naïve are justified in doing so, and, if so, what one can learn through applying the term to Mahler's music.

At this point, it is interesting to explore Mahler's relationship with Schiller: was Mahler aware of Schiller's work and did it influence him? And also, most importantly, if one examines Mahler's creative personality, as far as this is possible, does it conform to that which Schiller calls naïvety.

5.1. Mahler, Schiller and the romantics

5.1.1 Mahler and Schiller

That Mahler had read Schiller's works, and particularly *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* has actually already been demonstrated in his (Mahler's) statement about the Pastoral Symphony, in which the word naïve seems to be used in precisely the Schillerian sense:

"From the very first movement [of the Pastoral Symphony] ... one needs to know how naïvely Beethoven meant this picture: to know what he felt when he breathed the fresh air, saw the sun and the open sky, and was surrounded by the brooks and meadows."

The fact that Mahler was well acquainted with Schiller's work is confirmed by Floros who adds, however, that little is known about Mahler's exact relationship with these writings². He (Floros) does, though, make special mention of *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* as being a work of which Mahler had an intimate knowledge³. It thus seems not unlikely that Mahler should have been influenced by the ideas expressed in the essay.

It would be, however, too simplistic just to state that Mahler knew Schiller's essay and was influenced by his ideas, set folk poems to music and thus produced naïve music, which was recognised as such by his contemporaries. This theory does not work for a number of reasons. For instance, Mahler was influenced by a number of writers from Schiller and the Romantics to Schopenhauer and (at least for a time) Nietzsche. To what extent is Schiller's influence noticeable in comparison with that of any other writer (especially as so little is known about Mahler's relationship with Schiller)? Even more fundamental, perhaps, is the question of Mahler's naïvety as a composer: could his knowledge of Schiller and *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* itself preclude him from entering that state of creative consciousness which Schiller calls naïve?

5.1.2. Romantic influences on Mahler's natural aesthetic

"[Meine Musik] ist immer und überall Naturlaut."⁴

That Mahler had an especially close relationship with nature has already been discussed in terms of the strong romantic aspect of his personality. This relationship has been shown to be more than just a superficial enjoyment of natural scenes; Walter, for example, calls it a "Dionysian saturation". It should come as no surprise, therefore, that this relationship with nature should inform his attitude to music in general and his own composition in particular, to the extent that he is able to speak of natural music in general, and of his own music as "natural sound - always and everywhere".

Mahler's letters, as well as the records of the expression of his thoughts by others, abound in statements relating to "natural music", both as a general concept and especially with reference to his own music. One of the earliest examples is to be found in the letter to Steiner already quoted in which he quite clearly places the sound of a shepherd's pipe in the context of the natural rather than the human world. Perhaps even more unequivocal is the following quotation from a letter to Max Marschalk, written in 1896:

"Wohl hat Wagner sich die Ausdrucksmittel der symphonischen Musik zu eigen gemacht, so wie jetzt wiederum der Symphoniker in seinen Mitteln vollberechtigt und vollbewusst in das Ausdrucksvermögen, welches der Musik durch Wagners Wirken gewonnen wurde, hinübergreifen wird. In diesem Sinne hängen alle Künste, ja sogar die Kunst mit der Natur zusammen."⁵

*It is interesting to note that Bauer-Lechner describes Mahler's affinity to Wagner precisely in terms of the former's perception of the natural in Wagner's music:

"Furthermore, under Mahler's leadership the elemental force of this poetic work [*Rheingold*], so profoundly inspired by Nature, made itself felt with unforgettable impact. Perhaps only Wagner could have done it this way!" [Bauer-Lechner, p. 93]

Walter calls Mahler's relationship with nature "elementary"* and relates this to the Dionysian element not only in his (Mahler's) character, but also in his music.⁶ It is surely to this factor, too, to which Mahler was referring when he said to Bauer-Lechner of the Third Symphony:

"[In order to understand this music] you would yourself have to plunge with me into the very depths of Nature, whose roots are grasped by music at a depth that neither art nor science can otherwise reach. And I believe that no artist suffers so much from Nature's mystic power as does the musician when he is seized by her."⁷

On the same lines Bauer-Lechner records the following reaction by Mahler to a remark that nature is more easily understood than Art:

"How can people think ... that Nature lies on the surface! Of course it does in its most superficial aspect. But those who, in the face of Nature, are not overwhelmed with awe at its infinite mystery, its divinity (we can only sense it, not comprehend or penetrate it) - these people have not come close to it ... Indeed there is no end to the infinite oceans of the world! And in every work of art, which should be a reflection [Abbild] of Nature, there must be a trace of this infinity."⁸

She also quotes him as telling her:

"We probably derive all our basic rhythms and themes [Urrhythmen und -themen] from Nature which offers them to us, pregnant with meaning, in every animal noise. Indeed, Man, and the artist in particular, takes all his materials and all his forms from the world around him - transforming them and expanding them, of course. He may find himself in a harmonious and happy relationship with Nature, or alternatively in hostile opposition to her. He may even seek to have done with her, looking down upon her with humour and irony from a superior vantage-point - and this attitude provides in the most precise sense for the sublime [schön-erhabenen], the sentimental, the tragic and the humorously ironic styles in art."⁹

These quotations reveal a wide span of influences on Mahler's thought. His discussion of the Third Symphony seems clearly to show the influence of the ideas of Schopenhauer, while

*This is surely a mistranslation: "elemental" seems more appropriate here.

the last quotation cited seems to tend more to the ideas of Herder and Schiller. The former writer's influence is particularly noticeable with respect to the derivation of "basic rhythms and forms" from nature, and the effect of the artist's attitude to nature on the style of his/her art, respectively, while his categorization of possible attitudes to nature reads almost like a précis of Schiller, starting with the naïve, "harmonious and happy relationship" and then working through the various types of sentimental approach.

Nor are these the only writers who influenced Mahler's concept of natural music. Floros cites E.T.A. Hoffmann and Eichendorff as being especially influential on Mahler's thought in this regard. He (Floros) refers in particular to the Romantic idea of music as "sounding nature" ("tönende Natur") and quotes Hoffmann's description of music as "die geheimnisvolle, in Tönen ausgesprochene Sanskritta der Natur"¹⁰. Floros further quotes Eichendorff's famous verse:

"Schläft ein Lied in allen Dingen,
Die da träumen fort und fort,
Und die Welt hebt an zu singen,
Triffst du nur das Zauberwort."¹¹

Of major importance with respect to this last quotation is the introduction of the concept of the dream. Floros cites Robert Mühler's *Natursprache und Naturmusik bei Eichendorff* in which the author depicts natural speech or music, according to Eichendorff, as simultaneously heard and seen: "sie ist die Sprache des Traumes"¹². The poet is able to enter the heart of nature and hear its (nature's) sleeping song. Through this, the poet's voice mingles with the sound of nature and the poem truly functions as part of this natural music or sound. According to Mühler this is Eichendorff's poetic ideal.¹³

Floros applies the above argument directly to Mahler's perception of his music as "immer und überall Naturlaut". The composer, like the poet, is able to penetrate into the heart of nature and the resulting music thus functions as natural sound. Floros also points out that for Mahler,

as for Hoffmann and Eichendorff, the concept of "tönende Natur" is inextricably linked to the ideas of the mysterious and the dream¹⁴. In a letter to Anna Mildenburg, for instance, Mahler describes the Third Symphony as "etwas ..., was die Welt noch nicht gehört hat! Die ganze Natur bekommt darin eine Stimme und erzählt so tief ein Geheimnis, das man vielleicht im Traume ahnt!"¹⁵

So, given that Mahler, "der Wissende, Ordnende und Leitende" as Stefan would have it, Specht's "unheimlich scharfsinnige Mensch", the intellectual who devoured books, and seems to have been influenced by most of the published German philosophers and writers of the late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth centuries, how is one to find and isolate that element which writers have referred to as naïve (assuming that it is there at all)? Do the influences of writers whose emphasis was different to a greater or lesser degree to that of Schiller preclude the application of the latter's ideas to Mahler's music? And, perhaps most importantly, what was it in Mahler's music which evoked the reaction of Specht, Stefan, Adler et al who seem so convinced of its naïvety?

5.2. Mahler's "creative naïvety"

Assume that Specht is at the very least partly correct when he says that Mahler, the creator, is naïve. What, then, is one looking for in his creative personality and work if one wishes to explain this phenomenon? First and foremost, the naïve composer should be, if only temporarily, in a state of oneness with nature. He/she is not aware of, or forgets, the distance which has opened up between humanity and nature, and creates as though that gap had never existed.

Secondly, all the work produced in this state will be realist, a direct imitation of nature,

without ever leaving the natural world for that of the pure imagination. Thirdly, and this is closely connected to this last point, the naïvety of the work will be perceptible to others. This is very important. Naïvety exists only in the eye, or ear in this case, of the beholder or listener who is not naïve, who will react to a piece of naïve music (and indeed to a naïve composer) as being so. The composer him- or herself cannot be aware of his/her own naïvety and remain naïve.

Furthermore, the naïve artist will always seem somehow out of step with his/her time. While his/her work may be appreciated by connoisseurs who are able to perceive its integrity and beauty, it is likely to be reviled by the majority of the population who will not be able to understand any more than the surface simplicity and will thus see it as unworthy of notice.

Finally, naïvety is not an absolute state - it is possible for a person to be naïve at times, while at others showing a more worldly approach to life. This applies both to what has been referred to as "social naïvety" and to the naïve state of creativity. Even the same work may be naïve in some places, in others not. Furthermore, it has been shown that works which may not be the result, strictly speaking, of the naïve creative process - which may, in fact, originally be defined as sentimental - may, through the passage of time and/or the perceptions of others, become naïve. *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* itself has been discussed in these terms.

So how, if at all, does Mahler fit into this picture? At this point it is interesting to place some of Schiller's descriptions of the naïve poet and genius in direct conjunction with statements made by and about Mahler and to examine any similarities and differences which arise.

According to Schiller, a person who experiences naïvety of surprise is morally capable of denying nature, but this is impossible for a person of truly naïve disposition¹⁶. While Mahler is aware of the possibility of denying nature (as evinced in the remark to Bauer-Lechner about hostile or superior attitudes to nature), all the quotations revealing his own attitude to nature would seem to suggest that this course of action is inconceivable in his own work. For example:

"I believe that no artist suffers so much from Nature's mystic power as does the musician when he is seized by her."

"In diesen Sinne hängen allen Künste, ja sogar die Kunst mit der Natur zusammen."

"How can people think ... that Nature lies on the surface! Of course it does in its most superficial aspect. But those who, in the face of Nature, are not overwhelmed with awe at its infinite mystery, its divinity (we can only sense it, not comprehend or penetrate it) - these people have not come close to it ... Indeed there is no end to the infinite oceans of the world! And in every work of art, which should be a reflection [Abbild] of nature, there must be a trace of this infinity."

"Indeed, Man, and the artist in particular, takes all his materials and all his forms from the world around him - transforming them and expanding them, of course."

"Meine Musik ist immer und überall Naturlaut".

It should be immediately obvious that not all these quotations express a naïve attitude. As already discussed, they reveal a variety of influences of writers with differing viewpoints on the natural aesthetic. Nevertheless, Mahler speaks of sensing the infinite mystery of nature, and of being seized by nature, and this would seem to suggest that he has at least potential for entering the naïve creative state¹.

Whether or not his perception of nature itself is the same as that of Schiller², Mahler definitely seems to have the capacity of losing himself in nature, of being so inspired by nature that there is no sense of distance between himself as creator and nature as creation. This is one of the characteristics which Schiller ascribes to the naïve genius, characterised by a childlike spirit and by the ability to transform and expand nature without leaving its boundaries. In the same section of the essay, Schiller writes that naïvety describes childlikeness where it is no

¹As has already been discussed, it may be possible for an artist to *describe* the creative process in a way which is not naïve, but to actually *experience* the process in a way which *is* naïve.

²and perhaps it is the differences in perception of what nature actually is, that give rise to the greatest differences in approach when formulating an aesthetic which has its roots in the artist's relationship with nature

longer expected and that the term cannot thus be applied to the speech actions of children themselves:

"Die Handlungen und Reden der Kinder geben uns daher auch nur so lange den reinen Eindruck des Naiven, als wir ihrer Unvermögens zur Kunst nicht erinnern und überhaupt nur auf den Kontrast ihrer Natürlichkeit mit der Künstlichkeit in uns in Rücksicht nehmen."¹⁷

These ideas are interesting because they seem to coincide with descriptions of Mahler's unexpected childlike- or childishness*. Several quotations describing this aspect of his personality have already been cited to which can be added the words of Alma Mahler:

"[E]r war so naiv, und das konnte ich damals nicht glauben. Er war kindhaft. Das konnte man nicht gleich verstehen, wenn man ihn zuerst sprechen hörte."¹⁸

This naïvety seems, at least in part to have contributed to Mahler's social unease. Interestingly, Schiller notes that naïve poets seem out of place in an era based on artifice and will tend to be social outcasts, recognised only by those who have the knowledge and the sensitivity to appreciate their integrity. Even more interestingly, if one extends the concept to include aesthetic naïvety, there is a remarkable similarity between Schiller's description in this context, and Stefan's explanation of why Mahler's music was reviled in his time:

Es tritt uns nahe: es verstimmt uns. Die Zeit ist selber nicht imstande, naiv zu sein; muss sie nicht heben, der ihn zur trotz naiv ist, Volkslieder singt, das Wunderhorn in sich gestaltet, übersehen, ungeachtet lassen, und schliesslich mit der griesgrämigen Anerkennung, die sie für das 'Können' hat, verachten?"

The apparent contradictions in Schiller's discussion of genius have already been noted, however, as the remark about the genius expanding nature is made directly after the definition

* What is also interesting is the way in which Schiller seems to be linking genuine naïvety of disposition with artistic ability. It is possible that the word "Kunst" in the quotation from *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* above refers once again to artifice in general, rather than art in particular, but it does seem to have aesthetic connotations in this context.

of the genius as naïve, it seems safe to discuss these ideas in conjunction with one another. If this is the case then Mahler's statement that "the artist in particular, takes all his materials and all his forms from the world around him - transforming them and expanding them, of course" is no longer necessarily incompatible with naïvety, as long as, in the course of the expansion, the artist does not leave the realm of nature for that of pure imagination in his/her transformations. It would seem, given Mahler's statement that every work of art should be a reflection of nature, and his comment that his own work is always and everywhere natural sound, that he did not see his work in any other terms than those of the natural.

Also of great importance in Schiller's discussion of genius is his description of how genius expresses itself in speech, and, one may deduce, in art. If Mahler conforms to the criteria of the naïve genius - creative genius that is - his style should be characterised by stylistic freedom, disregarding rules and conventions, and should directly communicate his ideas in such a way that the technique of expression is not obvious, nor should it seem important. Rather, as Schiller would have it, one would be presented with the naked expression of thought.

This is entirely compatible with the fact that in naïve art there is no distinction or contradiction between instinct and reason, between spontaneous and learned ability. It is because of this that the creations of the naïve artist are always imitations of reality, governed by the inevitability of nature.

With this discussion of the aesthetic expression of naïvety, it seems appropriate to turn directly to Mahler's music. Questions of musical style cannot ultimately be resolved simply by deductions from statements about the music in question, but must be based on a thorough examination of the music itself. It is thus necessary to examine Mahler's compositions and especially the *Wunderhorn* songs thoroughly according to the criteria laid out in this chapter and the section on musical naïvety and to search in them for evidence of naïvety.

Before doing this, however, let us draw together the threads of the discussion thus far. As yet there is no absolute proof that Mahler either was (or sometimes was) or was not naïve, especially as a composer. Various pointers have, however, become apparent as to why his contemporaries may have regarded him as being so.

Firstly, Mahler indisputedly had a remarkably close relationship with nature. This alone does not guarantee naïvety. For a composer to be naïve, he/she must create in a state of unity with nature, and without the consciousness, at least at the time of the creative act, that any division could exist between nature and humanity. While Mahler's consciousness of a mystical union with nature may have been influenced by later writers (e.g. Eichendorff or Schopenhauer) as well as by Schiller himself, this does not mean that he was not able to experience that peculiar state of creating while at one with nature. One might conclude at this stage, that if Mahler's attitude was not always naïve composer (and the fact that he was able to discuss the artist's relationship with nature in precisely Schiller's terms would seem to preclude that), he at least had the potential to be one.

Secondly, the naïve artist always imitates nature. Mahler's much quoted comment "Meine Musik ist immer und überall Naturlaut" would seem to fall in with this. Certainly during the *Wunderhorn* period all his material is drawn from natural sources in one way or another, either literally through imitation, or through the sort of mystic communion discussed in the quotation about the Third Symphony, through the natural poetry of the folk anthology, or through music taken from the world of the "Volk".

Thirdly, the naïve person will remain unappreciated by society, both socially and aesthetically. This certainly seems to be the case with Mahler. In the case of his social naïvety, childlikeness and a sort of childish selfishness (combined it must be said with other factors, including his Jewish ancestry) made his place in fin de siècle Viennese society difficult, to say

the least. And according to Stefan, it is precisely the aesthetic naïvety of Mahler's music, created from folk song and the *Wunderhorn* which made that music difficult for the same society to accept.

Finally, the naïvety of Mahler's music should be perceptible to others. The number of quotations referring to *Wunderhorn* songs as naïve would seem to testify that this is the case, at least in the case of several of Mahler's contemporaries. What would seem now to be necessary is a thorough examination of the music, which tries to establish what it was that for instance Specht, Stefan, or Adler found naïve about it, as well as attempting to answer some of the questions not yet been settled in this section concerning whether Mahler's relationship with nature could be described as creative naïvety. Perhaps the easiest place to start with such an analysis is to examine the relationship of the songs to folk music, their genuinely naïve (in the Schillerian sense) source, as well as comparing their style to the earlier, imitative style of folksong composition.

6. FOLKSONG AND MAHLER'S *WUNDERHORN* SONGS

Mahler's perception of folk song as being somehow more part of the natural world than of that of human civilization has been noted on a number of occasions as has his perception of his own music as being "immer und überall Naturlaut". It is thus interesting to examine what happens when these two factors - folk song and Mahler's music - are synthesised in the settings of those texts which he himself described as "mehr Natur und Leben - also die Quelle aller Poesie - als Kunst", to music.

What immediately strikes one on first listening to Mahler's settings of texts from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* is the completely different approach taken in these songs to that taken in settings of *Wunderhorn* and other folk texts by earlier composers. Reference has already been made to Brahms' setting of "Der Überläufer" as an example of such a setting. It was noted that Brahms attempts to imitate in this and other songs the style of a genuine folk song and that these attempts are so successful that it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between Brahms' original settings of folk texts and his arrangements of authentic folk songs, in which both the text and the melody are retained intact.

This was further noted as being important in terms of the potential naïvety in these songs and others like them, as well as in the case of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* itself. While the attitude of Arnim and Brentano as poets and Brahms as a composer may not always (or ever!) be described as having been naïve, and may, in fact, even have fallen into the sentimental category, the results of their work may become naïve because they are accepted at face value by others, and are taken into the canon of genuinely naïve poetry or music.

Nobody, however, could possibly mistake even the simplest of Mahler's *Wunderhorn* settings for an arrangement of an existing folk song. In his musical approach to these texts he

rejects many of the most fundamental criteria of "folk music composition" as exemplified in the works of Schumann, Brahms, Mendelssohn, and others. These include:

- 1) the maintenance, intact, of the strophic structure traditional to folk song;
- 2) the use of simple diatonic or often modal harmonies as suggested by the melody;
- 3) the use of melodies themselves of an exceptionally simple nature, with small range, no large interval jumps, and the use particularly of the flattened seventh step to create a modal feeling;
- 4) a syllabic approach to text setting; and
- 5) the simplest possible approach to the accompaniment which is often chordal, and without which the melody can still function as an independent entity.

Virtually none of these are to be found as stylistic elements in Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs.

6.1. Structure

Mahler himself stated that he preferred the use of through composition in song writing¹, and from the very first *Wunderhorn* settings in the *Lieder und Gesänge* he avoids literal repetition from strophe to strophe. The strophic structure is maintained in the way stanzas are consistently separated by short instrumental interludes but the content of each stanza setting is generally varied enough to make the application of the words strophic, or even varied strophic, somewhat problematic.

Some songs do suggest a strophic formal structure. In "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen" (one of the nearest to a genuinely strophic song among all the *Wunderhorn* settings), for instance, the melody follows a double strophic pattern: the second stanza is a variation of the first in the relative minor (E major - c# minor), the third is identical to the first, right down to

the accentuation of the last phrase, as is the fourth to the second. The accompaniment to each stanza, which forms an integral part of the song, is different, however; it would be impossible to rewrite this song in the traditional manner whereby only the music to the first or first and second stanzas is given while the others are written, without music, below the musical notation.

This double strophic structure is employed or suggested in several of the songs, especially in the dialogue songs - those which take the form of a conversation, usually between a young man and a young woman. It is generally far more varied than in the example above, however. In the "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm", for example, the prisoner's part is varied from the first to the third stanza by the chromatic alteration of notes and by the introduction of a sequentially repeated motif (b 32). The fifth stanza is so considerably varied, however, as to make the application of the term strophic problematic. Even the key is changed (d minor to C major - c minor). In the seventh a combination of material from the first and third is used.

The girl's part can hardly be called strophic at all, although there is a suggestion of a strophic feeling by the repetition of the opening motif of the fourth stanza at the beginning of the sixth, though at a different tonal level. In fact, each of the girl's stanzas is in a different key (G major; B \flat major; F major) and is melodically strongly varied from the others, with a suggestion of a strophic feeling through the maintenance of the rhythmic structure and certain accompaniment figures. In this song then, one has a structure in which most of one side of the dialogue could be discussed as a sort of varied strophic form (although the setting of the fifth stanza creates problems), while the setting of the other part is hardly strophic at all.

The repetition of the opening motif of one stanza at the beginning of the next which suggests a strophic feeling in a setting which is not necessarily strophic is a device which Mahler uses more than once. It is a particularly important factor in songs which are not strophic, or in which the implicit strophic structure is less clearly defined than in the examples already

discussed. Examples are to be found in, among other songs, "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz"¹ (compare bb 4 - 6 with bb 16 - 18) and "Verlorne Müh"² (bb 7 - 8; bb 40 - 41; bb 74 - 75). In the latter example the girl's initial motif remains the same in each stanza, after which the music changes to reflect the growing intensity of her requests. The boy's responses, too, increase in intensity as he becomes more and more irritated by the girl's advances: note particularly the repetition of "Nit!", and the rise in pitch from the first response to the second and especially at the end of the third where it is combined with the lengthening of the final high note (bb 31 - 33; bb 65 - 69; bb 102 - 108).

It should be remembered that the texts of the *Wunderhorn* songs are themselves all strophic. To set them to music without in any way reflecting this would thus be difficult and not necessarily desirable. Mahler's songs as discussed so far can perhaps be seen, thus, as a compromise between strophic and through-composed setting: the structure of the poems, i.e. their division into stanzas, is usually maintained³. The setting of each separate stanza, however, very often varies so much from the others that the term strophic becomes difficult to apply to most of the songs.

So why does Mahler reject the simple strophic structure adhered to by earlier composers setting *Wunderhorn* and other folk texts? The inability of a strophic structure to express meaning has already been discussed. Nevertheless, as has also been noted, the *Wunderhorn* poems, by their structure and also by their essential being as folk poetry, seem to demand a strophic setting. Despite this, in most of his settings Mahler manages to avoid the simple strophic format which would preclude the realisation of the meaning of the text in music, without losing the sense that one is listening to a setting of a natural poem.

¹There are a few notable exceptions.

The means by which he achieves the latter phenomenon* include separating stanzas with instrumental interludes (e.g. "Trost im Unglück"; "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt"), setting some stanzas with the same music or variations thereof while others are set with different thematic material (e.g. "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen"), and suggesting a strophic format by starting a new stanza with the first motif or phrase of the original stanza and then diverging into different music (e.g. "Verlorne Mühe"; "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt"), or various combinations of the above. These methods are so successful, that in some cases on simply listening to some of the songs, one has the impression that they are, in fact far closer to strophic format than analysis reveals them to be.

The structural means which Mahler uses to express the meaning of the text have not been dealt with in much detail up to this point, and when one comes to analyse them, often seem incredibly simple. In this regard, one must bear in mind that Mahler is setting folk texts to music and that part of the meaning of these texts is that they are just that - the music of what were seen as the simple people. The simplicity of the means which Mahler uses to replace the traditional strophic format, and the references to this format which are made in his settings can be seen in terms of the preservation of the meaning of the texts as natural music.

For instance, in "Ablösung im Sommer" the shift to the major and the flowing accompaniment herald the coming of the nightingale (bb 31 - 32 ff.), while in "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" Mahler uses the change of key (from F major to A major) and thematic material in bb 46 ff to signify the introduction of the actual voice of the young girl's admirer as opposed to the narrative voice of the first section. Similarly the return to F major and a variation of the original melody from b 68 is linked to the return of the narrative voice. Reference has already

*i.e. the suggestion of strophic structure where the musical content of each stanza is too varied to justify the definition of strophic

been made to "Verlorne Müh", in which it was shown how Mahler's varied handling of the text emphasises the increasing intensity of the girl's demands as well as the boy's growing irritation in his rebuffs of her pleas.

"Verlorne Müh", is, in fact, a small scale example of a structural means used by Mahler in several songs: the setting of the different parts in the dialogue songs to different music, whether strophic or not. This point, although it seems almost ridiculously obvious, actually represents an important breakthrough in the setting of folk texts. In earlier settings of such songs, no distinction was made in the setting of parts representing different characters (see, for instance, Brahms' very famous "Vergebliches Ständchen" (Peters, Band I, pp. 92 - 95)).

Unlike the earlier composers, Mahler almost consistently gives the characters in his songs different voices. One method employed is that used in "Der Schildwache Nachtlied" and "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm" in which the men are characterised by militaristic themes, especially fanfares, while the women's music is much more lyrical, flowing, and, at the same time, folklike. In each case the man is duty or, in the case of the prisoner, conscience bound, while the woman has far more freedom and, interestingly, is always connected to something natural, although the circumstances differ from song to song.

In "Der Schildwache Nachtlied" the girl tries to tempt the Sentry from his post into a beautiful garden and green fields, and her music is alluring and sensual in contrast with his martial, fanfare-like theme. Furthermore, the shift from quadruple to double triple time gives the effect of a shift from march to dance. (The continuation in alternating triple/quadruple time in no way destroys this effect: the impression is rather of double triple time with a pause before the upbeat - perhaps an exaggeration of a feature of Austrian folk music.)

The Sentry's second stanza opens like the first, his two rising fanfare motifs "driving away" the temptation offered by the girl, but from b 36 there is quite considerable variation. This

can be seen as directly related to the meaning of the text. The Sentry is not just a Nightwatch in times of peace, he is a soldier, facing battle. This could account for the rise in pitch, and the strong accentuation of his melody. Perhaps the most notable contrast comes in the final line of the stanza, where the mournful, falling octave on "Muss traurig sein" is replaced by a confident, rising fanfare on the repeat of "Bin ich gestellt" (bb 10 - 12 and 41 - 44 respectively).

The girl's response follows the same musical pattern as before, as she does not try to tempt the Sentry from his post, but instead enjures him to have faith in God. The Sentry rejects this as he has her earlier enticements, and again his response starts as it did in the first stanza before further variation which once again is linked to an increase in intensity with the repetition of "Ein Kaiser!". Once again, though, the most notable change is to the third line, here "Er führt den Krieg", where the rising fanfare is found, but on a higher pitch and rhythmically broadened from (Fig. 1):



to (Fig. 2):



This is followed by an interpolation into the strophic structure as the Sentry calls out to the passing patrol, and then drives the girl off with a last furious fanfare.

The final twist comes in the last stanza, set to a varied version of the girl's music (bb 91 ff) combined with arpeggio figures related to the Sentry's fanfares (bb 95 and 99) and the falling octave from the end of his first stanza (bb 104 - 105). This final stanza is sung by a new, narrative voice, whose question - who was singing? - and answer - a forlorn ("verlor'ne") Sentry - casts ambiguity over what the listener has just heard. Are we to take it at face value? Does the girl exist? Is she a ghost, or spirit (midnight is after all the witching hour)? Or a figment of the Sentry's imagination? Is any of it real?

"Lied des Verfolgten im Turm" follows a similar pattern, right down to the shift from a martial theme in quadruple time to a sensual, dance-like theme in double triple time. This is less of a question answer song than "Der Schildwache Nachtlid" -the prisoner and his lover are each obsessed with their own little world, hardly heeding the other till the last two stanzas. The girl may pledge eternal love to the prisoner, but she seems hardly aware in her first two stanzas that he is, in fact constrained, as she blithely sings of the joy and freedom to be found in the open, out on the high, wild mountainside. Meanwhile the prisoner does not acknowledge her presence at all till the end of the song.

The strongly contrasting musical worlds Mahler creates for his characters here create a sense of mutual exclusivity which cannot be broken down - even when the girl admits that she is grieving for her imprisoned lover (although with more than a hint of selfishness - she seems almost to be blaming him for being happy while she weeps for him), his response is to reject her (equally selfishly - to admit emotion would be to destroy his carefully constructed world of intellectual freedom).

The double varied strophic structure of these songs is particularly interesting in that it

seems to represent, not only the divide between the two characters as described above, but a more general gender stereotype, which might go some way towards explaining the music Mahler uses for the men on the one hand, and the women on the other. During the Romantic period, women were often seen as more "natural" than men. This was a weakness as well as a strength, making them incapable of intellectual reasoning and logic. They were "sensible", full of feeling, precisely the state that the Romantics aspired to in theory, theories which depended on the intellectual ability which many of them purported to revile*.

These songs seem to characterise this stereotype, perhaps indicating the attitude of Arnim and Brentano in the selection or composition of "folk" lyrics. With respect to the text of "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm" in particular, it should be noted that this is one of Arnim and Brentano's own concoctions. According to Elizabeth Dargie the prisoner's part may be adapted from a genuine folk song, but one in which the protagonist is not a prisoner. The girl seems to have been entirely the invention of the two anthologizers⁷.

In the light of this, one could perhaps propose an explanation for Mahler's choice of folklike music to characterise the girls in these two songs. Both girls sing of natural scenes, but there is more to it than that. They are a part of the natural world in a way in which the men, bound to their Sentry's post by duty, or in their prison by conscience, are not and, in fact, cannot be. The girl in "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm" can escape her responsibility ("Man hört da gar kein Kindergeschrei") in a way in which the prisoner cannot. And there is a hint of something else too: in each the woman is, or at least in the case of "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm" seems to be, tempting the man to abandon his duty and principles. There is more than a suggestion of the garden of Eden here, couched in the innocent, natural tones of the folksong.

*It was this very contradiction (between nature and reason, rather than women and men!) which induced Schiller to invent sentimentality as an aesthetic concept.

In "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen", where Mahler also gives the male and female characters different melodies, the stereotypes are far less distinct, despite the fact that the theme here has to do with a young man leaving his lover to go to war. Both parts are set to gentle, lyrical music in keeping with the meaning of the text. The only hint of the martial in the vocal part is to be found in the final stanza, (sung by the boy) and here this style is implied more by the accompaniment than it is by the vocal line. Furthermore, the whole structure of the song as a dialogue is complicated by the interpolations of a narrative voice into the dialogue.

The relationship of structure to meaning in this song is extremely interesting owing to the greater flexibility found here than in any of the songs already analyzed. This setting is the furthest of all those examined from even a varied strophic structure. Certainly there are strong musical relationships between the different sections and the boy's text is twice set to identical music, but these are not enough to compensate for the enormous deviations from the norm of strophic setting. For one thing, the text cannot even be divided into stanzas of equal length. If one follows the musical setting, then the first section comprises two lines of poetry, the second, six, plus the repeated line, the third two again, the fourth three, the fifth two again, and the sixth four, plus the line "O Lieb' auf grüner Erden" which sounds like a repetition but is actually a line from a different poem to the rest of the section, and seventh four.

This can be attributed at least partially to Mahler's emendations of the text, or rather texts, at his disposal. The text of "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen" is a combination of sections from two *Wunderhorn* poems, "Unbeschreibliche Freude"³ and "Bildchen"⁴, with additions of Mahler's own. The two *Wunderhorn* poems are actually closely related, although only "Bildchen" contains the reference to the boy's death.

A further factor contributing to the uneven division of lines is the way in which Mahler organises the text according to the sense of the words, rather than according to the four line

stanza structure found in both the original poems. Thus the boy's first utterance is set as one section instead of being split between two stanzas as in the poem. The resulting structure is a genuinely through-composed song, and one in which the meaning of the text plays an important role in the choice of musical material. Thus the boy sings a tender love song until the final section where the mention of war is explicitly realised in the accompaniment.

The use of martial music throughout the song also contributes substantially to its meaning, although in quite a different way to that employed in either of the songs discussed above. In "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen" the distant, melancholy horn calls create the strange, dreamlike atmosphere which permeates the setting as a whole, implying the underlying theme of the song without stating it outright. The boy's inevitable death is implicit in the funeral march opening, although it does not happen within the duration of the song itself and is only referred to in the premonitory final section.

"Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" is not the only song in which Mahler tampers with the original stanza divisions, but this does not always lead to the kind of complexities which characterise that song. Take, for instance, "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen", already cited as one of the songs closest in structure to strophic (or double strophic in this case), and structure of which Mahler altered quite extensively. In the original⁵, the stanza divisions occur at the end of every fourth line. Mahler's divisions actually make more sense in terms of the meaning of the text: the mother's first sentence is now found all in the same stanza instead of divided between the first and second, with the knight's reply logically starting a new stanza.

This shift to what is (if one, disregards the text repetitions), a six line stanza might explain the addition of the extra two lines of text, but these can also be ascribed to the fact that Mahler was, in fact, writing this song for the amusement of actual children. The description of the presents in his bag which are withheld from disobedient children serves to heighten the effect

of the song in this regard.

As has been mentioned, this song follows a strict double strophic structure with regards to melody. The fact that the rhythm of the two different stanza settings is the same and, in fact, that there is a strong melodic similarity between them - certain phrases, notably the second period of each strophe, are virtually identical with respect to everything except pitch level and tonality - increases the effect of a genuine strophic setting, as does the use of the instrumental introduction unvaried between the second and third stanzas, and, in full chords this time, at the end of the song.

Perhaps one of the clearest examples of how Mahler avoids a strophic format without losing the folklike character of the song is to be found in "Rheinlegendchen", one of three songs (with "Verlorne Müh and "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht") set to the music of the Ländler. In this song Mahler uses a fairly limited amount of material but this is organised in a very original manner. The song falls into two distinct sections, the first comprising the first four stanzas of the poem, the second, the second four. Moreover, the music of the setting of the first stanza is recapitulated at the end of the first section, and that of the first two stanzas in the penultimate strophe and last interlude, giving the final strophe an almost coda like effect. The interlude at the end of the first section then becomes the postlude to the song as a whole.

Within the two sections Mahler does not follow the stanza division of the poem. The first two stanzas are set as one unit, so that if one did not know the text, one would get the impression of three stanzas, one twice as long as the others. In the second section, Mahler divides the sixth stanza into two parts, separated by an orchestral interlude. Furthermore, the first part is attached to the end of the fifth stanza so that once again the stanza division of the song is blurred. The isolation of the second two lines of the sixth stanza serves to heighten their effect as the climax of the song.

While the effect of this structure cannot be perceived as strophic, the impression is not altogether lost. The text units, though not set to identical music, are still largely based on the same few melodic and rhythmic figures and are clearly distinguished from one another by the orchestral interludes. The recapitulation of certain stanzas, particularly the first, also suggests a strophic feel, even though, as has been demonstrated, they do not actually function in a strophic manner.

The reasons for the musical changes from stanza to stanza in "Rheinlegendchen" are less obvious than those in, for instance, the dialogue songs, where different voices are set to different music. It is quite possible, in fact, that they lie in the poem's very nature as a folk text. This may seem paradoxical -how can the rejection of a traditional folk form (strophic) express the integral being of that form? However it is undeniable, that on listening to "Rheinlegendchen", one is aware above all of its nature as a folksong, and yet it is equally undeniable that "Rheinlegendchen" is not a straightforward and simple strophic song.

Perhaps the solution to this lies in another characteristic integral to folksong as a living tradition: it is an oral art. Much reference has already been made to the dangers inherent in notating folksong for preservation, and thus destroying its life as a mutable artform. Reference has also been made to the fact that in pure strophic structure the onus for interpretation lies entirely with the performer(s). It is the singer who becomes the narrator, the storyteller, who must use all his/her skill and talent to make the material live, through changes of inflection and pitch, tempo and rhythm, dynamics and tone.

Now, when one examines "Rheinlegendchen" one finds that the musical changes from stanza to stanza seem to conform to the kind of changes that a singer-storyteller might make in narrating or improvising this text in performance. In the first three stanzas Mahler (following the text) sets the scene. We meet the first person narrator and learn a little about him, but nothing

actually happens till he throws the ring into the river. This introductory nature of the opening stanzas might even be used to explain compression of the first two into a single unit. The narrator is, in effect, saying "here I am, and this is what I do", and then, without pausing, but with a change of tone, comments rather ruefully on what he has just described. There is then a pause before he starts the action of the story, emphasised by the introduction of large melodic leaps.

This is followed by an almost offhand return to the music of the first stanza, as if the storyteller is tantalising his audience, suggesting, in the third stanza, that something interesting is going to happen ("I threw my ring into the river!"), and then deliberately letting the narrative hang for a little, not just by returning to a fairly neutral tone (and thus music*), but also by pausing before continuing: the interlude between the fourth and fifth stanzas is the longest in the piece (a full twelve bars).

It is in the fifth stanza that things really start getting exciting, and in the tempo, key and pitch changes**, the alterations in tone, voice, almost of the facial expression of the narrator describing the strange adventures of the ring are vividly musically realised. This is supported in the accompaniment, where the continuation of the semiquaver figure from the end of the interlude*** in the second violins and violas (bb 71 -76) seems to suggest the movement of the water as it carries the ring, or the swimming of the fish, or both.

The excitement increases. The narrator puts on a specially deep and dignified voice to become the king, then pauses dramatically, keeping the audience in suspense for a brief while before slowing right down for the climactic moment when the lover claims the ring for her own,

*Musically speaking this is also what one might perhaps call Mahler's Rhine motif in this song!

**the overall pitch of the melody, that is, which moves quite suddenly from middle/low (bb 70 -74) to high (bb 74 -78).

***first heard in the introduction

rejecting the king for her humble mower. After this everything can relax. The music and tone return to that of the beginning. The story is almost told, its end, the lover's return, inevitable. It, and the song end emphatically, almost with a sense of formula ("They lived happily ever after"/"If you want anymore you can sing it yourself").

This narrative tension, achieved through the musical structure, is, perhaps, at the heart of all Mahler's deviations from simple strophic form. It can be seen as an extension of his fondness for detailed performance directions: here, rather than writing mini essays on the score as to how a particular phrase is to be performed, he composes into the music the changes of expression and tone, the pauses and alterations in speed, in short, all the means, overt and subtle, that a gifted storyteller uses to capture and hold his/her audience, to such an extent, that one can almost see the gestures, the facial expressions, the shifts of posture of the narrator. This is, perhaps, why so many writers argue that it is not necessary for the dialogue songs to be performed by more than one singer. Just as a storyteller takes on the roles of all the characters in his/her tale, becoming each of them for the duration of their dialogue, so the singer can embody another character, even another gender, through the music which Mahler gives him/her.

This question of embodiment is of the utmost importance. For the duration of the story, the narrator of the type under discussion does more than simply relate the tale. There is no distance between him/her and his/her subject matter. The narrator becomes the story, immersed in its events and characters, so that, for a short while, the audience too experiences the narration as reality.

And in each of the *Wunderhorn* songs, the singer becomes just such a narrator, shifting roles from mower to king, from gentle girl to doomed youth, from ass to cuckoo to nightingale,

*This latter ending is, of course, explicit in one of the other Ländler settings, "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht".

from starving child to desperate mother, even to ghostly drummer boy, taking the audience with him/her so that they too see and believe what the poet, composer and now the singer sees and believes. It is as though Mahler has taken the art of performing folksong and imbued it into the composition thereof, departing from old structures in the process, without ever leaving the world which created those structures in the first place.

6.2. *Harmony*

Mahler himself regarded his harmonic approach as particularly innovative. He told Bauer-Lechner of the "Rheinlegendchen" that "the whole thing is extremely original, especially in its harmonization, so that people will not know what to make of it"⁶. Specht also highlights this aspect as being especially characteristic of Mahler's style in the *Wunderhorn* songs:

"Der Stil dieser Lieder ist besonders im Harmonischen seltsam; durch lehere Quinten oder Quarten, durch Querstände, freie Vorhalte und manch andere Schroffheiten erzielt er auf das einfachste und bei erlebter Kunst den Eindruck des Kunstlosen, des Naturlauts, des Volksliedhaften. Er verzichtet hier auf alle Mittel der Enharmonik und Chromatik, lässt die Tonalität in der ungebundensten Weise walten, derart, dass er am liebsten auf die Modulation verzichtet und die Tonarten unvermittelt neben-einander stellt; was einen ungemein herbwürzigen, vorzeitlich kraftvollen Eindruck macht. Und einen, der das Gegenteil vom Artistischen ist, der nichts vom Atelier-dandytum der Werkstatt hat."⁷

This description captures the essentials of Mahler's harmonic style. In the place of the usual use of extremely simple diatonic and sometimes modal harmonic language employed by earlier composers setting folk texts, Mahler uses an harmonic style of his own. This style is, however, as far removed from the subtle chromatic and enharmonic language of Wolf, Strauss and Pfitzner, as it is from the style of Brahms or Schumann (in the context of their folklike

compositions). Rather, Mahler's harmonic language is abrupt and unconventional.

As Specht states, Mahler tends to simply change key without modulating. One example of this phenomenon is to be found in "Rheinlegendchen", where at the end of the first section which is in A major, Mahler moves to D major using the tonic note - A - as the dominant of the new key (bb 58 - 64). Then, with no warning whatsoever, he jumps to F major (bb 65 - 68) before again jumping back to A minor, the key in which the second section starts.

Similarly, in "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht", the first section ends very definitely in F major (b 45), the key of the song as a whole, and the second starts equally definitely in A major (also b 45 - 46) with no modulation between the two. B 49 contains a very brief return to F and with b 50 - 51 back in A. Bb 52 - 54, are in F, and again no modulation takes place between bb 51 and 52. In b 54 the music again jumps, this time to D \flat major with a return to A in b 57 analogous to the return to F in b 49. From b 59 the music rises sequentially in semitones ending in D \flat (b 66) and jumping immediately back to F (b 67) where it remains until the end of the song.

Within each key, Mahler's approach to harmony is also unusual. Specht notes his tendency to use open fourths and fifths, a trend found from the very first bars of the first Wunderhorn setting ("Ablösung im Sommer") in which the first time the third of the tonic chord is heard is in the fourth bar, despite the fact that the first six bars are all in the tonic. The song also ends with an open tonic chord, as does "Scheiden und Meiden". Open (i.e. thirdless) chords are also prominent at the opening of "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen". Here the dominant triad occurs repeatedly without its third which is heard for the first time in b 29. In fact, these chords are an important feature of the song as a whole (see bb 1 - 8; bb 15 - 28; bb 36 - 39; bb 72 - 77, the dominant again; bb 161 - 164, again the dominant; bb 188 - 190, although the third of the tonic which is omitted here is heard in the second half of b 190).

As well as open fourths and fifths, the *Wunderhorn* songs also abound in parallel fifths and octaves. Again this apparent from the very earliest songs e.g. "Ablösung im Sommer" (bb 28 - 30) (Fig. 3):

The image shows a musical score for the song "Ablösung im Sommer". It consists of three staves: a vocal line, a piano treble line, and a piano bass line. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The vocal line begins with a circled number '28' above the first measure. The lyrics are written below the vocal line: "Wer soll uns denn den Som-mer lang die Zeit und Weil' ver-trei-ben?". The piano accompaniment features a bass line with a 'mf' dynamic marking and a treble line with a 'f' dynamic marking. The score illustrates parallel fifths and octaves between the vocal and piano parts.

Further examples may be found i.a. in "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm" e.g. bb 51 - 55 and "Das irdische Leben" e.g. bb 41 - 48.

This passage from "Das irdische Leben" also contains another harmonic element typical of what one might call the *Wunderhorn* style: pedal point, in this case on E \flat , first an E \flat minor chord (the g \natural in b 42 may be regarded as a lower neighbouring note) and then simply the note E \flat . Pedal points are to be found throughout the songs, for instance in "Der Schildwache Nachtlid", where the pedal point on B \flat that accompanies the girl's first two stanzas (bb 13 - 20; bb 46 - 53) is extended over 12 bars in the final verse (bb 92 - 103), only moving to F - the root of the final chord and the dominant of the original key for the last four bars.

The next song in the set, "Verlorne Müh", is also characterised by pedal points which are heard first in the opening bars, first on E (with its seventh in bb 3 - 5) and then on A (bb 7 - 17). Most of the latter pedal point is actually on a thirdless chord on A, with a brief interruption in b 14, where the fifth drops to an augmented fourth.

The pattern in bb 1 - 17 forms the basis of the start of each stanza, although the pedal point is not maintained in the second. In the third stanza, the pedal point on A (major alternating with minor) is suggested by the upper parts in bars 74 - 77 over alternating tonic and dominant chords in the bass. This is followed, however, by a longer pedal point on F (again a thirdless chord, where the fifth drops to the augmented fourth) in bb 78 - 84, a transposed version of that found in bb 11 - 17.

But perhaps the most sustained use of pedal point in the songs is to be found in "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen". From bb 40 - 47, the boy's lyrical melody is accompanied in the bass by a tonic pedal point*. In bb 48 - 53 this is taken over by a dominant (based on the same octave A pattern that dominates the previous eight bars), followed in bb 56 - 59 by a pedal point on a thirdless B chord, the subdominant of the new key of F# minor, and in bb 60 - 61 on G, the subdominant of D minor, the key to which Mahler ultimately returns this passage.

The girl's lyrical melody and its introduction, are accompanied by a tonic pedalpoint in bb 88 - 96, and again from bb 103 - 111, although the upper notes of the broken chord pattern do not maintain the pedal point in these bars, as they do in the previous passage. Bb 130 - 162 are harmonically and melodically a repeat of bb 40 - 72.

Throughout "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" it is the lyrical melodies which are

* It could be argued that this is a dominant pedal point on A with two interruptions by the tonic in bb 40 and 44, but it seems that the effect of the D in the bass and at the beginning of each melodic phrase is felt throughout this passage - the overwhelming harmonic impression is tonic rather than dominant. This is borne out by the harmonisation of bb 130 ff.

accompanied by the pedal points, underlining the martial effect of the accompaniment to the boy's melody when it appears for the third time, this time accompanied by material related to the opening horn calls, rather than the expected pedalpoint.

Where one has pedal point, one of course has dissonance, and it is in the context of dissonance that Mahler's harmonic style differs most radically from that of earlier composers of folklike music. Mahler does not avoid dissonance or chromatic harmony in order to create a folklike harmonic world. Take for instance, the following bars from the opening (bb9 ff) of "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" (Fig. 5):

Handwritten musical score for piano, numbered 9. The score consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in 2/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music features complex harmonic textures with dissonance. Annotations include: a circled '9' at the start; 'susp. from b. 8' with an arrow pointing to a note; 'pp' (pianissimo) markings; 'p' (piano) markings; 'OR V with added 13th' written below the bass line; and Roman numerals III+, VI, II, and V below the bass line. The score includes various rhythmic values and phrasing slurs.

While this sequence may not be that unusual in the context of late 19th century harmony, it is certainly nothing like the very simple diatonic or modal harmonies usually associated with folk style and used by earlier composers in folksong setting. Nor is this an isolated instance. Here, for example, is the harmonisation of the opening vocal melody of "Rheinlegendchen", a song whose harmonisation Mahler himself described as particularly original (Fig 6):

(17)

Bald gras ich am Nek-kar, bald gras ich am Rhein,

V I $V \frac{4}{3}$ $V \frac{6}{iii}$ iii

Not only is the progression here unusual for a folksong setting (it would be quite possible to harmonise this melody V-I-V-V-I) but the nonharmonic notes also fall outside the gamut of the simple style usually adopted in this context. This chromatic approach to harmonisation, which extends through the whole of "Rheinlegendchen", permeates the songs from the earliest settings - see the example below from "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen" (Fig 7):

The image shows a musical score for the song "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen". It consists of two systems of music. The first system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a circled number 7 and the lyrics "Da lugt die Frau zum Fen-ster aus und sagt: „der Mann ist nicht zu Haus, und". The piano accompaniment features several non-harmonic notes (PN) and some ledger lines (LN). The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "nie-mand, und nie-mand, und nie-mand heim als mei - ne Kind'," and the piano accompaniment with more non-harmonic notes and ledger lines. Below the piano part, there is a detailed harmonic analysis in Roman numerals.

Harmonic analysis for the first system:
 Emaj: I⁶ \bar{V}^{\flat}/\bar{V} $\bar{V}^{\flat}6$ vi vi⁶ \bar{V}^{\flat}/ii ii ii⁶ \bar{V}^{\flat} vii^{o6}/₅/iii

Harmonic analysis for the second system:
 I⁶/₄ or iii⁶ vi I⁶/₄ or iii⁶ vi ii \bar{V} I \bar{V}^{\flat} I

The abandonment of the strict strophic structure, allows Mahler to be tonally as well as harmonically adventurous in comparison to genuine folksong and the earlier, "authentic" folksong compositions. Strophic composition restricts a composer severely in the context of tonality, especially in the already limited style of the traditional folksong. In this context, even a single modulation to the dominant, or relative major in a minor key, is an exception to the single key norm, and, of course, every stanza must end in the original tonic, if the song itself is to do so.

By expanding the structure to, at the very least, a varied strophic form, if not to through-composed songs, Mahler escapes this restriction. From the earliest songs he changes key freely and abruptly. "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz", for example, begins in G minor but ends in C minor, and, in fact, the song is built around an interplay between these two keys, with interpolations of their tonic majors, and B \flat major, as the mood of the soldier changes.

For instance, at the point where the soldier hears the alphorn and tries to return to his home (bb 7 - 14), the music switches to the tonic major (G major) only to switch back to the minor on the words "Das ging ja nicht an". The effect here is of hope awakened, only to be dashed.

The tonality in the strophe undergoes abrupt changes, from g minor (bb 17 - 18) to c minor with a G (dominant) pedal point (bb 19 - 20) and then very suddenly to B \flat major (bb 20 - 22) before returning to c minor on the words "Mit mir ist es aus!", a key which is linked to the soldier's death throughout the song. Thus, as the prisoner begs for pardon, the key shifts to B \flat major and then to c minor (and sequentially up to d minor) as that pardon is withheld and, at the end of the song the music returns to c minor for the soldier's denunciation of the alphorn (bb 52 -58) and for the postlude, at which point he has, presumably been executed.

Also of great interest is the setting of the final stanza which opens, not in g minor, or

even, as one might expect in c minor, but in C major, as the soldier addresses his comrades directly. As he takes his final leave from them, however, the key shifts to G major and then back to C, with a flowing melody and a broken chord accompaniment, quite different from anything heard before in the song and which can be understood to be in the style of a lullaby.

In fact, if one compares this passage to other lullabies in Mahler's oeuvre, and particularly the "Lindenbaum" episode in "Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz" from the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and the final section of "Im diesem Wetter" from the *Kindertoten Lieder* then the similarity becomes apparent especially with reference to the rocking accompaniment. For Mahler the use of a lullaby style seems, in the light of all these examples, to have a strong association with the concept of the sleep of death, and especially resignation to the inevitability thereof.

In the case of "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz", this resignation can also, perhaps, be connected to the use of the tonic major of the "death key", c minor. Death is ever present, but here it has lost its terror. It is almost a relief from the sorrows of the world. That the song returns to the minor, perhaps denotes a movement from contemplation of death to its reality.

This use of tonality is closely linked to Mahler's movement away from the simple strophic format - it may be seen as part of the same narrative technique of text interpretation. "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" is no isolated example: this technique of shifting tonality with the meaning of the text is found throughout the songs.

In the microcosmic world of harmonisation, however, the question as to why Mahler chooses to abandon the simple diatonic or modal harmonies of the folk song for his own harmonic language is less easy to connect to the meaning of individual texts. While it is undeniable that Mahler uses harmony and tonality to create atmosphere this is generally in broad terms, rather than in the context of the subtle text interpretation of, for example, Wolf.

Thus, his choice of harmony and tonality may reflect the mood of the poem or stanza of that poem; but while he may set happy songs in major keys and tragic in the minor, (this virtual cliché is applied with great regularity), and while he may change key to indicate a change of tone or voice indicated by the text, Mahler does not as a rule use harmonic means to interpret the meaning of individual words or phrases of text.

It is here that the dissimilarity between Mahler's style in the *Wunderhorn* songs, and that of his contemporaries in their art song compositions is most pronounced. In fact, this difference is perhaps connected more to Mahler's use of the harmonic means at his disposal, than to the means themselves, particularly in the cases of dissonance and mutable tonality. The use of dissonant chords with delayed or unusual resolution, and the modulation or movement to distant tonalities, were common by the end of the 19th century. But where composers like, for instance, Wolf, used such elements as a means to subtle text interpretation, Mahler does not. And his use of parallel and open octaves and fifths, and pedal point, combined with dissonance and sharp changes in tonality produce an effect quite different to that found in the art songs of his contemporaries.

Perhaps one could define Mahler's harmonic innovation in the *Wunderhorn* as the following: he creates a harmonic language which manages to communicate a sense of primitivism to the listener without being the simplest possible realization of the melody. According to Specht, the harmonic language which Mahler uses in the *Wunderhorn* songs creates "the impression of artlessness, of the natural, the folksonglike". This impression is further described as "immensely harsh [and] archaically powerful ... the opposite of artistic". His harmonic language, then, can be seen almost entirely in terms of the creation of a primitive voice to express the meaning of the songs as folk music.

If one examines the elements of Mahler's harmonic style, one finds that three of the

components discussed here are traditionally associated with the archaic: the use of parallel octaves, fourths and fifths, and open fourths and fifths and pedal point. Both parallel and open fourths and fifths are commonly linked with medieval music, and it is interesting to bear in mind Alma's record of Mahler's fascination with the imagery of that period⁸. In fact the use of open (thirdless) chords create an atmosphere of extreme archaism, as do pedal points, recalling the drone bass commonly believed to be one of the earliest forms of accompaniment to a melody.

Mahler's use of these elements in the context of the setting of folk texts may be seen, thus, in terms of the creation of a sound world which evokes the distant past, a past in which folk music was also perceived to have its roots. Whether this is deliberate, or whether Mahler simply uses those harmonies which to him sound the most natural in terms of the sound world of the universe is difficult to say, but certainly the effect of the harmonisation is never contrived. One does not sense anything calculated in this respect.

Furthermore, Mahler is using harmony to interpret the meaning of the texts, but in a far broader sense than is the case with his alteration and abandonment of the strophic format. Where Mahler's structural changes can, at least in many cases, be linked to changes in the meaning of the individual stanza of the individual poem, his use of archaic harmonic means may be seen (and heard!) as a general interpretation of the meaning of the texts as folk song.

It is tempting to see Mahler's use of dissonance, too, as a means of creating an archaic sound world - after all, the crude effect linked to the primitive, created by dissonant chords becomes standard in the twentieth century (Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* is probably the prototype), and at the time Mahler was writing Moussorgsky was already starting to exploit this possibility. Furthermore, as Specht's description of Mahler's harmony shows, at least some of his contemporaries experienced Mahler's handling of dissonance in the context of this discussion in the way described.

This is, however, problematic, given that the type of dissonance which Mahler uses is far closer to the harmonic language of the late 19th century, than it is to the language of the 20th. The impression which one has in the *Wunderhorn* is rather that Mahler was using those harmonies which for him flowed naturally from his melodies, than that he was attempting to create a new style of archaic dissonance. That, in the context of other harmonic elements, the melodies themselves, the folk texts etc., these dissonances may play a role in the creation of an archaic sound world, may not be an accident, but they do not have a feeling of deliberate primitivism to them.

This sense of naturalness - that Mahler's harmonies flow from his melodies without artifice - is, perhaps, the key to understanding his abandonment of traditional folk style in the harmonic context. Mahler is setting folk texts, and in interpreting the fundamental meaning of those texts as natural, he uses music which is natural to him, combining his own, individual harmonic style with archaic means to perfectly capture this meaning. That this is effective, is attested to by the songs themselves, which instantly conjure up the world of folk music to such an extent, that one is not even always immediately aware of the complexity of the harmonies used, simply of their rightness.

6.3. Simple melodic style

"Und auch ihre Melodik ist, als ob vergessene Lieder wach werden wollten; man hört diese ganz schlichten, scheinbar ganz ohne Raffinement gefügten, in jugendvoller Frische und Heiterkeit und Trauer wie unmittelbare Laute junger Herzen erklingenden Weisen zum erstenmal und ist ihnen sofort vertraut, als hätte man sie hundertmal gesungen und wieder vergessen; - sie tragen den Duft des Volksliedes her."⁹

While Mahler's melodies undoubtedly do suggest the melodic style of folk song, they are actually less close to it than Specht would seem to suggest in this quotation. If one compares the traditional folk song melody, and thus the melodic approach of those composers who attempted the literal imitation thereof, with Mahler's *Wunderhorn* settings, one finds that virtually none of the characteristics of the former are entirely preserved in the latter.

From the earliest songs, for instance, the range tends to be far larger than that of a normal folk song. Of all the *Wunderhorn* settings in the *Lieder und Gesänge*, only one - "Starke Einbildungskraft" - has a range of an octave or less. "Ablösung im Sommer" has a range of a ninth and the others are all between an eleventh ("Scheiden und Meiden" and "Aus! Aus!") and two octaves ("Selbstgefühl"), although Mahler usually does give alternatives to extremely high or low notes. (He also writes at the beginning of "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen" "Die kleinen Noten vom Sänger nur im *Notfalle* zu gebrauchen" and adds to a very high passage in "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" where such an alternative is given the direction "Die unteren Noten *nur* für Sänger, die über keine Kopfstimme verfügen" [my italics in both cases]!) As might be expected, the range of the later songs is, on average, even wider. Here, the songs with the smallest range are "Verlorne Mühe!" and "Rheinlegendchen" each with a range of a twelfth, while the largest range, a sixteenth, is found in "Lob des hohen Verstandes".

Mahler also uses extraordinarily large melodic intervals for folk song settings. One of the most striking early examples of large intervals is to be found in "Scheiden und Meiden" where the word "Ade!" is set to a rising octave in bb 36 - 42 and bb 63 - 67. The rising octave is also to be found as a prominent melodic feature in bb 22 - 23 and 51 - 52. "Scheiden und Meiden" is not the only early song to contain intervals of an octave or more. Rising ninths are found in both

*"Singers are only to use the small notes in cases of emergency."/"The lower notes only for singers who have no head voice."

"Selbstgefühl" (bb 13 - 14) and "Ich ging mit Lust" (b 73), for example. This last-mentioned song is also remarkable in folksong terms for the range covered by the rising arpeggio figure on which much of the melody is based. While the opening broken chord only covers an octave (quite possible in a genuine folk song), those following cover first a thirteenth, then an eleventh and then a tenth, all of which are unlikely in traditional folk song style.

Similarly large intervallic leaps are to be found in the later *Wunderhorn* songs. Perhaps the most obvious examples are the enormous melodic jumps in "Das irdische Leben", starting with the rising and falling octaves in bb 11 -13 and bb 25 - 27, and extending to the rising and falling tenths in bb 59 - 61 before returning to the octave leaps at bb 139 - 141, and in "Lob des hohen Verstandes" (the sixteenths at bb 81 and 82 and the octave in the final two bars).

It should further be noted that Mahler does not attempt to imitate the style of authentic folk song melodies by using modal touches like the flattened seventh referred to earlier. His melodies are rather influenced by his original harmonic approach which sometimes results in most unexpected turns or intervallic jumps. In "Ablösung in Sommer", for instance, the introduction of the c# in b 51 produces the strange melodic tritone (bb 50 - 51), while the constant use of semitones in "Das irdische Leben" creates a most "unfolklike" effect.

If one takes all these factors into account, how is it possible that the *Wunderhorn* songs can create such a strong folklike impression? As is the case with the strophic structure, Mahler combines in his melodic writing his own original approach with the traditional folk song style. Thus, as well as the stylistic factors discussed above, he uses many melodic elements which are authentic to the folk song. Of the traditionally folksonglike elements, one can, perhaps, single out the anacrusic rising fourth with which several of the songs open (e.g. "Scheiden und Meiden"; "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen"; "Trost im Unglück"; "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt") for special notice. As it starts the song, it sets the stage in terms of atmosphere

for what is to come. One might see starting a folk song setting with an anacrusic rising fourth as analogous to starting an original fairy tale with the words "Once upon a time".

In fact, many of Mahler's melodies, or rather, individual phrases therein, do follow the criteria of the authentic folk song style, i.e. stepwise movement, or movement in small intervals, arpeggio figures and so on. Examine, for instance, the opening melodies of "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen", "Rheinlegendchen", or "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen", (although the end of this melody rises too high to really be classified as folklike (bb 28 -29)). In connection with "Rheinlegendchen" in particular, it is interesting that Floros notes a strong similarity between this song and a genuine Ländler from Zillertal in the Tyrol¹⁰. Similarly, Siegfried Borris finds the melody of "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" reminiscent of the folk song "Kein Feuer, keine Kohle"¹¹

In fact, it is quite common phenomenon for Mahler to start a song with what sounds like a traditional melody and then, once this impression has been formed, to deviate by using the factors discussed. In "Scheiden und Meiden", for example, the melodic style of the entire first stanza differs very little from the traditional approach, except perhaps the large range. From bb 22 - 26 in the second stanza, however, the introduction of the octave leap, as well as the use of the semitones results in a melody which could not occur in the context of a genuine folk song. By this time, however, the listener's ear is so accustomed to the folk style of the first stanza that this deviation is not immediately noticed as such. This impression is reinforced by the fact that the rhythmic bass figure in the accompaniment remains unaltered.

In fact, the melodic style of the *Wunderhorn* songs is far more literally suggestive of folk song than is the harmonization. Where the latter suggests archaism and primitivism without actually using many traditional methods (modal harmony, extreme simplicity, for example), the melodies almost always, at least in part, bring to mind the genuine style of folksong. That they

deviate from this style does not mar the sense that one is listening to songs firmly rooted in the world of folk music. Once again, it is rather as though Mahler melds traditional melodic style with his own original ideas in a way which is entirely natural to him. These are not simple imitation folk songs. But they flow naturally from the tradition of the folk song "carrying forth its fragrance", as Specht would have it.

One final set of melodic figures must be mentioned: those sounds which, while not actually derived from folk song or folksonglike melodies as such, are still taken from the world of the simple people, or the world of Nature, untouched by human influence. These can be seen to fall into three main categories: dance and especially Ländler melodies, military marches and fanfares, and bird calls and song.

The first category is represented especially by three songs, "Rheinlegendchen", "Verlorne Müh'!" and "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht". The group which could be loosely classified as martial music is much larger, ranging from the marchlike "Aus! Aus!", through several songs containing fanfare motifs, e.g. "Der Schildwache Nachtlid" and "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm", to the mournful horn calls in "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" and "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen". Bird calls are also found in the melodies of a number of songs. The most common call to be found is that of the cuckoo e.g. in "Ablösung im Sommer", "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes".

The imitation of birdsong in music is the one instance of Mahler using purely natural sound - as opposed to the music of those people who are perceived as being in a state of unity with Nature - in the *Wunderhorn* songs. The use of bird calls, thus, serves to emphasise the fact that these songs are, in fact, natural sound, a part of the natural world.

Bird calls play a further important role in terms of the literal interpretation of the text, particularly in the context of songs like "Ablösung im Sommer" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes"

where the cuckoo is an important character in the narrative. In "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen" the role is less clearly defined, beyond that discussed in the previous paragraph.

Similarly the use of Ländler type melodies in "Rheinlegendchen", "Verlorne Mühl'" and "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" does not seem to perform any specific function with regard to the interpretation of the meaning of the text, but rather to be establishing beyond doubt its function as folk, and thus natural music. In Mahler's music the Ländler seems to epitomise the simplicity, cheerfulness, and carefree atmosphere of folk music at its happiest. These songs, like their traditional counterparts, may be seen as having no particular significance or meaning, outside of their own existence as small pieces of happiness. And as such, their importance as a part of life in general is not inconsiderable!

The use of martial music, on the other hand, is usually connected to the literal meaning of the text; "Aus! Aus!", for instance is a marching song and is thus set in the style of a military march, and the use of fanfare figures too is generally found in songs of a military character. The soldiers in all these songs are, of course, all rank and file, rather than an aristocratic elite of high ranking officers. They are not strictly speaking peasants or farmers, but are quite probably the sons of peasants or farmers, and the girls who tease and flirt with them, or weep for their going to battle, have their roots firmly in the rural lower class.

It is, perhaps, worth mentioning that one may distinguish between two different types of march found in Mahler's music as a whole and the *Wunderhorn* songs in particular: the funeral march and what Floros calls the "Allegro marziale type".¹² The former has a very specific function. In the *Wunderhorn* settings only two songs of this type are to be found, "Der Tambourg'sell" and "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz", both of which are literal marches to the scaffold. The second type is found more widely in the songs and also seems to be more general in implication: this style is used to set the light hearted "Aus! Aus!", the dramatic "Der

Schildwache Nachtlied", the ironic "Trost im Unglück", and the terrifying "Revelge".

If one takes the *Wunderhorn* songs as a whole, then, one might say that Mahler creates a melodic environment resonant of the world of nature and the simple people, farmers, soldiers, shepherdesses and innkeepers' daughters, and their simple stories of cuckoos and nightingales, saints and fishes, rings and kings, using many melodic means taken directly from this world. Why then, does he not limit himself to these means, but introduces other, potentially "un-folklike" elements?

As one might deduce, given the discussion of structure in particular, the other melodic factors discussed are all related to the realisation of the meaning of the texts. The wide ranges of the songs can be seen as a means of enabling Mahler to do this (or perhaps are the result of his doing so): they create a broader spectrum within which he is able to work. It is the wide range of "Verlorne Mühe!", for instance that allows the rising intensity of emotion coupled with rising pitch, already mentioned. Large interval leaps on the one hand, and chromatic melodies on the other, are also often connected to the meaning of the text, although this is not always the case. The octave leaps on "Adé" in "Scheiden und Meiden" seem to be more emphatic, or perhaps playful, than meaningful.

The use of these uncharacteristic melodic elements for the purposes of text interpretation is, perhaps, nowhere more significant than in "Das irdische Leben", where the child's despairing pleas are characterised by both chromatic melody and large leaps, growing in range and emotional intensity as the child becomes more and more desperate. After the initial semitone pattern (bb 7 - 10), clearly communicating the child's anguished begging, the words "Gib mir Brot, sonst sterbe ich" are set (bb 11 - 14), using a pattern of rising and falling octave leaps.

The second time these words are set (bb 45 - 48), the same pattern is used, with a falling semitone between the first and second octaves and at the end of the phrase instead of a rising

semitone. The third time the child cries out for bread, however, Mahler replaces the octaves with tenths (bb 79 - 82); the child's desperation is now acute: even the semitone pattern is replaced with a fourth, a fifth and a sixth (bb 75 - 78). In the final phrase, "lag das Kind auf der Totenbahr!" (b 119 - 124) Mahler returns to the use of octaves, but the dynamic markings rising to a *ff* and the rhythmic extension combined with the rising third at the end make this phrase the most intense and the climax of the song as a whole.

All this is offset by the folklike melody given to the mother. In this song there are, in fact three voices: the child, the mother, and a narrative voice, also set to folklike music, although the sudden change of key halfway through the phrase (see bb 36 - 37 and 71 - 72) is again typical example of Mahler's original approach.

The use of the folklike style in this song may be seen as having two purposes. In the case of the narrative voice, it establishes that this song is the realisation of a folk text*. In the case of the setting of the mother's text, the melody seems to have a similar function - it defines the song as a folk song, and also the mother's place in society - but in fact there is more to it than that. Mahler himself said of the mother's melody that it embodies in music "the slow, monotonous responses of the mother - of Fate, which is in no particular hurry to satisfy our cries for bread"¹³.

It is interesting to note that Mahler's use of large interval leaps does not always denote emotional intensity. In, "Lob des hohen Verstandes", such leaps are used to a comic rather than a dramatic effect: the sixteenth leaps (bb 81 and 82) are a graphic portrayal of the uncouth braying of the donkey as is the octave leap at the end of the song.

*The change of key occurring on the words "rief das Kind noch immer da" is an instance of Mahler's use of tonality to underline textual meaning.

6.4 Syllabic vs melismatic setting

Mahler tends to use more and longer melismas than is normal in the setting of folk texts, especially in some of the later songs, although unusual melisma's are found on the word "Weiden" (bb 7, 8 and 9) in "Ablösung im Sommer" and in "Ich ging mit Lust" (bb 19; 47; 97 and 99). In the later songs, an example which immediately springs to mind are the long melismatic passages in "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" (bb 35 - 45 on the first syllable of "Haide", and bb 87 - 97 on "Ja"). This song also contains shorter melismas on both syllables of "hohen" (b 12), and in the first two syllables of "Töchterlein" (b 31).

"Haide" in this case in the plural "Haiden" is also set melodically in "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm". In this song melismas are used only in setting the more lyrical girl's text; as well as the one already mentioned, a long melisma is found on the first syllable of "Bergen" (b 43) and an even longer one on the first syllable of "Grase" (bb 81 - 83). Special note should perhaps be taken of the setting of "auf hohen wilden Bergen" (bb 49 - 51); the melisma on the octave leap here produces an effect not unlike yodelling. Long melismas, but of a different type comprising the extension of one syllable over a few very long notes are to be found in "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen" (bb 68 - 71 on the fourth syllable of "Herzallerlieble"; bb 117 - 120 on the first syllable of "Weinen"; bb 157 - 160 on the first syllable of "Erde").

These melismas, however, never appear at the opening of a song. In fact, Mahler often uses the method of starting a song conventionally and then deviating from the norm in the context of the choice between syllabic and melismatic text setting. (The melismatic two note slurs at the beginning of, for instance, "Selbstgefühl" or "Rheinlegendchen" are not out of character in traditional folk song style.) The closest to the beginning of any song that one finds an unusual melisma is in "Ablösung im Sommer" (see above).

It should be recognised that melismatic setting remains the exception in Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs; mostly the texts are set syllabically, or using two note slurs not out of character in the folklike style. Nevertheless, it is interesting to examine those melismas that do occur and to attempt in the process to ascertain why Mahler sets certain words in this way.

Such an examination immediately brings to light the fact that Mahler very often uses a melisma on a word describing a natural feature. Of those isolated, seven of the words set melodically fall into this category: "Weiden" ("Ablösung im Sommer"); "grünen Wald" ("Ich ging mit Lust"); "Haide" ("Ich ging mit Lust") and its plural "Haiden" ("Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm"); "Bergen"; "Grase"; and "auf hohen wilden Bergen" (all also in "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm"). Of those which do not fall into this grouping, two can be discounted, as they are the lines which correspond with "grünen Wald" in the second and fourth stanzas of "Ich ging mit Lust" (the third stanza is set differently, but melodically speaking this is one of Mahler's near strophic settings).

It seems thus not unlikely that there is some connection between melismas and Nature in these songs. It is as though the melismas are a sort of natural music within natural music. As shown, Mahler's style is already a means of writing music which at the same time allows him a wider degree of textual interpretation than is available in the traditional style of folk song writing, while still realising the fundamental meaning of the texts as folk texts. Thus he seems to use melismas as a way of expressing nature through music without resorting to the folklike, as though the flowing melodies afforded by a longer melismatic pattern are part of the smooth outpouring of nature in his music.

Not all melismas conform to this idea, however. In "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" the long melisma on "Ja" at the end may be regarded simply as a piece of musical playfulness, in this most playful song. (In fact, most longer melismas can be understood in this way, but the fact that

this is on a meaningless syllable makes it a special case. The long melisma on "Haide" can be seen as a combination between the playful and the special category linked to Nature) The other two on "hohen" of "hohen Haus" and "Töchterlein" also do not seem to fall into any special category, but to be merely playful.

Far from playful, however, and of a completely different nature to those in any of the other *Wunderhorn* songs are the melismas in "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen". Only the sobbing turn on the word "weinen" seems to have a clear function: it is one of the few examples of direct interpretation of a single word to be found in these settings. The other two seem rather to be related to creation of the atmosphere of the song as a whole than to perform any particular function or fall into a special category*.

One can thus identify various functions of melismas in the *Wunderhorn* songs. The broadest probably encompasses the concept of the melisma as a form of musical play - in a sense most melismas fall into this category. It could be said that most melismas also contribute to creating the atmosphere of the songs in which they appear, whether lighthearted (as in "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht"), lyrical ("Ich ging mit Lust") or sorrowful ("Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen).

But to these conventional categories, Mahler seems to have added another, what one might almost call the melisma as natural feature. These melismas run through the music as naturally as a stream through a field, flowing unrestrainedly through the generally folklike style of Mahler's melodies without distracting from the existence of these melodies as part of the world of nature, because they too are a part of that world - as natural to Mahler as the folksong itself.

*It could be argued that the melisma on "Erde" is connected to a natural feature, but as this is a strophic repetition of that found on "(Herzallerlieble)", this seems a rather dubious interpretation, especially given that the general character of the song is quite different to any of those in which "natural" melismas are to be found.

6.5. Accompaniments

Up until now little has been said about the accompaniments to the Wunderhorn songs except in the context of harmonic analysis. In fact, this is one of the areas in which Mahler's settings are the most innovative. Whereas in earlier settings of folk texts, the accompaniment often consisted of simple chords, and, in fact, performed no function other than providing an harmonic foundation for the melody, each of Mahler's accompaniments is an integral part of its song. Mahler's accompaniments are thus generally on a far larger scale than those of any of his predecessors, and are all connected in one way or another to the meaning of the text.

Sometimes this connection is obvious: the allusion to the birds, for example to the nightingale in the accompaniment of "Ich ging mit Lust", the donkey's bray in "Lob des hohen Verstandes", the various fanfares in the military pieces e.g. "Scheiden und Meiden"; "Der Schildwache Nachtlied" etc., and the mournful horncalls in "Nicht wiedersehen", "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" and "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen", all are simple, realistic musical effects.

In other cases the connection between text and accompaniment is less immediately obvious. The accompaniment of "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt", for instance, can be understood to imitate the sinuous movement of the fish, but this is not an explicit imitation such as those mentioned above. Furthermore, in several of the songs the function of the accompaniment is to create a suitable atmosphere. This may be cheerful, e.g. "Ablösung im Sommer", charming, e.g. "Rheinlegendchen", mournful e.g. "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen" or even disquieting as in "Das irdische Leben".

In order to understand better exactly how Mahler interprets individual components of the text through the accompaniment, it is interesting to examine two songs, very different in mood, "Lob des hohen Verstandes" and "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen".

The first of these songs must be one of the most entertaining of all the *Wunderhorn* settings, characterised as it is by an almost slapstick humour. There is nothing subtle about the methods which Mahler uses to realise the comicality of the text, either in the melody, or, more crucially for this discussion, in the accompaniment.

The latter might be divided into three distinct blocks, each one interspersed with the very important figures imitating the cuckoo and the ass. The first of these blocks comprises the simple folklike passage which forms the introduction, and then acts as an uncomplicated counterpoint to the melody of the first two stanzas, and as an interlude between them.

That this music may be closely connected with the cuckoo, is perhaps indicated by the cuckoo calls at the end of the passage. It also sets the scene more generally, however, the simple tune with its "Once upon a time" anacrusic rising fourth beginning, establishing the a folklike atmosphere immediately. Furthermore, the orchestration, with its strong emphasis on the wind section, and particularly the shriller manifestations of the woodwinds, places the listener in the world of the "böhmischen Musikanten", and indeed in this case in its "most crude and basic form"¹⁴.

The ass has its own crude and basic music - far more so than the cuckoo's, in fact - which forms the second of the blocks discussed above. Its entry is signalled by a hammered out V-I V-I in the timpani (bb 53 - 54), while its announcement of the start of the competition is accompanied by what can best be described as "oompah" effects in the bassoon, horns, trombones and tubas with pizz. bass (bb. 59 - 63), leaving the listener in no doubt about the musical intelligence and subtlety of the judge. This underlines the inevitability of the adjudication, when the words "aber Kukkuck singst gut Choral!" are accompanied by the same oompahs, this time on the strings (bb 105 -110).

The ass, of course, also brays, not just in the vocal part, but also in the accompaniment,

especially in the E \flat and B \flat clarinets in bb 82 - 85, as a reaction to the music of the nightingale. (These brays might be classified as natural sound, but, unlike the cuckoo calls, they are not only literal imitations, but also deliberately coarse jokes).

The nightingale itself is represented by flowing semiquavers similar to those found in "Ablösung im Sommer" and "Ich ging mit Lust" (bb 65 ff), very sweetly orchestrated for strings, upper winds and triangle (this comprises the third block). The tune here remains simple - the nightingale is still part of the natural world, both literally, and in the context of the folk text, and Mahler does not give it music which would break the atmosphere of the folksong.

This melody is taken up in the vocal part for the whole competition, which may be why the cuckoo's choral is set to the same music - though in the minor - as the nightingale's more delicate offering. Even the ass' brash intervention (bb 78 - 85) is constructed from figures taken from it.

The final judgement is accompanied by the "oompah" music (as mentioned above) interspersed with references to the first block (further confirmation, perhaps that this is the cuckoo's music), which finally comes to dominate the accompaniment from b 119 to the end, so that the song ends in a hail of cuckoo calls, supporting the final bray in the vocal part. The listener is left in no doubt as to who has triumphed.

In general the accompaniment to this song sets each successive scene, defining the characters and costuming them, musically speaking, so that they take on a vivid vitality, far greater than could be achieved by the melody alone. This is not achieved by the subtle methods of artsong composition used by Mahler's contemporaries, where every chord and figure may be an interpretation of a word or phrase in the text, if not the bearer of some hidden meaning of great significance to the composer, but not immediately obvious to the listener.

Mahler uses bolder, broader means, the blocks mentioned above, with small references

to the individual characters - the cuckoo calls and brays, the hammered out drum beats (bb53 - 54) - to bring the songs truly to life. And if the result sometimes sounds brash and crude, it is no more than a realisation of the heavy humour of the song itself, which, after all, tells of nothing more or less than the defeat of subtlety by vulgarity.

Much subtler in effect, but still a far cry from the songs of Wolf or Strauss, is "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen". What is interesting, is to see how Mahler uses what are essentially very similar methods to those described above to create a song whose atmosphere is entirely different to the broad comedy of "Lob des hohen Verstandes".

The accompaniment to "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" can also be divided into a series of blocks, following a division created by the melodic setting of the strangely divided stanzas, and lending a great poignancy to the text at certain points. This is, after all, a song about a boy foreseeing his own death in battle, foretold over and over again in the melancholy horncalls which run through the song.

The song, in fact, opens with an introduction built round these horncalls, first on the horns themselves (bb1 - 4), then, in the form of a slow, funereal marchlike melody in the oboes and clarinets which dissolves into chords (bb5 - 15), then back to the brass section, with the celli and violas playing trill figures, which could be seen as representing drum rolls (bb15 -20).

This lack of real percussion, combined with the slow tempo, the very soft dynamic and the muted brass, gives the whole introduction a sense of unreality, of dream (Mahler instructs that the section should sound "Verträumt"), of distance. This is not the genuine battle heard in "Revelge", or the real funeral march of "Der Tambour'sell" or "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz". It is the melancholy foreboding of a battle and death which are inevitable, but not here and now.

The sense of unreality which pervades the music is what has, perhaps, led some listeners to hear in it, not foreboding, but memory, and to interpret the song as a dialogue between the

ghost of an already dead soldier returning to his lover. There is nothing to directly support this in the text although, admittedly, nothing which makes this interpretation impossible either. What is certain, is that the horn calls and march are distant, whether in the future or the past, and create from the opening bars, an atmosphere both sorrowful and somehow eerie.

What is interesting is that Mahler creates this atmosphere more through the orchestration, timbre, dynamics and tempo, than by distorting the realistic means - horn calls and march - which he uses to establish the military theme of the song. This is not ghostly music in the way in which "Night on a Bald Mountain" or the "Dance Macabre" are ghostly. Rather, it is the sense of distance between the listener and the sound world of the introduction which creates a feeling that this is music removed in time as well as in space; that it is somehow otherworldly.

The horn calls and march - and thus the atmosphere described above - extend from the introduction into the accompaniment of the first stanza, as the girl asks who is knocking. Interestingly, Mahler avoids the obvious touch of incorporating genuine knocking into the music. The closest sound to it is the "roll" effect on the violas and celli, which could equally be part of the march. This may give the listener the impression (whether intended or not) that it is the music of the introduction which has wakened her, the spectre of what is to be (or what has been, depending on the interpretation) which has disturbed her slumber.

One could, of course, argue, that the story starts with the girl's words, that what has gone before is simply atmospheric scene setting, but the girl's melody grows so organically from the march, even following it literally for a while (bb 24 - 29), that it is difficult not to hear the two as intrinsically linked*. This is supported by the continuation of the accompaniment material as an interlude before the entry of the boy.

*although it must be said that the melody is not really martial in character (e.g. the lack of dotted rhythm in b25) when heard without the accompaniment.

With the latter, one finds the first significant change in the music, what one might call the start of a new block in both melody and accompaniment. The melody, as has already been mentioned, is gentle and lyrical, but it is the accompaniment which really shifts the mood of the song. Where the girl's question, which is set to a melody that is not intrinsically martial, is accompanied by the music of horns and funeral march, the boy's melody is accompanied by music as gentle and lyrical as the song he sings. It is delicately orchestrated for strings, joined in bar 47 by the flute and follows the melody, doubling it in the violins and then the flute at pitch (first violins bb39 - 47, second violins bb48 - 53) and at the third or sixth (second violins bb39 - 47, first violins and flute bb48 - 53), before diverging from it, although with returns to the doubling (second violins bb58 and 60 - 64). The lower strings play a simple accompaniment, the celli and basses providing the pedal point already discussed.

The whole effect is one of both love and security. The lyricism of the passage leaves one in no doubt of the boy's relationship of the girl, and the sweetness of timbre provides a momentary respite from eerie military shadows of the introduction and first stanza.

A respite is all that it is. No sooner has the boy ended his song, than the accompaniment returns the listener to the ghostly battlefield (bb 73 - 87). The text may not yet have given a hint as to why the boy is at the girl's door so early, but the accompaniment as the girl lets him in leaves the listener in no doubt as to the inevitable ending of the song.

But now it is the girl's turn to welcome her lover with a loving, lyrical melody, and once again, despite the fact that it grows out of what would be the penultimate chord of the first block (bb86 ff.), there is no hint in this third accompaniment of the horn calls or march. In fact, the techniques used here are similar to those used in the second block: the orchestration is for strings joined by winds, in this case the clarinets, the melody is doubled, first in the first violins (bb92 - 98) and clarinets (bb104 - 107), while the broken chords in the celli provide a pedalpoint,

although this is not unbroken (this has also already been described in the section on harmonisation).

The girl's welcome is followed by a beautiful snatch of melody on the violins (bb 108 - 111), perhaps a reference to the nightingale in the next stanza. When this bird finally appears in the text, however, it is accompanied by the march, which continues, with horn calls, in the next interlude. The listener knows why the maiden is weeping, without a word having been said. Her loved one has come to make a last farewell before going to the front. Her thoughts, and the inescapable fate of her loved one are clearly heard in the orchestra*.

The boy then takes over for the rest of the song. First he comforts her (bb 129 - 161) to the music of the second block, promising, albeit rather ominously that she will be his in a year as none other can be. At this, his fate becomes clear, and in b162 the martial music takes over to end the song as he voices for the first time, what has haunted them both (and the listener) through the whole song.

As has been mentioned, the melody which he sings at this point is not overtly martial. It is made so by the little military band which accompanies it, dynamically at a far stronger level than has been heard so far, before dying back to distant horn calls again as the boy finally sings of his death.

The similarity in the techniques used in the structure of "Lob des hohen Verstandes" and "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" should be clear. In each case certain accompaniment ideas are linked to moods or ideas, but, unlike in the case of *Leitmotifs*, for instance, they are not linked to individual concepts and scattered through the songs as these concepts arise. Rather they occur

*It is also possible that he has already met his fate and that she is weeping, either because she has just become aware of it, or because the visitation by his spirit is a reminder of what she has lost.

as blocks, accompanying whole strophes. In this way Mahler remains within the sound world of folk music (even if his accompaniments are not like any genuine folksong accompaniments) in a way in which he could not have, if he had taken a more fragmented approach. In fact, each accompaniment (and this goes for all, possibly, but one of the songs) is like a folk universe in which the song takes place.

There are, of course, important differences, too, between the accompaniments of the two songs under discussion here. Perhaps the most important is that, while the accompaniment of "Lob des hohen Verstandes" is continually and inextricably linked to what is happening in the song in any given section, that of "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" for the most part describes something that has not yet happened. It is a premonition of fate, as well as, at times, an insight into the thoughts of the boy and the girl. And it tells the listener about what the song is really about, in a way in which the text does not, till the very last lines.

But to return to the importance of these, at face value unfolklike, accompaniments in the defining of the context of the *Wunderhorn* songs. Mention has been made of the accompaniments as a folk universe in which the texts and melodies can gain their true meaning. This may seem a rather overripe description, but one only needs to listen to the songs to understand and justify it. Think of the military songs. Yes, in most cases the melodies are martial enough to make the point, but by accompanying them with what sound like real military bands, Mahler not only leaves his listeners in absolutely no doubt of the world of these songs, he also makes them live in a way inconceivable if they were to be sung a cappella, or accompanied by simple chords.

The same is true of the Ländler. One has only to hear the opening bars of the introductions of "Rheinlegendchen", "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" and "Verlorne Müh", to see the mountainsides and meadows which are the home of these idylls. And the funny band that opens "Lob des hohen Verstandes", or the comic grunting of the bassoons and tootling of the

clarinets in the "Fischpredigt" take the listener immediately into the vital, folk world of each song.

These are, of course, largely orchestral effects, and, in fact, one of the most important means of accompaniment which Mahler uses to create the impression of the folklike in the later *Wunderhorn* songs is, in fact one which is entirely alien to the conventional method of folk song setting: orchestration. Mahler himself has been quoted as saying that "a large scale composition that plumbs the depths of the subject, unconditionally demands the orchestra". Although Mahler first wrote the *Wunderhorn* songs for piano before orchestrating them, the accompaniments were orchestrally conceived from the first, and it is the orchestral versions which can be considered definitive. Mahler himself said:

"Composing is quicker than orchestrating - and in such a medium the whole thing would in fact have to be reworked! It is never enough simply to orchestrate a piano accompaniment which hasn't been orchestrally conceived."¹⁵

Even the songs from the *Lieder und Gesänge* seem to have been orchestrally conceived. While this group of songs has only piano accompaniments, some of these contain indications referring to orchestral instruments, e.g. "wie Trompetenmusik" in "Scheiden und Meiden" (b 5), "Wie fernes Glockenläuten" in "Nicht wiedersehen" (b 27), and "Wie eine Schalmel" and "In aller diesen tiefen Trillern ist mit Hilfe des Pedals der Klang gedämpfter Trommeln nachzuahmen" in "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz" (bb 1 and 15 respectively). It is furthermore interesting that La Grange notes the existence of an orchestration of the first quarter of this song¹⁶ affirming that the indications referring to sounds of instruments other than the piano are not mere special effects, but actually may show some of Mahler's intentions in the orchestration thereof.

Even in songs where these indications are not present, it is often possible to infer potential orchestrations for various passages. The bass figure which Mahler indicates is to be imitated by

which Mahler heard in his childhood. As might be expected, this ensemble is connected to all three of the Ländler-like songs, as well as to the "Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes". The latter two songs can be seen, at surface level at least, to be simple folk narratives, and it is the world of the "Volk", the simple village people, which the sound of this ensemble evokes. (In the case of the "Fischpredigt", one is reminded that Mahler himself described the instrumentation of this song in terms of the "Gedudel der böhmischen Musikanten".)

The overall effect created in the songs is thus not that of the symphony orchestra, and especially not of the massive entity which the orchestra had become by the end of the nineteenth century. Instead, smaller ensembles are evoked, and ensembles which would not normally be heard in the concert hall, but rather on the village green, or marching on parade from the barracks where the local regiment is housed.

This is, of course, not to say that the orchestration is a literal imitation of these ensembles; Mahler does not suppress his enormous skill as an orchestrator in composing the songs. As is the case in the context of melody writing, harmonisation and structure, Mahler creates his own sound world, which nonetheless leaves the listener with the strong impression of folk music. Perhaps the most characteristically folklike of the songs are the three Ländler - they are, after all set in a recognisably folk idiom, and one that seems, as has been mentioned to have been chosen by Mahler for no other purpose than to express the origins of the texts. How then does Mahler go about orchestrating these folk poems set as folk dances?

Without abandoning the symphony orchestra, or even introducing genuine folk instruments not normally found in the orchestra (bagpipes, shawms, the traditional Czech fiddles described by Klusen) Mahler nonetheless manages to create a sound in these songs which is redolent with the character of folk music. The ensemble in each case is the same with one exception: all are orchestrated for basic winds and strings with no brass except the horns, but in

"Verlorne Müh" and "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" there is also a triangle, which is not found in "Rheinlegendchen". What all three songs also have in common is that the orchestration is very clear and light, with almost transparent texture, as though implying a smaller ensemble than that which Mahler actually uses.

This is particularly the case in the context of "Verlorne Müh" and "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht". What is immediately noticeable about these songs is the conspicuousness of the wind instruments, especially the reed winds often associated with pastoral music, usually found in conjunction with the triangle and the horn providing a simple bass. It is this "village green" ensemble (joined by the flute in "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht") which opens both songs, immediately setting the rural scene, so that by the time the strings enter, the listener is already aware of his/her musical environment.

This ensemble continues to define the sound world of the songs throughout, particularly characteristic passages being, for example, "Verlorne Müh" bb78 - 80 and "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht" bb46 - 50 and 54 - 58. Mention must also be made of the comical clarinet figure in bb72 - 76 of the latter song, which is somehow extremely apt for the entry of the nonsense geese in the text. One can almost hear them honking!

It should be stressed again in the context of both these songs, that Mahler does not literally imitate a village band. This music is a far cry from Mozart's "Dorfmusikanten" in the "Musikalisches Spass". Nor does he idealise the peasant ensemble. One does not hear in these songs, the folk band elevated to perfect transmitter of natural music, or prettified for the purpose of creating flimsy scenery against which a gentrified fairy tale may be played out (cf. lots of ballet music!). Rather, by incorporating elements of folk music into his own, highly original orchestral style, he creates an instrumental environment which immediately and irrevocably places the listener in the world to which these songs belong.

This is, perhaps, most clearly illustrated by the orchestration of the third Ländler, "Rheinlegendchen", paradoxically, because one hears less of the real village band in this song than in the two discussed above. This is not to say that the little wind ensemble is not heard; it is present throughout, and perhaps at its clearest in bb25 - 37, and 58 - 68. But the predominant sounds in this song are those of the strings, and maybe especially the solo violin, the flute and the horn, which plays a far more melodic role than in either of the other two songs discussed.

Now of course, the small folk ensembles of Austria and Bohemia were not entirely made up of wind instruments. In fact, the strings played an important role: the "Iglauer Fiedler" have already been mentioned. This music, however, seems not really to be an imitation of such fiddle groups. The folklike sound is produced more by the style of writing, rhythmically and melodically, than by the string section of the orchestra which sounds like a delicately used, but nonetheless professional ensemble. Certain touches, the pizz. lower strings, for instance, do remind the listener of the origin of the music, but as a whole, this does not sound as though it is being played on "Fiedel", "Grobfiedel" and "Plaschperment". Similarly, although the figures played on the horn are folklike in themselves, it is unlikely that the horn in a village band would play them.

The clue to the orchestration of this song, lies, perhaps, in Mahler's own description thereof: "sweet and sunny - nothing but butterfly colours"¹⁷. The existence of this song as a piece of happiness, has already been discussed. Mahler's orchestration in this case, contributes essentially to that happiness. In the delicate lightness of sound he creates the equivalent of a summer day in the meadows in music, not deliberately "folksy", but nonetheless somehow rural. This sense of naturalness and warmth combines with the other musical elements, some derived directly from the world of folk music, and, of course, the folk text, to produce a song which leaves the listener in no doubt of its origins.

In the case of the songs with a martial theme, the imitation of the military band is far more literal. In all but "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" and "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm", Mahler incorporates a mini-marching band, complete with side drum, bass drum, triangle and cymbals into the symphony orchestra. In addition, he often uses the orchestral woodwind and brass instruments in much the same way as they would be employed in such band. This results in a quite clear definition of the world of the garrison or battlefield.

This does not mean, however, that Mahler abandons the orchestral sound in these songs. Rather one hears the military band in the context of the symphony orchestra - the ensemble here is generally much larger than that found in the Ländler settings, incorporating string and full wind as well as brass and percussion. Thus, while the listener is primarily aware of the martial character of the music, this is not always as literal as it seems.

Take, for instance the opening of "Revelge". From bb 1 - 29, the strings are used almost exclusively to imitate drum rolls. (That this is what is intended is borne out by the rhythmic doubling of the string section by the side drum in bb 11 - 13 and 21 - 23.) As this is heard in conjunction with trumpets and shrill woodwinds, it seems unlikely that anyone with any knowledge of Western music could mistake this for anything other than a military march, but the ensemble is not really that of a marching band.

Mahler's use of the full orchestra in these songs, also allows him a great deal more narrative freedom than he would have had, had he limited himself to the literal imitation of such a band. This is, perhaps, most obvious in the dialogue songs, where he is able to underline the changes of character with a complete change of orchestration. Thus the girl in "Der Schildwache Nachtlied" is personified by strings, harp, cor anglais and clarinet (this choice of winds perhaps suggesting the pastoral nature of her origins) in the first verse, joined by flute, bassoon and horn (providing the bassline) in the second. In both "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm", and "Trost im

Unglück“, the girls'parts are also both more delicately orchestrated than those of the men.

This is not, however, the only narrative distinction which Mahler makes orchestrally. Throughout the songs, he uses orchestration to create and relieve tension, and to define characters and events. In "Revelge", for instance, arguably the most dramatic of the military songs, the orchestra is used to support the narrative throughout.

Thus the string section (the least military instrumental group) may imitate drum rolls as discussed above*, perhaps most notably in bb 88 ff, where strings, drum, bassoon and double bassoon combine to imitate the terrible drumming of the dead boy. But it may also create lyrical moments, as in the third and fourth stanzas, when a soldier tells the drummer boy that he cannot carry him back to camp because the enemy has defeated them (bb32 - 40), and when the drummer boy cries out that his comrades are passing him by as though it was all over with him, which presumably it is, although he is unaware that he has died (bb 57 - 64). It may also support the march music played by the winds and brass (e.g. bb 29 - 31 and 72 - 88) or even take over the march itself, especially in the ghostly interlude leading up to the final stanza (bb 139 - 154), where the violins col legno and the lower strings saltando combine in the march to create a passage of great tension.

Nor are the winds and brass used exclusively in the martial style. Throughout this and the other military songs, the orchestral brass and woodwind instruments imitate those of the band, but not to the exclusion of all other roles. Thus, in "Revelge" again, Mahler uses these sections to sometimes quite horrific effect. Take, for instance, the muted sf and then ff horns at bb 85 - 89, lending awful emphasis to the passage describing the battlefield thick with bodies, or the shrill, eerie cries of the piccolo, flute and oboe at the end of the song (bb 163 to end) as the

* not just at the opening of the song, but in bb 47 - 54, 88 - 94, 97 - 100, 106 - 108, 110 - 115, 163 - 167

drummer boy returns, with his comrades, to the door of his sweetheart's house*.

In the military songs as a whole, then, one finds the orchestra used as a means of interpretation in at least three ways: 1) through the imitation, at times most realistically of the marching band; 2) through the use of different instrumentation to describe changing characters and events; 3) through special or atmospheric effects, most notably, perhaps, the distant, eerie horns predicting the boy's death in "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" and the wild horror of "Revelge" described above.

In a sense, although the imitation of the military band is generally more realistic than that of the village orchestra in the Ländler, "Lob des hohen Verstandes" and the "Fischpredigt", there is a similarity of approach. In both contexts, the ensemble, folk or martial is incorporated into the symphonic sound, leaving Mahler the freedom of a broader palate of narrative and/or interpretative effect, without ever leaving his listeners in any doubt as to the sound universe of the songs.

Of all the *Wunderhorn* there is only one song which is not orchestrated in such a way as to suggest some kind of folk or military ensemble and that is "Das irdische Leben". This can, perhaps, be ascribed to the extreme emotional intensity of this song, the like of which is not to be found in any of the other settings. In this song, Mahler uses the orchestra to underline this intensity. The constant semiquaver pattern in the strings -Mahler speaks of "the uncanny notes in the accompaniment, which bluster past in a storm"¹⁸ - creates a tension which grows steadily more acute as the song progresses. Floros notes that the single stroke of the tamtam with which

* It is interesting to compare both these effects with the orchestration of "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen", in order to better understand the interpretation given of that song. In both cases, the effect is eerie, or ghostly, but where "Revelge" tells an out and out horror story, suitably shrilly and horrifically orchestrated, in "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen" the effect is far less immediately terrifying, and more melancholy and distant, both from the actual events of the song, and in acoustical effect, from the listener.

the song ends is generally speaking a death symbol in Mahler's music, and indeed this instrument is also found punctuating "Der Tambour'sell" where its use in this sense seems quite unambiguous^{19*}.

6.6. *The Texts*

"Diese Poesie [unterscheidet] ... sich [wesentlich] von jeder anderen Art 'Literaturpoesie' und [könnte] beinahe mehr Natur und Leben - also die Quelle aller Poesie - als Kunst genannt werden."

One final area must be mentioned in a discussion of Mahler's style, and that is his approach to the texts. Mahler's perspective on the Wunderhorn poems must be examined in a broader context, that of his attitude to poetry as a whole. Unlike a composer like Schubert, who would set just about any poem, irregardless of its quality, Mahler was highly selective when it came to setting poetry to music.

It should be remembered that Mahler was very widely read, with a large repertoire of poetry from which to choose. He did not, however, select only poetry of a high literary quality for his settings. In fact, it was his stated preference not to set the works of poets whom he admired. Ida Dehmel recorded in her diary: "It seemed to him a profanity when composers ventured to set perfect poems to music; it was as if a sculptor chiselled a statue from marble and a painter came along and coloured it."²⁰

The implications of these ideas are particularly interesting in combination with a further

*Although this interpretation would seem to be correct in these cases and others, e.g. "Ich hab' ein glühend Messer" from the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, Floros unfortunately does not attempt to explain the meaning of the similar tamtam stroke at the end of the "Fischpredigt".

statement of Mahler. In 1905 he wrote to Ludwig Karpath:

"Etwas anderes ist es, dass ich mit vollem Bewusstsein von Art und Ton dieser Poesie (die sich von jeder anderen Art 'Literaturpoesie' wesentlich unterscheidet und beinahe mehr Natur und Leben - also die Quellen aller Poesie - als Kunst genannt werden könnte) mich ihr sozusagen mit Haut und Haar *verschrieben habe*."²¹

The reasons for Mahler's attraction to the *Wunderhorn* have already been discussed, and certainly his choice of these poems must have had to do with the fact that they offered ideal ground for musical interpretation. Moreover, Mahler was highly selective in the choice of texts which he set. In all, he composed twenty five* songs based on the over six hundred *Wunderhorn* texts covering only a small proportion of the kinds of songs found in the anthology.

The subject matter of the poems anthologised in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* is wide ranging, covering all facets of the daily life of the rural people. Arnim himself categorised the second and third volumes of the collection into religious songs, craftsmens' songs, historical romances, love songs, drinking songs and songs of war. A further category is represented by the children's songs in the appendix. As Elizabeth Dargie points out, these are very broad categories, and even so there are some songs which defy classification thereunder²². Nevertheless, they serve to indicate in broad outlines the type of life led by the people who created them (or at least were purported to have created them).

These outlines are filled in by the content of the texts themselves. The songs speak of the cycle of human existence from birth to death; of a life of hard work, and one where war is seen not only in terms of glory and chivalry, but more often from the viewpoint of the common soldier, taken from friends and family; a life in which love is not over-romanticized, but treated

*This number includes "Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht", from the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, and the three symphonic movements, "Urlicht" from the Second Symphony, "Es sungen drei Engel" from the Third, and "Das himmlische Leben" from the Fourth.

in down to earth, even flippant tones; and a life at the centre of which stand religion and the Church. It is a life in which, however, there is also time for fun, for entertainment, humour and fantasy.

As might be expected given the small percentage of texts selected, not all the types found in the original anthology are represented in Mahler's settings. The classification of the songs into *categories, however, remains problematic. Mitchell writes that the "songs are too various to be arranged into watertight compartments."*²³ He singles out the marches and military songs as a dominant group, and see the rest as falling between the two poles of "the endearingly genial inventions like 'Rheinlegendchen' and 'Verlorne Müh!'" on the one hand and "the piercingly plaintive cry of pain" of "Das irdische Leben" on the other.

Dargie states that the songs could be grouped under four headings: songs about love, about the soldier's life, humorous and religious songs. (The last mentioned are all symphonic settings which Dargie discusses out of their context.) Interestingly, in her detailed discussion of the songs she groups them, not according to these categories, but under the headings "The folk-song [sic] heritage"; "Songs of love"; "Songs of 'earthly life' and death"; "Humorous songs"; and "The childlike mind". She does not accord the military songs a special category in this grouping, but divides them up under the other headings. All in all this is not entirely successful as a good deal of overlapping still takes place. "Nicht wiedersehen" and "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen" are, for instance, both grouped as love songs, but have as much to do with death as they do with love.

An earlier attempt to categorise the songs is that of Walter, who does so according to their "various realms of expression" which he feels hold the key to Mahler's essential nature, rather than according to subject matter²⁴. The soldiers' songs, for instance, he subdivides into "the high spirited ones", "the melancholy ones", and "the three songs in which the nocturnal element in

Mahler's nature ... speaks with the full force of that peculiar quality"²⁵. (These are "Der Schildwache Nachtlid", "Wo die sch6nen Trompeten blasen" and "Revelge".) Other categories are "devout songs", "humorous songs", "Beautiful and heartfelt songs", and "'Gesnge der guter Laune' (songs of good humour)". "Das irdische Leben" is discussed separately as impossible to categorise*.

These categorizations are quoted here mainly because they give an overview of the type of texts which Mahler selected from the more than six hundred poems in *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. Mahler clearly does not reflect the same scope in covering the everyday life of the people as does the original anthology. There are, for instance, no work songs (except insofar as soldiering may be described as an occupation!) and no religious songs, although possible exception here is "Des Antonius von Padua FdFischpredigt.

Another interesting point, is the fact that the folklore is limited to what might be described as the homely sort: one is far more likely to meet the cuckoo and the nightingale than Tannhuser or William Tell, though both the latter appear in the original anthology. When knights in shining armour do appear, in "Scheiden und Meiden" and "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen", they are closer to the brightly coloured pictures in a child's fairy tale book, than to the heroes of old.

Mahler seems to select his texts according to three very broad categories (although there is no indication in the records of his ideas that this was in any way a conscious choice at all). The first category is the military songs, which comprise the largest single grouping. The second category comprises those songs which epitomise the life of the simple people, folklore or fairy tale (e.g. "Abl6sung im Sommer"; "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen"). This group includes

*Walter discusses none of the songs in very great detail, and several are not mentioned at all. Those that are, are mostly simply named as examples of the given categories.

the three Ländler settings.

There remain in the third category, certain songs which had a special meaning for Mahler. These include two comic songs, "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes" (although these two could also be seen as belonging to the second category), and "Das irdische Leben". The first two songs mentioned here are both satirical, the latter being a satire on critics which Mahler seems to have regarded as being so perfect an expression thereof that he remarked to Bauer-Lechner that he "merely had to be careful not to spoil the poem and to convey its meaning exactly"²⁶. The "Fischpredigt" is much broader in implication, being a satire on the whole of humankind.²⁷

"Das irdische Leben" is also seen as a representation of human life, but in its darkest aspect:

"In this way, I feel that human life (in the poem to which I give the interpretative title "Das Irdische Leben" ["the song's original title is *Verspätung*"]) is symbolised by the child's crying for bread and the answer of the mother, consoling it with promises again and again. In life, everything that one most needs for the growth of spirit and body is withheld - as with the dead child - until it is too late."²⁸

Walter too remarks of this song that "in a naïve and vigorous manner, it expresses a deep world-sorrow, similar to that which Mahler himself felt throughout his life"²⁹.

These three categories - songs with a military theme; the quintessential folk song; songs with a special meaning for Mahler - appear to cover all Mahler's *Wunderhorn* settings. What these categories do not help to explain is why Mahler did not choose other songs which comply equally well with the criteria which define them. Attempting to answer this question could only lead to useless speculation. Perhaps the best way to look at the problem of why Mahler chose the songs he did above all others, is simply to assume that he liked them.

If one returns, however, to the more general theme of Mahler's decision to set folk poetry, one is able to gain a certain amount of insight into the way in which Mahler actually worked with the texts themselves. In fact, the essentially mutable nature of the folk poetry, opened opportunities for Mahler that art poetry would not have done. He described the texts to Dehmel as "poems ... not complete in themselves, but blocks of marble which anyone might make his own"³⁰.

This allowed him a freedom with the texts which he would not otherwise have had, and indeed Mahler does not leave one of the texts unaltered in his settings. The changes vary from the wholesale rewriting of poems, through the repetition of words or phrases, the omission of sections of poems, to the addition of exclamation marks, sometimes at the end of virtually every line of a poem.

These alterations are found from the very earliest songs. Much of the text of "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen", for instance, is Mahler's own. He added, not only the bird calls and text repetitions, but also the two lines to be found in bb 22 - 24. Furthermore, he changes the stanza division quite extensively. In the original³¹, the stanza divisions occur at the end of every fourth line. Mahler's divisions actually make more sense in terms of the meaning of the text as has already been shown in the discussion of the structure of the song.

Among the later songs, in "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen", as has been mentioned, Mahler combines sections from two *Wunderhorn* poems, "Unbeschreibliche Freude" and "Bildchen", with additions of Mahler's own. "Bildchen" is the source for most of the material which Mahler uses - "Unbeschreibliche Freude" provides him mainly with alternatives for certain lines in "Bildchen" (some lines are combinations of different versions in the two poems) and for the line "O Liebe auf grüner Erden". Mahler's own additions are the lines "Willkommen lieber Knabe mein / So lang hast du gestanden." and "Von ferne sang die Nachtigall". This last

mentioned line is another instance of Mahler's fascination with the nightingale as a symbol both of nature and of love.

It is interesting that Mahler does not seem to have been aware that the poems very likely had been altered already by Arnim and Brentano; Dahlhaus writes that he was "following in the footsteps of Arnim and Brentano ... though he was completely unaware of it"³². For Mahler, the texts were pieces of folk poetry, the voice of Nature speaking through the simple people, to be transformed by him into songs. According to Kurt von Fischer, Mahler's attitude to his texts can be seen in terms of the use of material in a holistic compositional process, rather than in terms of traditional text-music relationships:

"Entscheidend für Mahlers Umgang mit Wunderhorntexten ist, dass dichterische Vorlagen nicht in traditionellen Sinne in Musik gesetzt und vertont werden, dass vielmehr Texte als Material mit in den gesamten Kompositionsvorgang mit einbezogen sind."³³

This hypothesis is borne out by Mahler's own description of the composition process in these songs:

"One minute it is the poem which is the inspiration, the next it is the melody, I often begin in the middle, often at the beginning, sometimes even at the end, and the rest of it gradually falls into place until it develops into a complete whole.

"Today, for instance, I had a theme in mind; I was leafing through a book, and soon came upon the lines of a charming song that would fit my rhythm. I call the piece 'Tanzreime' (he later called it 'Rheinlegendchen')."³⁴

What is of the greatest importance, perhaps, is that Mahler never stands outside his texts, so to speak. The creative process does not involve commentary on the texts, either in terms of their subject matter, or as folk texts as such. Rather, he involves himself completely in each poem, "living" that poem for the duration of the song in question. There is never any sense of superiority in his approach, or any irony or sarcasm. Where songs are ironic - notably "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes" - the irony is already present

in the original text; it is not the result of Mahler's reaction to that text and these personal meanings are generally not in any way explicit or implicit in the music, although a knowledge of Mahler would make his attraction to certain texts perhaps implicitly obvious. He does not, for instance, use a quote of his own music from another composition for the nightingale in "Lob des hohen Verstandes". If one did not know anything about Mahler's background, these songs would still make sense - the irony that gave them special significance for Mahler is already there, and the awareness thereof, and of why they were important to Mahler, increases one's understanding of the composer, rather than that of the songs.

The result of this involvement is a sense of immediacy - the texts are set as part of a vital present, not as relics from a distant past approached with nostalgia, or in attempt to preserve that past and bring what is important about it to the attention of the audience. Even where Mahler finds texts which he feels closely parallel events or experiences in his life, he does not reflect this in the music.

Mahler's approach to the poems may be seen in terms of the texts' essential meaning as folk poetry. It is important to note, however, that one is dealing here with folk song not as an object of anthropological study, but as a living entity. This is revealed not only in Mahler's statements, for instance about the songs as more nature and life than art, but also in his approach to their setting, and perhaps most notably in the fact that he does not regard the texts as fixed entities, but as living, changeable elements of composition. In recognising the fundamental mutability of these texts, Mahler is able to transform them into works which express the depths of the being of folk music as such.

7. NAIVETY AND THE *WUNDERHORN* SONGS

Given the great differences which exist between Mahler's *Wunderhorn* settings and the folksong settings of earlier composers, how is one to assess the naïvety of the songs? Perhaps the best place to start is Schillers definition: "Zum naiven wird erfordert, dass die Natur über die Kunst den Sieg davontrage". Only if Mahler's music is created when he is in a state of unity with nature (either permanent or temporary) such that nature triumphs over art in his work, can it be counted naïve.

Furthermore, the resulting music must be realistic, an imitation of nature, rather than an extension thereof through the world of his ideas and ideals. As soon as nature becomes an ideal for the artist instead of the only reality, he leaves the realm of naïvety.

But there is another element which must be borne in mind. Schiller's definition of aesthetic naïvety is a theoretical construct, and, furthermore, one developed with the world of literature in mind. If one is to apply it to music, which is an acoustic artform, one must ask whether or not, in the work under discussion, there is anything perceptible to the human ear which strikes the listener as naïve. Of course it is important that the songs, if they are to be defined as naïve, should conform to the theoretical definition of the concept, but it is just as important that they should *sound* naïve.

Consider first, however, the theoretical aspect. Mahler's settings from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* cannot be said to be direct imitations of the folksong genre*, in the same sense as can a song in which the composer literally imitates the folksong style so closely that it is impossible to tell the resulting setting from a genuine folksong. However, as has already been

*and thus of nature

discussed, while all naïve music imitates nature, not all music which is an imitation of nature is naïve.

In fact, there are distinct problems in describing the type of folksong where the composer deliberately sets out to write music which sounds like folk music because he/she considers the folksong to be an ideal, as naïve at all. It has already been shown that such idealization of the folksong cannot, in fact, be naïve. It is the result of a sentimental attitude towards nature in general, and towards folk music as an expression of nature, in particular.

Is it possible, paradoxically, that Mahler's folksong settings, despite their deviations from the traditional style, might prove closer to Schiller's definition of naïvety than direct imitations?

The first thing which must be examined is whether Mahler's attitude, his relationship with nature, in the composition of the *Wunderhorn* songs was naïve. That Mahler felt himself to be in a state of unity with nature when composing has been discussed at length. As has been shown, his perspectives in this context were influenced by many thinkers, and were expressed in language which sometimes does, at others does not seem to be that of the naïve artist. This is not necessarily a problem. According to Schiller's theories, it is quite possible for an artist to have the capacity for both naïvety and sentimentality (e.g. Goethe). What, then, was Mahler's state when working with the *Wunderhorn*?

Interesting in this regard, is the way in which Mahler's contemporaries perceived the naïve side to his aesthetic personality, and consistently linked it to the *Wunderhorn* as the natural source of expression for his naïvety. Thus the quotations from Stefan, Specht and Walter stress how natural his relationship with the anthology, commonly perceived by the end of the 19th century to be naïve, was:

"Das Wunderhorn gab ihm die Worte, die er gesucht hatte." (Stefan)

"Die Zeit ist selber nicht imstande, naiv zu sein; muss sie nicht haben, der ihn zur trotz naiv

ist, Volkslieder singt, das Wunderhorn in sich gestaltet, überschauen, ungeachtet lassen. und schliesslich mit der griesgrämigen Anerkennung, die sie für das 'Können' hat, verachten?" (Stefan)

"Als er dann... das Volksbuch Arnims und Brentanos gefunden hatte, war es ein Glücksfall für ihn ... hier sprudelte ihm entgegen, was er brauchte und er als erster hat diese bald bis zum Übermass ausgenützt, köstlich bildhaften, aus naiver Seele klingenden Liebes-, Landsknecht- und Gespenstergedichte der Musik gewonnen." (Specht)

"When... [Mahler] made the acquaintance of The Youth's Magic Horn, he must have felt as if he had discovered his own native country. In it he found everything that agitated his soul and he found it presented in the same manner in which he felt it: nature, piety, yearning, love, farewell, night, death, spectral doings, lansquenet manners, youthful spirit, nursery jokes, crisp humour - they all lived in him as well as in the poems." (Walter)

These writers all stress the naturalness of Mahler's compositional relationship with the *Wunderhorn*, and it is this naturalness one might see as lying at the heart of the songs' possible naïvety. Mahler does not set out in these songs to exactly imitate the folksong style. Rather, he writes folksongs in a way which is entirely natural to him. It has been demonstrated again and again in the previous chapter how Mahler creates a style which is instantly recognisable both as containing the essence of folk music, and at the same time as his own.

The folk elements in the settings of the *Wunderhorn* are not externals, tacked onto Mahler's late romanticism as signposts to the listener that these are the settings of folk texts. Nor does he add late romantic touches to folksong style, perhaps, for instance, to make it sound "more original". The two styles, the archaic and the new, are melded together so organically that it is difficult to even speak of *two* styles. One is dealing here with one style, a style which comes from a unity with nature, both because it is rooted in music which was believed to be natural, and because it is music which is entirely natural to Mahler.

This style would not have been possible if it had not been for Mahler's relationship with

the texts of the songs. In his awareness of the texts as "mehr Natur und Leben ... als Kunst", and his recognition of their essential mutability, Mahler was able to work with the texts as one must imagine the original creators of folk music to have done. He was able to discard convention, and to compose whatever music the texts suggested to him in much the same way as the maker of folksong or -story instinctively creates and recreates their material.

This conforms to the criteria describing the naïve creative genius whose work should be characterised by stylistic freedom, disregarding rules and conventions, and who should directly communicate his ideas in such a way that the technique of expression is not obvious, nor should it seem important. It is no accident that Specht speaks of what Mahler needed "bubbling forth" from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. There is a spontaneity about the songs which cannot be ignored. Of course the composition is technically accomplished. Mahler was a highly skilled composer, and for him to reject his ability for folksy effect would be unnatural, and therefore not naïve. But when one listens to the songs, one is first and immediately struck, not by the highly developed technique of the writing, but by the completely natural fusing of music and text.

But even if these songs are the natural expression of Mahler's relationship with *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, this does not guarantee their naïvety. One could argue that part of what gives many outstanding works of art their greatness is that they are the natural expression of their creators' genius. This is, perhaps, precisely why Schiller links the concept of genius to that of naïvety. But even Schiller, in referring to the sentimental genius, would seem to imply that not every genius is always naïve, despite the fact that this is a contradiction of his previous statement, "[n]aiv muss jedes wahre Genie sein, oder es ist keines". An artist is only naïve if his/her creations are realistic, an imitation of nature. As soon as the artist leaves the realm of realism - of nature - for that of the imagination - of fantasy and ideas - his/her work stops being naïve, and, at best, may fall into the category of the sentimental.

So, are the *Wunderhorn* songs realistic? Does Mahler, in abandoning the literal imitation of folk style, cut himself off from the world of nature and enter a world of his own imagining?

7.1 Realism in the *Wunderhorn* songs

The one aspect of the style of the songs on which every writer consulted agrees is the songs' realism.

"Mahler's approach [in the *Wunderhorn* settings] was stubbornly independent of any romantic indulgence. He eschewed all bogus medievalism and sophisticated, self-conscious 'folksiness', and accepted the texts at face value. Hence the songs' reality, rather than their romanticism."¹

In *Gustav Mahler The Wunderhorn Years*, Donald Mitchell stresses the realism of the *Wunderhorn* songs. He further writes:

"... while many of the songs' forms and much of their imagery arouse familiar expectations in the listener, Mahler treats his materials ... in so realistic a manner that they acquire a quite fresh level of significance. We are led, all unsuspecting and unprepared, to expect a conventional romanticism, but our expectations are disappointed - contradicted indeed, - and we experience instead a sometimes traumatic *realism*."²

Karbusicky also identifies the realism of the *Wunderhorn* songs as being an essential part of Mahler's adoption of the folklike tone:

"Mahlers 'Volkston' - wenn man es so nennen will - ist weder national-affirmativ wie bei Dvořák noch folkloristisch wie bei Bartók und, stellenweise bei Janáček. Mahler idealisiert nicht im Sinne der puristischen Volkskunde der 19. Jahrhunderts, sondern schockiert gerade durch seine analytische Sachlichkeit, mit der er allerlei Umweltklänge ohne ästhetische Vorsenzur verwertet. Volksklänge werden somit inhaltlich gesehen: nicht als Zeichen des verschönend gesehenen Milieus, sondern als Stimme seines rohen Alltags, als Einblick in das soziale Verhalten"³

In placing the songs in a specific social concept, Karbusicky is probably influenced by Adorno, who sees the songs as an example of social realism:

"[Mahler] pleads musically on behalf of peasant cunning against the powers-that-be; on behalf of those who go AWOL at the prospect of marriage; on behalf of outsiders, jailbirds, starving children, losers, lost causes. Mahler is the only composer to whom the term 'social realism' could be applied, if it was not itself devalued by power."⁴

It will immediately become apparent that while all the writers quoted may speak of the songs' realism, they are not all using the term in the same way. Mitchell identifies two closely related aspects of realism in the songs. Firstly, Mahler takes the texts at face value, rather than viewing them from romantic point of view, idealising them. "Mahler did not adopt a fairy-tale, 'once upon a time' approach, but re-lived the texts as if they were of the present moment."⁵ Secondly this attitude has important implications in terms of style: Mahler's style is not in the least romantic, it is freshly, even traumatically, realistic. Mitchell thus speaks of the beauty of the "dramatic truth" of the songs, as opposed to "the beauty of romantic make believe"⁶.

Karbusicky also points out that the songs are in no way idealist in their approach to the texts. He, however, goes one step further than Mitchell - who simply identifies the songs' realism - by attempting to give a reason for Mahler's realist approach. The songs, according to Karbusicky, are a social commentary, a presentation of life in the raw, rather than an idealised picture of a lost world.

Adorno goes even further. Not only are the songs realistic descriptions of the life of society's underclass, they are also a plea for that class, and hence fall into the category of social realism. According to Dahlhaus, Adorno's criteria for social realism are closely connected to the "seditious element" of this music, both in its subject matter, and in its use of materials not generally associated with the field of art music⁷. This is in keeping with Dahlhaus' approach to

music in the nineteenth century already discussed. Although realism was a commonplace in the other arts by the time of Mahler, the mainstream of music remained doggedly romantic, and to write realist music was thus an act of rebellion.

The question now arises as to how, and, in fact, whether, one can reconcile the approach of Karbusicky and Adorno with what has already been discussed about Mahler's motivations in the setting of the *Wunderhorn* texts. One is faced with what is the possibility of a conflict between Mahler's intentions in the *Wunderhorn* songs on the one hand, and the interpretation of the meaning of those songs by later theorists (and particularly theorists like Adorno who are approaching the music from a very specific ideological standpoint) on the other.

Admittedly there is nothing in the records of Mahler's philosophy which precludes his intending the *Wunderhorn* songs to contain an element of social commentary as expounded by Karbusicky and Adorno. Mahler is known to have had a strong social conscience as manifested in his socialist intentions (even if these were of a highly non-doctrinaire, anti-materialist and idiosyncratic nature) and in his behaviour as revealed in anecdotes like that recounted by his sister, Justine. There is no proof that his interest in the music of the people was not connected with this, but nowhere does he state that this is the case. His understanding of the texts as natural, as well as his perceptions of his own music as such, are, however, as has been shown, well testified to, and it is thus far easier to explore his motivations in this regard.

It should be noted that each of the interpretations of the writers quoted is subjective, dependant largely on the opinions of the person expressing it. Mitchell, essentially an historian, sees realism in terms of the songs lack of romanticism. He notes, for instance that Mahler never flinches from the unhappy implications of some of the texts, that he never changes a song to effect a happy ending: "It is the beauty of the moment of truth that we meet in these songs, not the beauty of romantic makebelieve."⁸ He approaches the question in terms of music and the

relationship of music and text (though why tragedy in particular should be anti-romantic is not made clear*).

Karbusicky, writing from a sociological viewpoint, interprets the songs' reality as a form of social commentary, and examines them in terms of their place in their social environment. Adorno, too, explores the songs from a socially oriented point of view, but one influenced by his own ideological standpoint. He sees the songs as a means of giving voice to the oppressed people in whose culture they have their origin. It should be added that all these theories have their merits. They should not be seen as necessarily mutually exclusive, but rather as supplementary to one another with respect to increasing the understanding of the works in question.

It seems important, however, to try to identify in detail what exactly about Mahler's style can be defined as realistic. Otherwise stated: what elements in the music make it sound realistic? While the writers quoted above may refer to musical elements, they do not actually isolate them. It is thus interesting to attempt to find out exactly what these elements are, and how they function. And by finding out in what way Mahler's music is realistic, one may take the first step to assessing its naïvety.

The complexity of the issues surrounding what constitutes musical realism and the imitation of nature have already been discussed. It has been noted that it is dangerous to attempt to link realism in music with simplicity. A realistic composition is not necessarily simple or childlike in form or content. Rather, it presents nature as the only, all-encompassing reality, drawing the listener into the natural world, so that he/she shares the composer's sense of unity with that world, if only for the duration of the piece.

*Mitchell is probably referring here to the Victorian habit of altering fairytales to remove all the nasty bits and make sure that each has the happiest and most moral possible ending for all concerned.

Nor is there only one way of defining what the imitation of nature in music actually comprises. It is perhaps, at this point, worth examining once again Dahlhaus' six ways in which he considers music able to imitate nature:

1. the simple imitation of non-musical sounds;
2. the imitation of spatial movement (up-down etc.);
3. the musical imitation of speech intonations;
4. the depiction of emotion or "inner nature";
5. the use of abstract symbolism
6. the idea of music as an image of nature or the structure of the world as a whole.

These criteria do not all equally conform with the concept of naïvety, confirming that, while music which is naïve always imitates nature, not all music which imitates nature is naïve*. The most obvious anomaly is found in 5.: abstract symbolism is surely a product of the human imagination, and therefore cannot be naïve under any circumstances. 6. is also potentially problematic. The naïve composer's music *must* be an image of nature; it cannot be anything other than an imitation of reality. But the composer who consciously sets out to create an image of nature or the structure of the world as an ideal, is no longer composing in a naïve manner. Once again, he/she has left the real world for that of ideas or ideals, and has entered the realm of the sentimental artist.

These criteria are, perhaps, not the only possible model for realism or the imitation of nature in music, but they are a convenient set, which covers a wide range of eventualities. It is

*It might be seen as presumptuous to use Dahlhaus' criteria for musical realism as the basis for a discussion of naïvety, as he denies that musical naïvety is possible. However, his opinion is open to criticism, as has been shown in Chapter 4, and this list is encompassing enough to be extremely useful, at the very least as a starting point. Anyway, Dahlhaus does not deny that music can be realist, and it does not seem to heinous to use his theories in this context to support ideas which rest on the existence of musical realism.

thus interesting to see what happens if one applies Dahlhaus' criteria to the *Wunderhorn* songs, although one finds that not all are equally appropriate. This is, perhaps, best illustrated by taking each criterion, and testing it in terms of the songs themselves.

7.1.1. The simple imitation of non-musical sounds

This rudimentary and obvious aspect of musical realism is found throughout the songs. It is most apparent in those songs which contain literal imitation of natural sounds, for instance the cuckoo calls in "Ablösung im Sommer", "Um schlimme Kinder artig zu machen" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes", which, of course, also includes the braying of the donkey, painfully brash in its literalism! The delicate melodies connected with the nightingale in "Ablösung im Sommer", "Ich ging mit Lust" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes" are, perhaps, less literal imitations of the genuine birdcall, but nevertheless may also be seen as falling into this category.

There is, however, another group of factors which could be included in this category, although they are not exactly non-musical sounds: those elements taken from the world of folk and military music. While these Ländler melodies and other elements taken from folksong and dance, march rhythms and tunes, fanfares, drumrolls etc. are not strictly speaking non-musical, they are taken from an entirely different context from that of the artsong (and the *Wunderhorn* songs are, after all, definitely written as artsongs and intended for concert hall performance), and melded into Mahler's style in much the same way as are birdcalls and donkey brays, and, because of the way in which they pervade every song, to even more dominant effect.

For Mahler, as for the romantics, folk music* forms part of the natural world, not that of

* and military music may be included in this classification in the context of these songs, both because it is used to set folk texts, and because the soldiers in the songs are definitely proletarian

art and artifice. Thus, when he includes elements from the world of the folk, whether they are folklike melodies, or the rhythms and metres of the dance or the military march, this can be seen as the realistic imitation of natural sound. And the organic way in which Mahler blends folk elements and his own style both speaks for his unity with the world of nature in the composition of the songs - one never has the sense that he is deliberately adding a folksy tune for effect - and simultaneously ensures that the listener is drawn into that world, experiencing its humour, joy and sorrow as personally as Mahler himself seems to do.

Nor is the realistic imitation of nature in these Ländler and marches limited to melody, rhythm and metre. As has already been noted, Mahler uses his orchestra to imitate two different instrumental ensembles connected with the world of folk music, or the music of the people, the military band and the village orchestra or dance band. He thus evokes smaller ensembles than the symphony orchestra, and, what is more, ensembles which would not normally be heard in the concert hall, but rather on the village green, or marching on parade from the barracks where the local regiment is housed.

Even Mahler's harmonic style can be linked to the simple imitation of nature. As has been discussed at some length, Mahler's harmonic innovation in the *Wunderhorn* lies in the way in which he creates a sense of primitivism without limiting himself to the simplest possible realization of the melody. The effect is described by Specht as "immensely harsh [and] archaically powerful ... the opposite of artistic".

This is achieved primarily through the use of three components traditionally associated with the archaic: parallel octaves, fourths and fifths, open fourths and fifths, and pedal point. These three elements combine with Mahler's use of dissonance, which in the context of other

in origin

harmonic elements, the melodies which they harmonise, the folk texts etc., plays a role in the creation of an archaic sound world which seems to belong more to nature and folk music than to the concert hall, even though it may differ strongly from the actual harmonic style of traditional folksong.

In all, then, it seems that every element of what one might define as the *Wunderhorn* style, its melodies, harmonies and rhythms, the cuckoos, nightingales and asses which sing or bray through several songs, even that most unfolklke element, its orchestration, derive, at least in part*, from nature, and the direct imitation of the natural world. This simplest form of musical realism permeates the songs, and is, perhaps, the most important single aspect in their creation.

7.1.2. The imitation of spatial movement (up-down etc.)

This criterion is not as obvious in the *Wunderhorn* songs as is the first, but careful examination reveals that there are songs in which it does play a role. Perhaps the most noticeable of these is "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt", in which the sinuous semiquaver patterns in the clarinets, strings, (particularly the violins, but from bb 95 - 133 the violas and celli as well), and, on occasion the flutes and oboes, mimic the movement of the shoals of fish, swimming to their sermon, never remaining still throughout (as fish do not, by virtue of their element if nothing else) and then swimming away again. The effect is so clear as to be almost visual. A similar effect has already been mentioned in the context of the "fishy" passage of "Rheinlegendchen" (bb 71 - 76).

*One might argue that those elements of the harmonisation (especially the chromaticism) and orchestration which could not really be described as deriving from natural sources, do in fact, do so, because they are natural to Mahler himself.

In terms of the kind of simple high - low, up - down analogy referred to by Dahlhaus, however, there are few examples, and these are not terribly obvious. One might quote the opening melody of "Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht", in which the words "Dort oben am Berg" are set to a rising tune, which reaches its peak on the word "hohen" (b 15), or the rising pattern on the words "hohen" and "Bergen" in "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm" (bb 15 and 16). In the latter song, however, this is contradicted in the girl's next stanza, where the same words ("auf hohen, wilden Bergen") are set to a *falling* pattern (bb 41 - 45).

Similar problems arise if one attempts to link certain pitch elements in "Rheinlegendchen" with spatial movement. It is tempting to see the octave jump on "so werf" (bb 43 - 44) with the throwing motion described in the words, or to hear the relatively low pitch of bb 70 - 74 as being connected with the depth of the ring in the water of the sea. But, on the other hand, the most dominant movement on the word "hinunter" (bb 54 -55) is a large leap upward, even if the words "tief hinein" (bb 56 - 57) are set to a falling melody.

In fact, in all these examples, it is very difficult to determine whether the linking of pitch and altitude is deliberate, or merely coincidental, and an attempt to make a definite statement seems difficult if not dangerous. It seems simpler to link these elements to Mahler's use of folklike elements, as well as the narrative techniques discussed at length in Chapter 6.

7.1.3. The musical imitation of speech intonations

Once again, this type of musical realism seems to be poorly represented in the *Wunderhorn* songs, if at all. The songs are not declamatory in style, nor do they seem much influenced by the experiments made by Moussorgsky in this regard. In fact, one might almost say that the fairly consistent use of the type of folklike melodies which Mahler employs, might

preclude this criterion.

However, there is one aspect of the *Wunderhorn* style identified in Chapter 6 and mentioned above, which could be said to tie in, if indirectly, to the following of speech intonations in music: Mahler's creation of narrative effect in the songs. It has been shown in some detail with reference to "Rheinlegendchen" in particular, how Mahler embodies the techniques of a gifted storyteller in his music, and this is true to some extent in all the songs. Part of their great power lies in their ability to communicate their simple stories almost *visually* to the listener, using many of the same effects used by the narrator of a story: changes of tone, pitch and voice, slowing and speeding up the tempo, dramatic pauses, dynamic changes and so on, are built into the structure of the songs, through melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, dynamic and tempo shifts both between and within stanzas.

While this technique is clearly not the same as the imitation of speech intonations in music, one could argue that it falls into the same category. One might almost say that the subtle and exact mirroring of speech in music works on a microcosmic level, permeating every detail of the relevant piece of music, where the narrative technique used by Mahler works on the macrocosmic level, creating its effect in bold strokes. Where the two are clearly linked, however, is that, in the case of both, one has the sense of hearing the composer telling something, and, in doing so, drawing us into his/her world.

In the *Wunderhorn* songs, it is as if the stories of the songs - whether the simplest, humorous tale of a shepherdess trying desperately and unsuccessfully to attract a boy, the dramatic horror story of a dead drummer boy returning as promised to his lover, or the stark tragedy of a starving child - tell themselves through Mahler. He becomes the latest in a long line in the oral tradition, where known material is transformed into something personal by the narrator while retaining all its character and power. Folksongs and -tales remain original through their

singers and tellers. And for the truly gifted among these, for the duration of the telling, the reality of their material is so strong that it is the only existing world.

It is, of course, very difficult to prove that this was actually the case with Mahler while he was composing the *Wunderhorn* songs, but there is some evidence which makes this seem less than unlikely. He refers to being "seized" by nature while composing, which implies a process where inspiration and his material take control of the creative process. In the case of these songs in particular, is this not what Stefan means when he speaks of Mahler's giving form to the *Wunderhorn* within himself?

7.1.4. The depiction of emotion or "inner nature"

This is another criterion which seems not really to play a great role in the *Wunderhorn* songs. Of course the music of the songs reflects the emotions implied in the text - at some level almost any vocal music will do this. In the case of these songs, the means used to communicate emotion are quite simple. Happy songs are generally in major keys, sad/dramatic songs in minor. Tender moments are set to lyrical music (the boy's and girl's themes in "Wo die schöne Trompeten blasen", for instance, or the girl's music in "Der Schildwache Nachtlied"), an infant's cries of desperate starvation are set to huge, dramatically painful leaps.

But what is described above is the depiction of emotion in music functioning at what is, perhaps, its simplest level and, as such, this is only a minute part of what Dahlhaus means by this criterion. In the context of romantic music, especially, Dahlhaus writes that the concept had taken on a mystical aspect with the idea that music can comprehend emotions which only it can depict and can thus reveal a reality which otherwise would remain hidden, and this is precisely what the *Wunderhorn* songs do not really do. The emotions revealed in them are all quite explicit in the

texts*. Their emotional realism lies in the depiction of textually expressed feelings in a way which is immediate and unambiguous, rather than in the revelation of something mystical and hidden.

7.1.5. The use of abstract symbolism

The research for this thesis has revealed only one example of this criterion in the *Wunderhorn* songs - the use of the tamtam as a death symbol in "Der Tambourg'sell" and "Das irdische Leben", referred to in Chapter 6. As was mentioned, however, the general application of this symbol is confused by the single tamtam stroke at the end of the "Fischpredigt", where its use is more ambiguous.

7.1.6. The idea of music as an image of nature or the structure of the world as a whole

Mahler certainly seems to have adhered to this idea in his symphonies, which he regarded as microcosms of the universe. As such they represent every facet of nature, and of his life and ideas. The application of this criterion to the *Wunderhorn* songs, however, is more problematic. Where a symphony has the dimensions to encompass a representation of the world, its structure, nature, and ideas, each of these songs is, in comparison, a tiny unit telling a single, simple story. If the symphonies can be said to represent the world, each song could be seen, in comparison, as a little peephole, giving a very limited view of one aspect of that world.

*This is the case even in "Das irdische Leben", possibly the only song which contains a meaning special to Mahler which is not at the same time immediately obvious by virtue of explicit irony or criticism in the original text, as is the case in both "Lob des hohen Verstandes" and "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt".

This is supported by the way in which Mahler incorporates the songs, or elements thereof into the symphonies. Mahler's first four symphonies are known as the *Wunderhorn* Symphonies because each has a strong and direct connection with the anthology. Briefly, in the First Symphony the first and third movements are based on songs from the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (whose close links to the anthology have been shown) i.e. "Ging heut morgen übers Feld" and "Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz", while the scherzo is based on the folksong "Bruder Jakob", which, although not in the *Wunderhorn* anthology, originates from its world.

The scherzi of both the Second and Third Symphonies are also based on *Wunderhorn* songs - "Der Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" and "Ablösung im Sommer" respectively - and each of the Second, Third and Fourth Symphonies contains a setting of a song from the collection - "Urlicht", "Es sungen drei Engel" and "Das himmlische Leben".

Despite the metaphysical nature of much of the music of these symphonies, despite their debt to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and the intellectual, idealist and spiritual character which permeates those movements which have no connection to the *Wunderhorn* (even in the form of references to its world through birdcalls and "non-orchestral", folklike instrumentation) what might be called the *Wunderhorn* movements remain untouched. The transition from song to symphony does not seem to affect the basic character of the music.

It is possible, in the context of the symphonies, to view the inclusion of the songs and other aspects which might be called *Wunderhorn* elements in a rather more complex manner than this statement would seem to suggest. Dahlhaus writes:

"It is entirely in accordance with the thesis that music can assimilate the natural world only in the form of 'second nature' that the simple appears natural because of its contrast to the symphonic style. What gives the 'folklike tone' the character of reality is the act of quotation."⁹

He further notes that the reflective slant necessary for the incorporation process to take place, as well as the satiric/ elegiac nature of the quotations from the *Wunderhorn* songs correspond to Schiller's definition of the sentimental¹⁰. Thus, in the context of the symphonies, the realism of the world of the *Wunderhorn* takes on a new meaning as an act of musical rebellion, even, according to Hans Werner Henze, of an intellectual examination of the essence of the meaning and existence of music itself:

"For the first time in music history, music is interrogating itself about the reasons for its existence and about its nature ... Its provocation lies in its love of truth and in its consequent lack of extenuation. Like all great music, it too, comes from the singing and dancing of the people; but that in no sense makes it simple, no, it makes everything real, and really different."¹¹

Another related viewpoint (at least in the context of the concept of second nature) is that of Danuser, who sees Mahler's use of apparently extra-musical elements as being in the 19th century tradition of transforming the natural, extra-musical into the natural, inherently musical through a process of stylisation which Mahler himself described in a statement to Bauer-Lechner¹². He (Danuser) continues:

"Man griffe zu kurz, läse man aus dieser Äusserung, Mahler habe in der Stilisieren von Naturlauten einen künstlerischen Selbstzweck erblickt. Vielmehr lässt sich zeigen, dass über die bedeutung der Naturlaute in seiner Musik in letzter Instanz die Funktion entscheidet, die sie innerhalb des Werkganzen erfüllen."¹³.

Even in terms of the symphonies, these arguments, though convincing, are only one way of approaching the problem. One could just as well conclude, as has already been suggested, that Mahler is capable of both realistic and direct imitation of nature and of reflection, and that these two aspects of his creative personality are to be found, side by side, as it were, in the symphonies.

It is in the context of the symphonies that Mahler's statement, "Meine Musik ist immer und überall Naturlaut" can be understood in its fullest significance. As has been shown, for

Mahler everything, and more especially everything in his music, had its roots in nature. If one were to regard the universe as comprising both the physical and the metaphysical, then the *Wunderhorn* can be seen as the manifestation of the physical world in the musical universe of these symphonies.

Nature in its metaphysical aspect is apparent in what one might call the abstract movements, those without any aspect of representational music, folklike quality, or imitation of natural sounds. It is in these movements that one senses what Mahler called "nature's mystic power", "its infinite mystery, its divinity"; it is here that nature "erzählt so tief Geheimnis, dass man vielleicht im Traume ahnt". These movements reveal, too, the full meaning of Dahlhaus' fifth criterion in the romantic context: they truly express a reality which cannot be verbalized.

In comparison, those elements taken from the *Wunderhorn* and its attendant world of birdcalls, folk and folklike tunes, the sound of the village orchestra, could be seen as standing in direct contrast to this dream world of almost intangible ideas. They transport the listener from the world of ideas, to a world of reality and immediacy, where everything is what it seems. They form a part of the natural universe, and, as such are no less important than the mysticism and intellectualism discussed above. They are what they are - a part of life - and it is as such that Mahler presents them to his listeners.

But in the context of the *Wunderhorn* songs, the theories of Dahlhaus, Danuser and Henze become extremely problematic. Here, after all, one is not dealing with something that sounds realistic because it stands in contrast to the symphonic style. The songs from the *Lieder und Gesänge* and *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* are not heard in any context other than their own. The listener does not experience them as part of a wider musical universe, incorporating all of nature - the real and the mystical - and mirroring the structure of the world. Rather, he/she experiences them as the only reality. They are a self-contained representation of the simple natural world, as

manifested in nature itself, and in the life and music of those people closest to nature.

One might even quote Danuser in his statement that the meaning of natural sounds in Mahler's music is defined by their function in the context in the whole work. Thus when the context is that, not of a symphony representing the whole of universal nature, but of small, realistic pieces of natural sound with no context other than their own existence, their meaning is bound to be different. Why, in fact, should they have *any* meaning, other than that of pure imitation of nature?

7.2. The songs' naïvety

The discussion of realism in the *Wunderhorn* songs should have started, at least, to reveal the ways in which the songs may be considered naïve. The discussion of each criterion of musical realism as defined by Dahlhaus has begun to reveal how the way in which Mahler imitates nature in these songs complies with Schiller's definition of naïvety as an aesthetic factor*. The examination of the application of the criteria to the songs again, with reference specifically to the songs' naïvety, helps to clarify, not only the theoretical naïvety of the songs, but also, why they sound naïve. For if they did not, there would be no reason to discuss the possible application of Schiller's concepts to Mahler's music at all.

7.2.1. The simple imitation of non-musical sounds

This has already been described as the single dominating element of the *Wunderhorn*

*Ironically perhaps, as Dahlhaus himself believes that musical naïvety is impossible!

style, and it is also that form of musical realism which is the simplest to link to naïvety. Naïve art must be realist, the naïve artist being limited to imitating nature, rather than extending it through the world of his/her ideas and ideals. Now, the most obvious expression of the natural in music is the literal imitation of nature through natural sound, and, as has been shown, Mahler's settings from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* abound in such imitation.

First one finds the literal imitation of genuine natural sounds, from birdcalls to the donkey's braying in "Lob des hohen Verstandes". If the imitation of non-musical sound is the simplest form of realism, then this is the simplest form of the imitation of non-musical sound. It is combined, moreover, with the use of elements from the world of the folk - the texts themselves, the folklike melodies, dance rhythms, military marches, the references to strophic structure in many cases, the orchestration, which at times turns the great symphony orchestra of the late 19th century into a military or village dance band. These elements all belong to the natural world, rather than that of art music. Even Mahler's harmonic style, for all its originality, speaks of archaism, of the primitive sphere of nature, not of the concert hall.

But is this imitation of nature, simple as it may be, enough to make Mahler's music naïve? As has been shown, the mere presence of realism in music does not ensure its naïvety. Schiller himself lays out a special set of criteria which has to exist before one can speak of true naïve art. In music, as in any other art, the composer must imitate nature because he/she is in a state of unity with nature, whether permanent or temporary - the music must be a manifestation of that state and, ideally, this should communicate itself to the receptive listener.

So is this the case with Mahler, at least in the context of the *Wunderhorn*? The question defining of the composer's mental state during the creative act is problematic. Nobody but Mahler himself could really know what he experienced as he composed, and one must allow that, in describing his sensations and beliefs in this regard, it would be well nigh impossible for any

composer to remain objective.

Nonetheless, Mahler's descriptions of his experience of the creative process are - and can only be - all the evidence available in this regard, and, as such, they must be taken seriously. Furthermore, there is absolutely no evidence that Mahler was not sincere in his explanations. When he speaks of plunging into the depths of nature, or being seized by her, one must accept his integrity. This is, if anything reinforced by Mahler's evident identification with Beethoven, in his composition of the Sixth Symphony: "one needs to know how naïvely Beethoven meant this picture: to know what he felt when he breathed the fresh air, saw the sun and the open sky, and was surrounded by the brooks and meadows."

One could, of course, argue at this point that the fact that Mahler was able to recognise naïvety in others, or as a phenomenon in itself, precluded him from being naïve, but this would ignore the fact that naïvety is not necessarily an absolute or constant element of personality (as Schiller himself emphasises). It seems equally possible to argue that Mahler was capable of understanding the concept "naïvety" on an intellectual level, and at the same of experiencing what he recognises in others in his own compositional work, when he leaves the purely intellectual world for the more instinctive world of creation. In fact, one might argue that he is able to recognise naïvety in others because, at an instinctive level, he knows what it feels like himself.

In this regard it is interesting that Mahler does not seem to have ever described his sensations as a composer as naïve. This could be because they are not, but could also be because he simply did not see his work in terms of definitions, an argument that is supported by the fact that he does not seem to define his work as anything*, preferring to describe his sensations, rather

*Mahler does, of course, define the sublime [schön-erhabenen], the sentimental, the tragic and the humorously ironic styles in art, but this is in a general explanation of the roots of music,

than to limit them with abstract distinctions.

What does seem clear is that when Mahler describes Beethoven's feelings when surrounded by nature and, implicitly, the relation of those feelings to his (Beethoven's) composition, he (Mahler) is recognising those feelings as close to his own, and identifying with them. (One might even accuse Mahler of projecting his own feelings onto Beethoven - he could not really have known how the latter felt, any more than writers now can know how Mahler himself really experienced the creative act!) In this context, especially with regard to Mahler's other statements about his relationship with nature while composing referred to above, and his remark "Meine Musik ist immer und überall Naturlaut", a strong case must be able to be made for Mahler's creative naïvety, at least in terms of the *Wunderhorn* songs.

There is, however, one very important factor which may play a part in resolving the argument of Mahler's naïvety in the context of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*: for a composer to produce music that is truly naïve (as Mahler himself puts it) that composer must feel at one with nature, and this feeling should be *audible* in some way to the audience. If the listener cannot hear and sense anything in the music which makes him/her say, "That *sounds* naïve," then all the arguments about Mahler's creative attitudes come to naught. In fact, one might argue that this audible naïvety is the most important type - it is the initial reaction to the music that should lead one to investigate the composer's personality. Reading all Mahler's discussions of his work only becomes meaningful in the context of that music.

Do the *Wunderhorn* songs sound naïve? Specht and Stefan both thought so, and other writers imply it: Walter, for instance when he describes Mahler's discovery of the anthology as the finding of his native land and when he writes of "Das irdische Leben" that "in a naïve and

rather than a description of his own style.

vigorous manner, it expresses a deep world-sorrow, similar to that which Mahler himself felt throughout his life"¹⁴, or La Grange who states that "its colourful naïvety gave him [Mahler] the idea of a completely new kind of music, never before written" seem to imply that they heard something in the songs closer to the world of the anthology, than to the accepted style of the artsong. More topically, this thesis would not have been written had not an aspect of the music been perceived which seemed to need explanation. While it is difficult to say absolutely that Mahler's *Wunderhorn* settings are naïve, no argument, there does seem to be something about them which leads at least some people to say, "These songs sound naïve".

Surely the imitation of natural sounds must play a part in this? The sound world of the *Wunderhorn*, as has been stated over and over again, takes the listener out of the concert hall and into the realm of nature. One hears in the music the sounds of the countryside and simple, country people. What is, perhaps, more important, is that one experiences these, not as externals, as stylistic tricks or clever games, but as a natural reality. One does not think, "Oh, how charming. Here is a song about a cuckoo, and Mahler has filled it with cuckoo calls to remind us of its subject matter!" The cuckoo calls are such an integral part of the song (be it "Ablösung im Sommer" or "Lob des hohen Verstandes") that they rather form a natural element of a sound world that involves its listener completely.

This reference to birdcalls as an "element" is important. Part of the reason why Mahler's style functions in the organic way it does, is because all the different factors discussed above, the imitations of natural sound, the folk and military melodies, rhythms, metres etc, the harmonies Mahler creates, the semi- or pseudo-strophic structure of many of the songs, the orchestration, and, of course, the texts themselves, all function together, to create a unified whole.

And the listener experiences this whole as a realistic imitation of nature. One hears the sounds of birds in the meadows and the woods, of a donkey braying idiotically, of simple people

dancing and singing in happiness or sorrow, telling ghost stories, revealing through text and music the joys of a life in love in the countryside, of the frustrations of such love unrequited, of the hardships of a life of difficulty which ends in death through poverty, of conscription into wars which mean little to their simple foot soldier except that they take him far from his home, from the land and people that he loves.

In every song one hears one or more of these aspects not only in the words of the text, but in the music which Mahler creates to communicate that text. One hears the opening of "Rheinlegendchen" and the folklike melody, the Ländler rhythm and metre, and the delicate, "village green" orchestration immediately transport one into the environment of the happy, almost nonsensical song with its simple story before one has heard the first word.

At the other end of the spectrum, "Revelge" takes one immediately to the world of the barracks and the battlefield. It effectively brings a military band onto stage, marching the listener with the drummer to his death, and then distorting the sound world so that he/she sees the horror as the boy rises up, taking the army with him to fulfil his duty in the war and his debt to his sweetheart. And one hears the same military band in more muted mood, taking another drummer boy to the scaffold in both "Der Tambour'sell" and "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz".

In each of these military songs, this transportation of the listener is effected through a variety of means: through the orchestration to be sure, with its recreation of the garrison band, with its wind, brass and percussion, its fanfares and drumrolls*, and, just as much, through the martial melodies and rhythms, be they the quick, dramatic march into battle, or the slow, sombre march to the scaffold. This is equally the case in the Ländler and other songs which belong to the village or the countryside rather than to the barracks, where the recreation of the spirit of a folk

*In the case of the songs with piano accompaniment this is often implied, as is notable the case in "Zu Strassburg auf der Schanz".

ensemble combines with folklike melodies, dance rhythms and metres in some cases, and Mahler's "butterfly coloured" sound world of a summer day in the meadows.

What is, however, perhaps of overriding importance in terms of hearing the songs' naïvety as well as their realism, is not just this recreation of the natural world, be it the birds singing in the forest, the peasants dancing in the open air, or the foot soldiers marching through the village streets, but the complete integrity of this recreation, perhaps best described as its authenticity. One hears, not only the realistic imitation of natural sound, but also Mahler's belief in his material.

It is very difficult to pinpoint stylistic elements which bring this about - perhaps it lies partly in experiencing what Mahler felt (as he himself says of Beethoven) when composing the songs - but it is this aspect above all which makes one believe in what Mahler is doing. Mahler experiences the world of the *Wunderhorn* in all its aspects as real, and he communicates this reality to the listener. An important part of the means by which he does this, involves the imitation of what might be termed non-musical sounds, but it is the integrity of the way in which Mahler uses those sounds which makes them naïve.

One senses or feels that there is more to this realistic imitation of nature than a two dimensional show, a simulation which is little better than a sham because the composer who is doing the imitation is doing so for effect or to prove a point rather than because he/she believes in the truth of the material. This is not the musical equivalent of artificial "Bauernmalerei".

Nor yet does it seem to be music which wants to say something about folk music, the people who make it and nature in general. This gives the sense of being the real thing. One cannot truly know what was in Mahler's head when he wrote the *Wunderhorn* songs, imitating in them the sounds of the village, the garrison and the countryside. These might be the sounds of his childhood environment, but they do not communicate any feeling of nostalgia for a lost

innocence. They might be sounds which he associates with his beloved nature, but they do not seem to take the form of a reverential attempt to show others the way back to nature. Rather they seem to be expressions of the true reality*.

That these recognisable imitations of real, "non-musical" sounds should be combined with other stylistic elements should not be surprising, or detract from the songs' naïvety. Assuming that Mahler, like the naïve poet is part of nature, there will be no distinction or contradiction between instinct and reason, between spontaneous and learned ability in his work. It is always governed by the criteria of nature itself, by authenticity and integrity, and it is the sense of that integrity which enables the resulting music to carry the listener into this world, allowing him/her a glimpse at the very least of its naïvety.

7.2.2. The imitation of spatial movement

As has been discussed, the clearest, and perhaps the only unequivocally present examples of the imitation of spatial movement in the *Wunderhorn* songs, are in the accompaniment to "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt", and in the brief "fishy" passage in "Rheinlegendchen". In both these passages the sinuous slithering of the fish is clearly and realistically imitated. That this imitation of movement might be described as naïve should be clear. There is nothing in it which is inconsistent with the simple imitation of nature and reality. In the end, it is not very far removed from the simple imitation of "non-musical" sounds discussed above, and one senses, similarly, the integrity of this imitation.

*One is reminded of Schiller's distinction between real ("wirkliche") nature which is commonplace, and true ("wahre") nature, the subject of naïve poetry, characterised by "eine innere Notwendigkeit des Daseins".

7.2.3. The musical imitation of speech intonations

As has been discussed, this aspect is not really applicable to the *Wunderhorn* in the sense in which Dahlhaus uses it. It can, however, be linked to Mahler's creation of narrative effect in the songs, otherwise stated, to the way in which Mahler embodies the techniques of a gifted storyteller in his music. And this, in turn, *can* be linked closely to musical naïvety, both in the theoretical and acoustic contexts.

The word "embodiment" or "embody" has been used over and over again in the discussion of Mahler's narrative technique in the composition of the songs, and it lies at the heart of the naïvety of this element at all levels. At the foundation thereof lies the art of the storyteller (or singer/storyteller in the case of ballads, sagas etc) in the oral tradition. At the root of the skill and talent of true artists of this type, lies an absolute integrity and belief on their material. For the duration of their performance, the tales that they tell become the only reality, and it is this element which both creates the enormous effect of the telling, and ensures that the tales themselves remain living, growing entities. Each narrator brings to them something of him- or herself, adapting the material in a way which is entirely natural, and thus maintaining its reality.

This is surely realism and naïvety in the truest Schillerian sense? The old stories (and songs) are both more part of nature than art, and furthermore, many have their roots in true events, or at least in events which the original narrators believed to be true. This truth and reality is maintained in subsequent tellings in a way which is not possible if these tales are written down and preserved in one form only. Moreover, there is no distance between the teller, the told, and the "told-to" (so to speak). The narrator does not comment on his/her material, but lives it, becomes one with it. In doing so, he/she extends the reality of that material to the audience, who are also able to become so involved in what they hear, that for them too it becomes reality.

This is precisely the effect of the *Wunderhorn* songs. One has the feeling that, for the duration of the song, Mahler, the composer/narrator, becomes so involved with his material that it is, for him, the only reality. It is interesting to note that Stefan, for instance, speaks of the compositional process in these songs not in terms simply of text setting, but of Mahler giving form to the *Wunderhorn* within him. Surely part of the way in which this process seems to manifest itself, is in the narrative techniques which Mahler uses?

Furthermore, Danuser feels that it is the existence of the *Wunderhorn* as natural poetry which allows Mahler to get away from what he (Danuser) describes as the Wolf method, in which the poem is reduced to textual material for musical composition¹⁵. This statement can be linked to the way in which Mahler lives each text in the music, which in turn can surely again be linked to his narrative techniques.

These techniques are also most important, because they are audible to the listener. This is not meant to imply that one is constantly and explicitly aware of the methods Mahler is using in constructing the songs, but rather that one experiences the results of these methods in the natural flow of the narrative, as they draw both performer and audience into the life and reality of the songs. Thus the barriers between composer and performer and performer and listener are broken down, and the relationship that exists becomes similar to that of storyteller and audience in the oral tradition. Mahler's complete and naïve involvement in the songs becomes a complete and naïve involvement of those who sing and hear them. There is nothing in the music which functions as commentary or irony. One hears the reality and truth of the songs, communicated through Mahler's narrative voice, and thus experiences the songs as naïve.

7.2.4. The depiction of emotion or "inner nature"

As has been shown, Mahler depicts emotion in the simplest possible ways. These songs are not of a mystical nature - they do not depict otherwise hidden emotions and thus reality. Everything they express is there, on the surface. Even their existence as folk music is clearly and unequivocally communicated in their melodies, structure, metre and rhythms.

If this were not the case, it would be difficult to argue for the songs' naïvety. The depiction of mystical, otherwise hidden feelings could imply an attitude to nature which is closer to sentimentality than to naïvety, as it suggests that the composer is aware of the revelation as having a special significance. This is particularly the case because of the character of the texts. On the one hand, one might argue that a naïve composer would, by virtue of his/her deep involvement in the world of nature, reveal truths which remain hidden to those who do not share this involvement. However, one might also argue that these truths are not evident in the words of the songs, and it is difficult to imagine how they might be revealed through such texts, unless the composer consciously wanted to say something about nature, and the human relationship to it. This would seem to smack of the sentimental poet's striving for unity with nature, where reality is elevated to the level of an ideal, and where poetry takes on the form of representation ("Darstellung") of that ideal.

As it is, emotionally the songs seem to remain naïve. With one possible exception (Das irdische Leben), Mahler never steps outside the reality of the songs to express the idea of a spiritual concept. This too is audible to the listener - at no point does one feel the philosophy of romanticism, of the meaning of folk music, of some mystical "inner nature" which only music can communicate, forcing its way out of these songs. What they communicate, whether it is happiness or sorrow, fear or amusement, is all already there, explicit in the text and now the

music.

7.2.5. The use of abstract symbolism

As has been shown, this criterion seems largely unapplicable to the *Wunderhorn* songs. The one exception is the use of the tamtam, which Floros identifies as a death symbol. If Mahler indeed uses this instrument as an abstract symbol to represent a concept (in this case death), then surely he is leaving the world of the naïve imitation of nature, and taking on an intellectual, reflective stance? And does not this call the naïvety of the songs where the tamtam is used in this way, "Das irdische Leben" and "Der Tambourg'sell" into question*?

Not necessarily. It seems unclear as to whether the use of symbolism is never naïve. Certainly the two do not seem to be incompatible in the field of naïve art in the visual sense. Bihalji-Merin even defines one of the criteria of naïve painting as "symbol laden imagery".

Furthermore, that the tamtam functions in these songs as a death symbol is a convincing argument, but just how *abstract* a symbol is it? The deep pitch, the timbre, and the slowly dying sound of the instrument all make for an effect which, to Western ears at least, is ominous, and which may easily be experienced as telling of impending doom, especially in the context of a text which is quite explicitly about death.

Furthermore, the single notes played on the tamtam call to mind a very specific sound image: a death knell. The question must arise as to whether this instrument is functioning as a

*The use of the tamtam in the *Fischpredigt* is more ambiguous. Mahler may be saying something about the fact that people (and fish!?) remain closed to anything that might change their lives till the day they die. He might also have used the instrument simply because it created an effect he liked. In the case of this song, at least given the current evidence, it seems impossible to say.

symbol, or as an imitation of a non-musical sound. If the latter is the case, then there is nothing to prevent the interpretation of its use as naïve. Even if one tends to the former interpretation, the effect of the sound discussed above, must leave some room for debate as to how abstract the symbol really is.

7.2.6. The idea of music as an image of nature or the structure of the world as a whole

As has already been discussed, it is very difficult to make out a case for the songs from the *Lieder und Gesänge* and *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* as an image of nature or the structure of the world as a whole. They do each provide an image of nature, but of one specific aspect thereof, rather than of nature as a whole, in all its manifestations. They do not seem to tell the listener anything about nature as a mystical entity, as a dream or an ideal. In fact, they do not seem to want to tell the listener anything at all about nature in a didactic sense. Rather, the music functions as a self contained realisation of nature as it is present in those texts which Mahler selected to set, manifesting such aspects of nature as are represented in each song. This lies at the heart of the songs' realism and reality.

The element of selection mentioned above could be seen, moreover, as preventing the songs' ability to represent the structure of the world as a whole. Not only are the songs not representative of every aspect of nature, they are not even representative of every aspect of the anthology from which they are taken. There are no work songs, no religious songs, (with the possible exception of "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt"), no legends, or tales of heroism. The world of the songs that Mahler selects is very limited.

Perhaps most important, however, in terms of the songs' naïvety, is that the songs do not seem to encompass the *idea* of nature or the world at all. Almost all are intended to be taken at

face value. This is not intended as a disparagement. The songs, or at least most of them, are what they are. They do not need to be understood as anything else. Their entire meaning is their existence as pieces of nature, representations of the natural world. But if they exist in this sense, it does not seem to be because Mahler is trying to tell his audience something about nature and its meaning, to express his ideas and abstract theories, but because, by virtue of their texts and music, they are natural. They belong to the world of reality, not the world of ideas.

This explains the sense of immediacy of the *Wunderhorn* songs, their lack of any feeling of nostalgia or romanticism. One does not feel in these songs that Mahler is pleading for a lost world, that he is saying anything about the beauty and necessity of nature, that they are in any way a moral statement about the state of humanity in terms of people's relationship with nature. One simply is presented with reality. Not with commentary, ironic or affectionate. Not even with imitation reality, an attempt at the exact reproduction of "real folk song". Rather one accepts the simple reality of the song's existence as what they are, and as part of the world from which they originated. This is surely the strongest argument for naïvety as a factor in their composition.

Is this not what Stefan means when he says of Mahler and these songs:

"Der Künstler geht in ihnen auf, er steht nicht über seinen Weisen oder über seinen Text.

Es sei wiederholt: Mahler, der Wissende, Ordnende und Leitende, ist als Schaffender naiv." ?

Or:

"Wir glauben nicht an die Realität des Märchens; und nun tritt uns das Märchen fast zum Greifen nahe. Es tritt uns nahe: es verstimmt uns. Die Zeit is selber nicht imstande, naiv zu sein; muss sie nicht heben, der ihm zur trotz naiv ist, Volkslieder singt, das Wunderhorn in sich gestaltet, übersehen, ungeachtet lassen, und schliesslich mit der griesgrämigen Anerkennung, die sie für das 'Können' hat, verachten?"?

Is this not a possible reason why Adler ascribes revelatory properties to Mahler's belief

in fairy tales:

"So wie [Mahlers] Verstand eindrang in die Werke Kants ... so erhielt sich sein Gemüt den naiven Märchenglauben, eine schwärmerische Märchenseligkeit, und er sah mit verklärtem Künstlerblick in den Himmel der sich ihm öffnete."?

And is this not why Specht could say of the *Wunderhorn* songs: "Diese Lieder sind ihm am meisten eigen, denn sie sind wirklich naiv."?

7.3 *Three problem songs*

There remain certain songs which had a special meaning for Mahler. These include two comic songs, "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes" as well as "Das irdische Leben". "Das irdische Leben" was renamed by Mahler to emphasise the fact that he perceived this poem to be an analogy of human life. "Lob des hohen Verstandes" is a satire on critics which Mahler seems to have regarded as being so perfect an expression thereof that he remarked to Bauer-Lechner that he "merely had to be careful not to spoil the poem and to convey its meaning exactly"¹⁶. "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt" is much broader in implication, being, as Mahler saw it, a satire on the whole of humankind¹⁷.

The three songs differ considerably from one another, the main distinction in both content and style lying between "Das irdische Leben" and the other two songs. "Das irdische Leben" is probably the darkest of all Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs; he himself considered it frightening in its representation of life as a hopeless struggle for unattainable fulfilment¹⁸. In contrast, both the "Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes" are much lighter in approach, taking a humorous view of what are, essentially, serious topics. The style of both songs is closest to the quintessential folklike, although Mahler's approach to the setting of each text is different, within

the confines of this style. His method in the case of "Lob des hohen Verstandes" has already been discussed: he felt that he "merely had to be careful not to spoil the poem and to convey its meaning exactly", which he did through the use of the folklike style at its most obvious and even coarse. The humour of "Fischpredigt" is less boisterous; Mahler describes it as "bittersweet"¹⁹ (as might be expected, perhaps, in a song representing an unfortunate side of the human character). The song is nevertheless extremely funny and Mahler told Bauer-Lechner that he "had to laugh out loud" while composing it²⁰.

7.3.1. "Das irdische Leben"

"Das irdische Leben" is seen as a representation of human life, but in its darkest aspect. It is perhaps the only song which truly reflects what Walter describes as the "profound world-sorrow [which lay at the bottom of Mahler's soul and] whose rising cold waves would seize him in an icy grip"²¹. He also remarks of this song that "in a naïve and vigorous manner, it expresses a deep world-sorrow, similar to that which Mahler himself felt throughout his life". According to Walter, "there never was relief for him from the sorrowful struggle to fathom the meaning of human existence ...: 'For what purpose?' remained the torturing basic question of his soul"²².

"Das irdische Leben" can be seen as one of Mahler's most pessimistic attempts to answer this question. Mahler himself expressed it thus:

"In this way, I feel that human life (in the poem to which I give the interpretative title "Das irdische Leben" ["the song's original title is *Verspätung*"]) is symbolised by the child's crying for bread and the answer of the mother, consoling it with promises again and again. In life, everything that one most needs for the growth of spirit and body is withheld - as with the dead child - until it is too late."²³

This attitude is expressed in many ways in the setting of the text. In the accompaniment and orchestration, for instance, the extreme emotional intensity of this song, the like of which is not to be found in any of the other settings, is underlined by the constant semiquaver pattern in the strings - Mahler speaks of "the uncanny notes in the accompaniment, which bluster past in a storm"²⁴. This creates a tension which grows steadily more acute as the song progresses, till it dies in the single stroke of the tamtam with which the song ends, the possible significance of which as a death symbol has already been discussed.

The vocal part too is characterised at times by great intensity, notably in the child's part, with its begging chromatic melody followed by desperate, enormous leaps. Even the folksong is called into play as an interpretative vehicle, to offset, in fact, the despair of the child's part. As has been noted in the previous chapter, Mahler says of the mother's folklike melody that it embodies in music "the slow, monotonous responses of the mother - of Fate, which is in no particular hurry to satisfy our cries for bread". The song as a whole, thus, functions as an allegory of Mahler's own experience of life as an artist.

7.3.2. "Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt"

"St Anthony preaches to the fishes; his words are immediately translated into their thoroughly tipsy sounding language (in the clarinet) and they all come swimming up to him - a glittering shoal of them: eels and carp, and the pike with their pointed heads. I swear, that while I was composing I really kept imagining that I saw them sticking their stiff immobile necks from the water, and gazing up at St Anthony with their stupid faces - I had to laugh out loud! And look at the congregation swimming away as soon as the sermon's over:

Die Predigt hat g'fallen,

Sie bleiben wie alle.

Not one of them is an iota the wiser for it, even though the Saint has performed for them! But only a few people will understand my satire on mankind."²⁵

This is Mahler's own description of the "Fischpredigt", revealing his perception of the comic nature of this song. The text is by Arnim (although Mahler seems to have been unaware of this), based on a prose source²⁶, and it is not difficult to deduce why it appealed so much to Mahler that he left it quite unaltered in his setting. The somewhat grotesquely comical picture of fish avidly listening to the sermon must have appealed to his sense of humour, while the end of the song fitted in well with his concept of the basic state of humanity.

The humour inherent in the text is translated into the music in both the instrumental and vocal parts, creating a comical acoustic picture of fish swimming, turning, sliding over each other, and so on, in the music. Mahler himself makes reference to the "tipsy sounding language ... in the clarinet" and Dargie notes in particular the passages for that instrument in bb 48 ff (marked "mit Humor") and 87 ff ("mit Parodie") the humour of which she ascribes to the "deliberate lack of consideration for the idiom of the instrument"²⁷ (although this does not explain why the same passage in the piano version is also funny, which she admits).

The clarinet is, furthermore, not the only instrument to contribute to the humorous sound of the orchestra. From the very start of the song, the atmosphere created by the pizzicato basses combined with the bassoons and the odd acciacatura figure in the clarinets is distinctly comical. Other instrumental elements also underline this, notably the slapping of the whip (e.g. bb 7 and 8, bb 27 and 28, and corresponding passages), the spiccato strings in bb 159 ff and the pompous use of the full orchestra in bb 71 - 75 and especially in bb 132 - 136.

The type of humour described above is largely dependent on sound effects and in the

vocal part it is thus mainly the responsibility of the singer. This is not to say that the vocal part of the song is not distinctly humorous. Mahler achieves comical effects by a number of means, including the very low range coupled with the non legato syllabic setting at the beginning of the song, the sequential repetition of very short phrases or fragments of phrases several times (e.g. in bb 20 - 26 and at the end of the song), the setting of the crucial words "Kein Predicht niemals/ Den Fischen so g'fallen" (in its various forms) in two separate but repeated phrases and the unexpectedly chromatic melody in bb 136 - 140 on the words "Erheben die Köpfe/ Wie verständ'ge Geschöpfe".

All this adds up to a song in which the intended satire is made quite explicit in the music. The poet's⁷ joke becomes Mahler's joke, which he in turn shares with the audience. When Mahler speaks of "my satire on mankind", he is surely reflecting the song's original meaning rather than inventing a new one. (One cannot help but wonder if he ever considered that this piece could, in fact, have the same effect as the sermon it so wittily presents - that the audience could enjoy the joke, even laughing at it knowingly, and forget its significance as soon as the song was over!)

7.3.3. "Lob des hohen Verstandes"

As in the "Fischpredigt", the satire in "Lob des hohen Verstandes" is an explicit component of the meaning of the text, and, as has been shown, Mahler himself saw his task in the setting of this poem as being to convey its meaning exactly. Dargie writes of this setting :

"There are no means whereby the music can add to the satirical element in the poem. What

⁷Whether one regards this to be Arnim or the anonymous originator of the text seems immaterial, especially as Mahler seems to have been quite unaware of the poem's lack of authenticity.

it can do is exploit its comic potential to the full, and thus make the satire ... all the more biting, while at the same time increasing the song's sheer entertainment value."²⁸

With regard to Dargie's last statement, this song must be one of the most entertaining of all the *Wunderhorn* settings in what can only be called a slapstick way. There is nothing subtle about the methods which Mahler uses to realise the comicality of the text. Interestingly, Mahler also uses many of the same methods of creating music which is simply funny in this song, as he does in the "Fischpredigt". Again, for instance, he gives uncomfortable figures both to certain instruments and to the voice. The most obvious of these are probably the reference to phrases from the vocal melody in the trumpet (bb 24 - 25 and 51 - 52) and horn (bb 47 - 48 and 106 - 107) parts and the trill in the vocal part on the word "Kenner" in b 52. Also again one finds repetition of very short phrases or motifs in both the instrumental and vocal parts (bb 4 - 6 and corresponding passages, bb 19 - 21, 39 - 40, 46 - 48, 90 - 93, 108 - 109 and 115 - 117). Moreover, once more certain sounds are used to humorous effect in this song, which create a quite different atmosphere in others*.

Also as in the "Fischpredigt" the satire in "Lob des hohen Verstandes" is quite explicit. In fact, the crudity of many of the elements which Mahler uses, most notably the donkey's braying, move this song almost into the realm of farce. And the significance to the composer of this piece, in which the critic donkey rejects the finesse of the nightingale's song for the banality of the cuckoo should be obvious.

*Compare, for instance, the impact of the stopped horn in this song with that in "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurm".

7.3.4. Naïvety in the songs with a special meaning

A dark allegory and two satires, one witty and one farcical - the question now arises as to whether the settings to which Mahler attached special meanings can still be regarded as naïve. In musical terms there is little difference in the approach, especially in the two satires, to that taken in those where the meaning of the text is to be taken at face value. In fact, the personal meanings are not in any way explicit or implicit in the music, although a knowledge of Mahler would make his attraction to certain texts perhaps implicitly obvious. He does not, for instance, use a quote of his own music from another composition for the nightingale in "Lob des hohen Verstandes". If one did not know anything about Mahler's background, these songs would still make sense - the irony in the cases of the "Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes" and the tragedy in "Das irdische Leben", that gave them special significance for Mahler are already there in the texts, and are realised in Mahler's music in a way which makes sense even if one does not know anything about their origins in Mahler's psyche.

"Das irdische Leben" is, perhaps, the most problematic in terms of its status as naïve music. Walter describes its style as naïvely vigorous and many of the criteria for naïvety are present, the belief in the text, the use of folklike materials, the use of the folk poem itself. It is not clear, however, whether Mahler's attitude to the text can truly be described as being in the necessary state of unity with Nature. Mahler does seem here to be standing outside the poem, not commenting on it, but commenting through it on the human state in a way which is not explicit in the poem itself.

The fact that Mahler does not place himself in anyway above the text argues the naïvety of his attitude. The fact that he uses the text to express his own ideas, while not necessarily at odds with the concept of naïvety (nowhere does it state that the naïve artist may not express

individuality), does make the status of this song more difficult to determine exactly than that of the others. This is especially the case as the music contains many unfolklike elements, particularly in the child's melody and in the accompaniment. The song certainly sounds quite different from any of the other settings.

Perhaps most problematic, however, is not the use of unfolklike elements, but the use of folksong, or, more specifically, the way in which it is employed in the mother's tune to express an idea, that of Fate, apathetically controlling human life. This, above all, militates against the song's naïvety - not only does Mahler step outside the original meaning of the poem (and that he does so is implicit in his change of the title, not just in his statements about the song), but he uses a folklike tune to do so.

And yet - Walter heard something naïve in this song, and, as has been stated, Mahler may be using this song to make a comment, but that comment is not about the song itself, or folk music in general, or the human relationship with nature. It is a general comment on the human state. So is the song really precluded from being naïve? One is reminded perhaps of certain naïve painters, in whose work strange images may occur, and who may use their art to express their ideas about life.

Moreover, there is certainly a gripping realism about the song, in the heartrending cries of the child and even in the responses of the mother, which could just as well be heard as helpless by a listener who has not read Mahler's interpretation of thereof. And even if the music sounds different from the other *Wunderhorn* settings, it has the same sense of integrity, of authenticity, of naturalness that they do, all of which make the song sound naïve, even if Mahler's own statements about it might seem to prevent that view. All in all, it seems that this is not a question to be settled lightly, and may, in the end, depend on the opinion of the individual listener.

In the case of the "Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes", it seems easier to

justify the songs' naïvety as the meanings given by Mahler are explicit in the text anyway. The question that needs to be asked is whether satirical humour or irony is compatible with musical naïvety as defined in the context of the Schillerian definition of naïvety as an aesthetic concept.

At first glance it might seem that this is impossible: naïvety and irony as aesthetic concepts are, after all, mutually exclusive. Closer consideration of the problem, however, reveals that one is dealing here with two different types of irony. Aesthetic irony, in Schillerian terms, involves the attitude of the artist to Nature or natural material. The ironic artist views Nature from a superior standpoint, looking down thereon, so to speak, and treating the material taken from Nature in a manner concurrent with this attitude.

The irony of the "Fischpredigt" and "Lob des hohen Verstandes", on the other hand, is inherent in the text. The songs are ironic, not because Mahler approaches the text itself from a superior, even satirical standpoint, but because the content of the poem itself is ironic or satirical. Mahler still approaches the poem from a naïve point of view, involving himself entirely in the text, both in terms of its specific meaning, and of its meaning as a folk song.

In the "Fischpredigt", this attitude is manifested in the style of the music, which, as has been mentioned, fits into the category of the quintessential folklike tone. Floros, by inference, even sees it as being in the style of a Ländler (he describes the Scherzo of the Second Symphony in terms of a type which he calls the leisurely ("gemächlicher") Ländler²⁹). Its satirical content, however, excludes it from the group of three Ländler, the most important meaning of which is their essential being as folk songs. This essentially folklike style informs the structure (which comprises Mahler's usual blend of strophic and non strophic elements), as well as the melody, harmony, rhythm and metre and orchestration of the song which conform to the stylistic norms of the *Wunderhorn* songs in general, and of the category in question in particular. It is interesting that it is the instrumentation of precisely this song which Mahler described as the "Gedudel der

Böhmischen Musikanten", placing the orchestral sound of this song firmly in the context of folk music.

The comicality and satire of the song thus do not detract from its naïvety. One does not laugh from above, so to speak, at the musical image of the fish - the irony in this song is already present in the text. It has nothing to do with Mahler's attitude or that of the listener to either text or music. One laughs at the music simply because it sounds funny, and the pictures it creates in one's mind are humorous. Just as Mahler enjoys the joke of the text, so he "tells" it to his audience, making them laugh too through the means of his telling.

Similarly, the crudity of the humour of "Lob des hohen Verstandes" should not in any way be seen as poking fun at folk song. Rather Mahler uses elements of folk music to poke fun at critics through a text which does just that. The sometimes coarse character of the music is a representation of the coarseness of the donkey and thus reaches its climax in the ridiculous imitation of his uncouth braying. Much of the folklike music in this song is, in fact, not coarse: the opening melody, with its "once upon a time" anacrusis rising fourth and the music characterising the nightingale, to cite but two examples of the type of music which have been shown to be used by Mahler as the epitome of a type of writing which recreates the spirit of folk music and of Nature itself. Perhaps what is most important in the context of the discussion of naïve music, these methods are virtually all related to Mahler's use of the folklike and of natural sound.

Mahler's setting realises the satire without approaching the text as such from an aesthetically ironic viewpoint. In listening to this song one laughs not at folk music, but at the comical text. If one knows anything about Mahler's attitude to critics, this maybe adds piquancy to the joke and certainly explains Mahler's attraction to the text, but it does not really add

anything to the meaning of the song. In fact, there do not seem in the end to be any factors in either of these songs which preclude them from being naïve, and the sound world which Mahler creates in them sounds no less naïve than that of those described as being quintessentially folksong-like.

8. CONCLUSION

It remains now to draw together the strands of the discussion of realism and naïvety in Mahler's settings from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. This is necessary, not only as a means of summing up what has been laid out in the last fifty pages or so, but also because the argument thus far has attempted to analyse various different aspects of the songs separately. In actual fact, when listening to these songs one does not experience these elements as distinct entities. Just as the various components which make up Mahler's style function together to create an organic whole, so the elements which contribute to the songs' realism and naïvety, too, function in unity with one another, so closely interlinked that they are at times difficult to distinguish without careful analysis.

The dominant forms of realism in the *Wunderhorn* as discussed above are the simple imitation of natural or non-musical sounds, the narrative style of the settings, and the realisation of nature as, and only as, it is manifested in the texts. To a lesser extent one finds the imitation of spatial movement, at its most obvious when Mahler imitates the movement of fish in music. These aspects inform the whole of Mahler's style, providing explanations for why he uses certain elements in the way he does. Mahler's use of authentic folklike factors, be they melodies, rhythms, the metres of dance or march, his use of, or references to strophic structure, can be explained as being imitation of natural sound in much the same way as can his use of birdsong and similar elements. All are also a means of realising nature as it exists in the texts; Mahler's harmonic style with its effect of primitivism or archaism can also be explained in this way.

The link between Mahler's deviation from simple strophic structure and the narrative style of the settings which can be seen as following a long line of oral tradition has already been discussed at some length. This naturally informs other elements: the movement away from the

strophic means greater variation in melody, harmony, tonality and rhythm, in the case of some songs, notably some of the dialogues, even metre. These elements can thus function not only as an imitation of natural sound, or the manifestation of nature in the texts, but also as contributing to the storytelling techniques which Mahler uses as composer/ narrator.

Take, for instance, either "Lied des Verfolgten im Turm" or "Der Schildwache Nachtlied". In both these songs the men's melodies, rhythms and metres, even the orchestration of their parts comes from the world of the barracks, while the girls' music is folklike in tone. Both these styles can be explained as imitation of natural music and thus a realisation of nature. But at the same time, the switching between the styles, which is the most influential factor in the structural formation of the songs, can be seen as a simple example of Mahler's narrative style, which can be explained as being natural in itself, if one regards it as related to the oral tradition. This is a very simple example of how the realistic factors in the songs function together, influencing, one might even say creating Mahler's style. And they do so one way or another, in every song.

What makes it possible to discuss this realism in terms of naïvety is what has been called Mahler's integrity in setting the texts, the authenticity of his style arising not from an attempt to literally recreate the traditional folksong, but to relive *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, to recreate it within himself, and thus to produce music which is both original and natural to Mahler. At the same time, this music leaves the listener in no doubt of its source - not just an anthology of folk poetry, but folk music and nature itself. One is left in no doubt that these poems are, after all, texts which he considered to be "more Nature and life - that is the source of all poetry - than art".

Mahler truly believed himself to be in a state of unity with Nature when he composed: this belief informed all his work. This belief, too, lies at the root of the songs' naïvety - it is what gives them their integrity and authenticity as natural music. Because of it, the listener can hear the songs' naïvety. Without Mahler's creative naïvety, no amount of musical realism could make

the *Wunderhorn* songs truly naïve; but if this naïvety were not audible, one could theorise ad infinitum about Mahler's creative naïvety, and it would mean very little.

The stylistic details of Mahler's realism have been discussed at some length, but generally speaking, how do they go to make up a style which sounds naïve? Mitchell identifies two closely related aspects of realism in the songs. Firstly, Mahler takes the texts at face value, rather than viewing them from romantic point of view, idealising them. "Mahler did not adopt a fairy-tale, 'once upon a time' approach, but re-lived the texts as if they were of the present moment", Mitchell writes. Secondly this attitude has important implications in terms of style: Mahler's style is not in the least romantic, it is freshly, even traumatically, realistic. Mitchell thus speaks of the beauty of the "dramatic truth" of the songs, as opposed to "the beauty of romantic make believe".

Mahler's settings of folk poetry are never a commentary on folk song as such. Mahler is never aloof to his texts: he lives each text, involving himself completely in its setting, and experiencing it as a piece of the living present, not of the dead and distant past. His music brings the listener and performer back into contact with the folk song as an essential piece of the human psyche, but, unlike in the case of the authentic style of folk song setting, this process does not have its roots in a sense of nostalgia for the folk song as part of that aspect of humanity in its natural state which has now been lost.

At the same time, Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs are quite different from anything else being written in the field of art song at the end of the nineteenth century. Their affinity to folk music especially with regard to their relative lack of subtlety of expression, places them apart from the rest of that genre. This lack of subtlety in the interpretation of textual meaning is retained from the folk song style, and can be seen as fundamental to the songs' relationship with that style. Mahler realises the meaning of folk song as such, through means which are natural to him: the songs are never a forced imitation of a rigid set of stylistic norms defining "folk song".

Rather, like the "Volk" themselves, he expresses himself in a way which is entirely natural and instinctive. This factor, i.e. that Mahler uses folklike or natural elements in a way which is natural to him, is essential to the understanding of the *Wunderhorn* songs as naïve music.

Mahler's settings recreate the folk song as part of the here and now. It is this to which Stefan refers when he says that the time (his time and Mahler's) itself is not capable of understanding Mahler because he is naïve. Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs make the folk song part of his time, to him they are real in a way which includes, but goes beyond the realistic representation of text elements. They are realistic because Mahler accepts the folk song on its own terms and realises it as such, and as something topical. If one accepts this, then it is no wonder that the sophisticated society of *fin de siècle* Vienna found these songs, in all their essential simplicity, difficult to understand. And more than that, why Mahler himself, whom Stefan describes as proud to be naïve, to sing folk songs, as one who gives shape to the *Wunderhorn* within him, was such an enigma even sometimes to those who were close to him.

In Stefan's terms, moreover, the naïve element of Mahler's aesthetic personality should inform, not just the *Wunderhorn* songs, but all his creative work. Indeed, mention has already been made of the four symphonies which also arise from his obsession with the anthology. The next step in the examination of Mahler's music as naïve should thus concern these works. This examination is, however, worthy of a study all its own, if justice is to be done to the complexity of the problems arising from these works, and particularly to the application of the term naïvety to them.

Mahler's statement "[Meine Musik] ist immer und überall Naturlaut" has already been quoted on a number of occasions, and as a statement of aesthetic belief and intention, its implications are enormous, particularly if one places it in the context of Mahler's theory of the symphony as metaphor for the world. It means that *all* the music in the first four symphonies

must be examined as arising from what Mahler perceived to be his state of unity with Nature during the creative act, that *all* the music in these symphonies, not just the overtly natural or folklike, must be examined in order to determine whether, in fact, it fulfils the criteria of musical naïvety. Obviously this is the subject of an entire study. The breadth of the content involved, as well as the complexity of the problems, both technical and aesthetic arising from this music, place such an examination beyond the scope of this thesis.

Nor is the exploration of naïvety as an aesthetic concept in Mahler's *Wunderhorn* symphonies the only possible extension in the application of the ideas raised in this thesis. The concept of Schillerian naïvety clearly can be applied to a broad range of nineteenth century music. One possible area of study in this regard has already been isolated: the folk song composition of earlier composers. Other work, however, also springs to mind. Consider the music of Moussorgsky, for instance. Is it not possible that the use of the concept of naïvety, both in the Schillerian sense, and also even in ways arising from the discussion of naïve art in the field of the visual arts might create new positions from which the music of that composer might be approached?

The final sentence of the preceding paragraph raises a very important point. The application of naïvety as an aesthetic concept, especially to Mahler's *Wunderhorn* songs can be seen in terms of a specific interpretation of, or approach to these compositions, rather than as a dogmatic attempt to define their absolute meaning. What this thesis has, in effect, done, is to take existing material and to apply it to the music in question, and to attempt, in doing so, to assess Mahler's intention in this music, taking a slightly different viewpoint from that of some modern writers. At the same time, certain aesthetic factors which are generally applied chiefly to Mahler's symphonies - most notably in terms of his aesthetic relationship with nature - have been brought into the context of the discussion of these songs.

It is to be hoped that the process used will have thrown some new light on Mahler's *Wunderhorn* settings, as well as on statements made by his contemporaries, and, indeed, himself, about these settings. Furthermore, the value of this thesis would be increased dramatically if the concept of musical naïvety, either as defined here, or in some expanded or improved form, might be applied to other music, and be used to illuminate more music than just the *Wunderhorn* songs of Gustav Mahler.

ENDNOTES

Chapter One

1. "Nothing is more romantic than that which one calls world and destiny. - We live in a colossal (in the macrocosm and the microcosm) romance [novel]." Hans Egon Hass (ed): *Die deutsche Literatur: Texte und Zeugnisse*. Fünfter Band, Vol. I, p. 54.
2. Eckart Klessmann: *Die Welt der Romantik*, p. 116.
3. "nothing natural [or] original, but fabricated, artificial, intensified, exaggerated, bizarre, even freakish and caricature-like" Hass, p. 85.
4. Klessmann, p. 17.
5. Op. cit., p. 18.
6. "The art of alienating in a pleasant way, of making an object strange and yet familiar and attractive, is Romantic poesy." Hass, p. 55.
7. "Life is something like colours, tone and power. The novelist studies life as the painter, musician and mechanic study colour, tone and power." Loc. cit.
8. "Yet do you know what romantic means?/ Look for the pattern in your spirit./ Romanticism cannot be separated from poetry,/ This is its [romanticism's] mother: fantasy." Klessmann, p. 19.
9. "That which is Romantic is the beautiful without limits or the beautiful infinite / eternal ..." Hass, p.72
10. "Everything that acts as a medium between our eyes and something distant, which brings the distant object closer to us, but adds something of itself to the object, is romantic." Klessmann, p. 23.
11. "Poesy does not have the modern literary meaning, but means the creative relationship of the subjective self and the creative, universal structure of meaning of life itself." Gerhard Kurz: "Ästhetik, Literaturtheorie und Naturphilosophie" in Horst Albert Glaser (ed): *Deutsche Literatur: Eine Sozialgeschichte*, Vol. 5, p. 105.
12. Klessmann, p. 42.
13. "Romantic poesy is a progressive universal poesy. Its purpose is not just to reunite all the separate genera of poesy and bring poesy into contact with philosophy and rhetoric. It wishes to and should now mix, now blend, poetry and prose, genius and criticism, art poesy and natural poesy, to make poetry alive and sociable, and life and society poetic, to make wit poetic and to fill and saturate the forms of art with true educational material of every kind and to enliven them through variations of mood. It comprises everything poetic from the largest systems of art, which in their turn include several other systems, to the sigh, the kiss which the child poet exhales in

artless song." Op. cit., pp. 21 - 22.

14. "world, life, the divine, the absolute, being, nature, the universe" Kurz, p. 106.

15. "I am one and everything" Loc. cit.

16. "We dream of journeys through the universe: is not the universe then within us?" Novalis: *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol 2, p. 13.

17. "I sing of myself! World and God all in one in me!/ I am my own song and world and Phoebus!" Johann Gottfried Herder: *Werke in zwei Bänden*, Vol 1, p. 14.

18. "As I am spirit! I spirit! - so am I God!/ I think! I will! I am It [God]! As God through whom I am,/ Once called spirits from the spirit-void/ And bodies from the body-void/ I call thoughts from the thought void!/ I will! and something arises out of nothing!/ O God, what you have given me! - all Your world/ I create in myself, following you! -" Op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 9.

19. "imitation does not mean simple reproduction [literally "daubing"] of reality, but artistic re-creation of nature. The poet is in this sense a 'Creator'." Wernly, J. *Prolegomena zu einem Lexikon der ästhetisch-ethischen Terminologie Friedrich Schillers*, p. 149.

20. "To such a small an extent has Nature created us as isolated blocks of stone, as egoistic monads! Even the most sensible strings of animal feeling (this metaphor must serve me as I know of no better for the mechanics of feeling bodies!), even those strings whose sound and tension do not stem from caprice or considered attention, indeed whose Nature it has not been possible to determine, even by all the skill of research, even these, in full play and without the awareness of another sympathy, are directed towards other creatures. The struck string performs its natural task: it sounds! It calls up the echo of a similarly tuned string, even when there is no such other string, even when it neither hopes nor waits for one such [string] to answer." Herder, Vol. 1, p. 733.

21. "The tone of feeling will create the same tone in the sympathetic creature." Op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 742.

22. "Now let all the senses of man be alert: he sees and touches and feels simultaneously all beings that speak into his ear - Heavens! what a school of ideas and speech! ... - the whole, many toned, divine Nature is language teacher and muse!" Op. cit., p. 766.

23. "Where children are, there is a golden age." Novalis, p. 35.

24. "it was the power of enchantment of the orator, the poet, to make us children again." Herder, Vol. 1, p. 742.

25. Willi A. Koch: "Nachwort" to Arnim, L.A. von, Brentano, C. - Koch, W. A. (Ed.): *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, p. 900.

26. Carl Dahlhaus: *Realism in nineteenth-century music*, p. 111.

27. Klessmann, p. 181.

28. Op. cit., p. 9.
29. Op. cit., p. 10.
30. Loc. cit.
31. Klessmann, p. 12.
32. Op. cit., p. 53.
33. "The novel is, so to speak, free history - the mythology of history as it were. Should a natural mythology not be possible? (Mythology here in my sense as free poetic invention which symbolises reality in very many ways etc.)" Op. cit. p. 72.
34. "It is only because of the weakness of our organs and our spirit that we do not see ourselves in a world of fairies. All fairy tales are merely dreams of that mother world which is here, there and nowhere. The higher powers in us, which will one day, as geniuses, bring to perfection our will, are now muses which refresh our present arduous lives with sweet memories." Op. cit., p. 179.
35. "The fairy tale is, so to speak, the canon of poesy - everything poetic must be poetic." Op. cit., p. 201.
36. "A fairy tale can and must be wholly musical." Op. cit., p. 202.
37. "The fairy tale is like a dream image without coherence. An ensemble of wonderful things and events, e.g. a musical fantasy, the harmonic sequence of an aeolian harp, Nature itself." Loc. cit.
38. Op. cit., p. 57.
39. "We have a mission: we have been called to educate the world." Novalis, p. 17.
40. Jens Tismar: "Volks- und Kunstmärchen, Volks- und Kunstlieder" in Glaser, p. 196.
41. "The people are an idea. We should become a people. A complete person is a people in miniature. True popularity is the highest human goal." ["Popularity" here refers to the sense of being a people." Novalis, p. 20.
42. "Germanity is genuine popularity and therefore an ideal." Op. cit., p. 41.
43. Herder, pp. 70 - 72.
44. Klessmann, p. 182.
45. Koch, p. 903.
46. Loc. cit.
47. Loc. cit.

48. Klessmann, p. 205.

49. "Life on the postship is wonderful, just like in heaven, only not for free and a bit hotter. The Rhinelanders are as noble a people as their wine; as well as their feeling for poetry, they have clear, high, ringing voices, especially the sailors. Wrapped in a cloak, wandering around without a plan with a friend and a book, intoxicated by the thousand new echoes of poesy in the songs of the sailors, making no distinction between day and night, free from storm and thunder, as our song carried them like pictures of our soul - so would I live even just once more; life dawned fresh, like the true source of the Rhine wine." Koch, pp 903 - 904.

50. "I have a suggestion for you and Reichardt, from which you must not exclude me, namely that we undertake [the compilation of] an inexpensive book of folk songs ... It should balance between the Romantic and the mundane, it should contain spiritual, handwork, daily work, day time, seasonal and funny songs, but not dirty ones ... It should be so compiled that no era is left out, the better folk songs should be consolidated therein, and new ones written." Klessmann, pp. 188 - 190.

51. "I think we have long been in agreement about the folksong book, I do not wish to publish it without you, nor with anyone else but you." Koch, p. 907.

52. "We wanted to return to everyone all that has retained its diamond firmness through many years for the general monument to the greatest modern people the Germans ... We wished at least to lay the foundations and to indicate that which is beyond our powers, in the firm hope that there will be those who will continue the building to the highest point and that there will be one who will bring the building to perfection ... the spirit has a future and a past, without which, how can it have a present?" Arnim and Brentano, p. 886.

53. "If the German peoples were united in one and their own spirit, they would not need these printed anthologies, oral tradition would make them superfluous; but just now when the Rhine cuts off a beautiful part of our old country from the ancient trunk, and other areas isolate themselves in shortsighted wisdom, it has become necessary to preserve and enliven that which remains, to maintain it in its lust for life and bind it together. War can destroy many, peace can put many to sleep, only not those who in public activity lead the inclination of the people." Klessmann, p. 191.

54. "It is the spirit of the nation on which everything rests. The nation itself has revealed its inner being in these songs." Loc. cit.

55. "Rightfully this little book should be found in every house where good people live ... But at best this volume should lie on the piano of the amateur or master of music, either so that the songs therein may come into their own with well-known traditional melodies, or so that tunes of a suitable kind may be added to them, or, God willing, so that new significant melodies may be called forth by them." Op. cit. pp. 191 - 192.

56. Op. cit. p. 191.

57. Dahlhaus, p. 113.

58. "Folk poetry and art poetry should blend therein. That is the aesthetic utopia of the *Wunderhorn*." Tismar, p. 213.

59. "Neither of you had any true historic respect for these songs." Klessmann, p. 193.

60. "To develop a history of folk song from our *Wunderhorn* seems to me as strange as studying mineralogy from a stone building." Loc. cit.

61. "You do not let the old exist as old, but transplant it into our time where it truly no longer belongs." Loc. cit.

62. Dahlhaus, p. 112.

Chapter Two

1. Donald Mitchell: *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years*, p. 117.

2. Paul Stefan: *Gustav Mahler: Eine Studie über Persönlichkeit und Werk*, p. 95.

3. Richard Specht: *Gustav Mahler*, p. 165.

4. Deryck Cooke: *Gustav Mahler: An Introduction to his Music*, p. 36.

5. Stanley Sadie (ed): *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 11, p. 508.

6. Henry-Louis de La Grange: *Mahler*, p. 171.

7. Op. cit., p. 25.

8. Mitchell (1975), p. 118.

9. Op. cit., p. 25.

10. Arnim and Brentano, pp. 704 - 705.

11. "Mahler only got to know this anthology when he was twenty eight and it is remarkable how the words which he himself found [i.e. wrote] for his earlier melodies are like the old songs in atmosphere and form, without being forced in any way or such that the similarities are disturbing. They are the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*." Stefan, p. 95.

12. "The texts of these wonderfully simple, unadorned songs, sung from the heavily burdened soul of youth, awkward and with overfull heart, are by Mahler himself; at that time he did not yet know *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, but his entire being strained after the style to be heard in the precious book; strained away from the 'literary', from all verbal artifice and all rhyme-play, strained towards natural sound, to artless, genuine feeling. Anyone examining these unpretentious

poems will notice something remarkable: the relationship of their incomparably genuine, sincerely simple tone to [that of] the *Wunderhorn* poems." Specht, p. 165.

13. Bruno Walter: *Gustav Mahler*, pp. 93 - 94.

14. Mitchell(1975), p. 117.

15. La Grange, p. 742.

16. Loc. cit.

17. Mitchell (1975), p. 117.

18. La Grange, p. 742.

19. Op. cit., pp. 742 - 743.

20. Mitchell (1975), p. 119.

21. Loc. cit.

22. Alma Mahler: *Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters* (1968), p. 93.

23. Op. cit., p. xxii.

24. La Grange, p. 285.

25. Mitchell (1975), p. 118.

26. La Grange, p. 171.

27. Mitchell (1975), p. 119.

28. "The *Wunderhorn* gave him the words for which he had been searching. From the time that he knew it he did not have to find his own words for his melodies." Stefan, p. 98.

29. "Thus when he discovered the book of folk songs of Arnim and Brentano it was a stroke of good fortune for him; he was relieved of the necessity of having to find his own poet, - here bubbled forth what he needed, and he was the first to set to music these exquisitely picturesque love, soldiers' and ghost songs, sounding from the naïve soul, [texts which would] soon be used to excess." Specht, p. 165.

30. Walter, p. 94.

31. Mitchell (1975), p. 117.

32. Op. cit., p. 119.

33. Norman Lebrecht: *Mahler Remembered*, p. 15.

34. "Mahler once remarked ... to me, that, in artistic creation, those impressions which finally bear fruit and are crucial, are almost exclusively those which are absorbed between the ages of four and eleven years, that is to say before the onset of puberty; anything [absorbed] later only seldom becomes a work of art." Specht, p. 164.

35. "He spent his childhood in a Moravian village in which an old barracks stood, and from the soldiers stationed there the child learned hundreds and hundreds of folk and soldiers' songs, in fact one could perceive his musical aptitude from the fact that the four year old child could sing more than 200 such songs; and if little Gustav was once again not to be found in the house at all, then one could be sure that he was marching along with some or other regiment, or that he was standing on a coffeehouse table and treating the crowded guests to his songs." Loc. cit,

36. "The first impressions are already determined by the very earliest time. The Moravian servants, German as well as Slav, sing gladly and well. Melancholy songs awaken him and put him to sleep. The regimental band marches past. And the tiny boy imitates it all. At the age of four he receives an accordion and plays what he has heard, especially the marches of the military band. These fascinate him so, that one morning, after dressing very hastily, he rushes off after the soldiers and gives the market women who come to fetch him a regular concert on his instrument." Stefan, pp. 23 - 24.

37. Lebrecht, p. 9.

38. Op. cit., p. 19.

39. Loc. cit.

40. La Grange, p. 14.

41. H. F. Redlich: *Bruckner and Mahler*, p. 113.

42. La Grange, p. 840.

43. Mitchell (2): *Gustav Mahler The Early Years*, p. 233.

44. "Bohemia is of old a musical country par excellence, the inhabitants of this part of Europe rejoice in an inborn musicality, which saturates even daily life with beauty and poetry ... Bernhard Mahler's son thus heard singing everywhere, mostly melancholy, mournful songs, fitting for a people who for centuries have lost their independence and feel themselves oppressed." Norman Loeser: *Mahler*, p. 14.

45. Specht, p. 164.

46. Lebrecht, p. 22.

47. Paul Banks: *The Early Social and Musical Environment of Gustav Mahler*, p. 27.

48. Vladimir Karbusicky: *Gustav Mahler und seine Umwelt*, p. 23.

49. Op. cit., p. 34.

50. Banks, p. 31.
51. Karbusicky, (1978), p. 34.
52. Op. cit., p. 31.
53. Banks, pp. 33 - 34.
54. Op. cit., p. 34.
55. Natalie Bauer-Lechner: *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, p. 33.
56. Karbusicky, (1978), p. 26.
57. Op. cit., p. 44.
58. "wedding fiddlers" Op. cit., p. 37.
59. Loc. cit.
60. "These musicians play trapezoid shallow bottomed and flat topped string instruments, of which the highest, the 'Klarfiedel' and second fiddle are tuned like a violin, the middle, the 'Grobfiedel' the same, but without the high E string, and the bass fiddle' the 'Plaschperment', like a cello. The tone is penetrating, shrill and sharp." Op. cit., pp. 37 - 38.
61. Op. cit., p. 33.
62. "it is known that folk culture hardly respects political boundaries at all." Op. cit., p. 28.
63. Banks, p. 36.
64. La Grange, p. 21.
65. Op. cit., p. 22.
66. Banks, p. 38.
67. Lebrecht, p. 22.
68. "folk songs and military music made a permanent impression on his musical inspiration. His melodies, especially in songs and symphonic slow movements, are often born of the Bohemian folk song, martial rhythms play an important role in his work." Loeser, p. 14.
69. "People portray their environment, but do not experience it as a mirror image. A copy of reality originates on the lowest level of activity of observation. With the development thereof, the second possibility of a subject-object-relationship comes into play: the recording of the environment in symbols. Images are given 'other meanings'; they resolve themselves into new forms. The symbol clarifies that which is important; it reveals reality in unexpected contexts, escaping convention. The connection with expression, the third possibility for giving meaning to a reaction to the stimuli of the environment, gives the symbol image of a situation a unique

character, leaving it open to misunderstandings. If pictorial elements are combined symbolically in expressive viewpoints, and illuminate with the power of their own spiritual activity - their expression - then this is much more than a representation: one ventures into [the area of] the primeval Creation in which the distinguishing 'Word' which brings forth order from chaos: the much-encompassing 'logos' in the famous 'In the beginning was the Word' actually also has the semantic nuance of 'ratio, proportion, type and manner, consideration, plan, manner'." Karbusicky (1978), p. 1.

70. Lebrecht, p. 22.

71. Walter, p. 103.

72. Op. cit., p. 100.

73. Op. cit., p.29

74. Loc. cit.

75. Loc. cit.

76. "When the hideous compulsion of our modern hypocrisy and falseness have driven me to self-degradation, when the unbreakable connections with our relations to art and life have been able to sling disgust into my heart for all that is sacred to me, art, love, religion, then where is there any other escape but self destruction. I sunder with violence the bonds that bind me to the loathsome, stale morass of existence. With the power of despair I cling to pain, my only comforter. - Then the sun smiles on me -and the ice is gone from my heart. I see the blue heavens again and the swaying flowers, and my sneer dissolves into the tears of love. Oh, that a god might raise the veil from my eyes, that my clearer gaze could penetrate to the core of the Earth! Oh, that I might look at her this Earth, in her nakedness, without decoration, without adornment,as she lies before her creator; I would then go forth and stand in awe of her Genius." Alma Mahler (ed.): *Gustav Mahler Briefe*, pp. 5 - 6.

77. La Grange, p. 59.

78. Loc. cit.

79. Mahler (1924), p. 6.

80. Op. cit., p. 7.

81. Op. cit., pp. 9 - 10.

82. "Oh my dearly beloved Earth, when, oh when will you take the lost one to your breast; see! the human race has rejected him, and he flies away from their cold bosom, the heartless ones, to you, to you! Oh, receive the lonely, restless one, eternal Mother." Op. cit., p. 9.

83. Op. cit., p. 7.

84. "Suddenly a table rises out of the ground, at it [sits] a ghostly form, entirely enveloped in blue clouds: It is Melion, singing the praises of the 'great Spirit', and smoking genuine 'Three Kings' [tobacco] at the same time! And below him we sit, like two servers, serving the High Mass for the first time.

"And below us, clad in piquet cards, a kobold floats grinning, with the face of Buxbaum, who calls to us in terrible voice to the melody of a Berlini etude: 'Bow yourselves down! This glory too shall pass!' A stream of clouds from Melion hides the scene and the clouds grow ever thicker and thicker. Suddenly there appears, like on the Raphael Madonna, an angel's head, and beneath it stands Ahasuerus in his suffering, and wants to ascend to the holy place, but the angel floats away laughing, and he stares after it in enormous pain, then he takes up his stick, and wanders further, without tears, eternal, undying." Op. cit., pp. 8 - 9.

85. La Grange, p. 103.

86. "There was something of Kapellmeister Kreisler about him." Specht, p. 45.

87. "Kreisler's earthly reincarnation is called Gustav Mahler." Stefan, p. 17.

88. Walter, p. 4.

89. Lebrecht, p. 81.

90. Mahler (1968), p. 206.

91. Constantin Floros: *Gustav Mahler I*, p. 54.

92. Op. cit., p. 58.

93. Op. cit., p. 54.

94. Bauer-Lechner, p. 37.

95. Walter, pp. 140 - 141.

96. La Grange, p. 102.

97. Loc. cit.

98. Op. cit., p. 58.

99. Walter, p. 90.

100. "this poetry ... is distinguished in essence from every other kind of literary poetry and can almost rather be called Nature and life - that is the source of all poetry - than art" Mahler (1924), pp. 254 - 255.

101. "[My music] is natural sound - always and everywhere." Op. cit., p. 215.

102. "I do not that there was anyone who really knew Mahler." Specht, p. 9.

103. "No one understood him, at least while he was alive; one hardly knew him, and often didn't want to get to know him at all." Stefan, p. 13.

104. "In these *Wunderhorn* songs, in their quiet simplicity and tender humour, Mahler revealed his own childlike nature." Specht, p. 165.

105. "He was really a great child. This uncannily astute person who could take one by surprise and render one helpless through the most sparkling paradoxes, the most refined counter-arguments and the most cutting ironies of dialogue of a manner of speech simultaneously uninhibited and natural, was capable of even more through the pure untroubled childishness of his being. Now he was trusting, now mistrustful, like a child. This mistrust could easily be sparked off; by a casual glance of a malicious person, even by an apparently unintentional smile or glance; but then it could hardly ever be wiped out again and precisely because of this, much injustice was done to him and to others. And above all: he craved love as a child does. He needed love, understanding and tenderness as few others do, but one seldom dared to express these feelings towards him, who by the very nature of his brusque manner, his offputting moodiness and erratic behaviour, rather repulsed others. [He] seldom had the courage to say 'no, no, I will not be rejected', which his wounded yearning heart expressed in unforgettably steadfast and moving sounds. Which of course resulted in his allowing others to make up his mind for him and to influence his everyday life; that, entirely withdrawn into his dream and his world, he left it up to others to determine the 'practicalities' of his daily life, also his finances and not always up to those who in selfless love did the best for him." Specht, pp. 12 - 13.

106. La Grange, p. 586.

107. Otto Klemperer: *Minor Recollections*, p. 21.

108. Op. cit., p. 12.

109. Op. cit., p. 147.

110. "He could associate with people for years, could show them friendship and helpfulness and yet at the same time know nothing of their actual way of life, of their anxieties and hopes. If one took them to him, he would help with that kindness of the egocentric, who does not like to see the suffering of others, - and forget about it. Had to forget it. He had his work to do." Specht, p. 15.

111. "To experience the devout purity and the uninhibited truthfulness of his being, one had only to see him with children ... One who had heard him in conversation with his children, or saw him playing with them, did not even need to have heard one of his works to sense that his geniality was linked to the deepest cosmic things. In the quickly invented stories, which he told his little girls, there was - quite apart from the fact that they related to these children - a wisdom, a feeling for Nature, an understanding of a child's soul and a revelation of life, which expressed itself in the simplest events and symbols of the fairy tale with fantasy and clarity, which provided comprehension of the children with total satisfaction and delight in the story telling which was so close to their intellect and their feelings." Op cit, pp. 43 - 44.

112. "[blessed] with all the demons of ecstasy, with all the childlike purity of a natural being." Op cit, p. 44.

113. "Georg Göhler ... is of the opinion that a lack of fantasy has caused our age to remain estranged from the extremely imaginative artist, Mahler. This is a part of the truth. But we need [to understand] the whole. What our times lack is not so much fantasy [itself], as the courage for fantasy, the courage for experience, for thought, for poetry, for yearningly dreamt of, secluded and yet joyful unity of life and art. We are subjugated by technology. In reality we are able to fly, but we cannot soar towards the truth. Novalis and his circle could still do this. Our visionary ability, the godgiven certainty of the sublime superiority of the ideal world over that of semblance is paralysed, we are enslaved by our mania for facts. The pure, the original, the naïve, that which is complete in itself has become incomprehensible to us. We do not believe in the reality of fairy tales; and now the fairy tale approaches almost into our grasp: it discomposes us. The age itself is not capable of being naïve; how should it not overlook, ignore and finally hold in contempt with the grumpy recognition it has for 'ability', one who defies it by being naïve, who sings folk songs, who gives form to the *Wunderhorn* within him." Stefan, pp. 14 - 15.

114. "Just as Mahler's intellect penetrated the works of Kant ... so his soul retained the naïve belief in fairy tales, a rapturous fairy tale happiness, and, with a transfigured vision he saw a heaven open itself to him." Floros I, p. 173.

115. "These songs are the most his own, because they are really naïve." Stefan, p. 98.

Chapter Three

1. Joachim Ritter and Karlfried Gründer (eds): *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Vol. 6, col. 360.

2. "All naïve thought is natural, but not all natural thought is naïve." Loc. cit.

3. "Man of intelligence" ... "idiocy" Loc. cit.

4. Loc. cit.

5. "the completely naked expression of feeling" Loc. cit.

6. "Sublime naïvety" ... "the true innocence of a spirit which dares to expose itself without embarrassment" Loc. cit.

7. "external simplicity, which, without meaning to, betrays inner dignity" Loc. cit.

8. Watanabe-O' Kelly, H.: Introduction to *Schiller: On the naïve and sentimental in literature*, p. 12.

9. "The eruption of original, natural human honesty against the nature which has changed to feigning." Kant, *Three Critiques. Kritik der Urteilskraft*, p. 225

10. "beautiful but false seeming" loc. cit.

11. "One laughs at the simplicity which one does not yet understand, to hide that fact, and yet also rejoices over the simplicity of the nature that neutralises all art." Loc. cit.

12. "That, however, something which is infinitely better than all assumed morality, [that is] purity of thought (or at least the potential for that purity), has not yet died out in human nature, blends seriousness and deep respect in this play of judgement." Op. cit., p. 226

13. Loc. cit.

14. Schiller, *On the naïve and sentimental in Literature*, translated by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly. (Henceforward referred to as Schiller (1)), p. 7.

15. Op cit, p. 13

16. Op cit, p. 9.

17. Op cit p. 15

18. Op cit, p. 12

19. Loc cit

20. For naïvety to exist, it is necessary that Nature should triumph over art. This happens either without the knowledge and will of the person, or with the full consciousness of that person. In the first place [the phenomenon] is naïvety of surprise and amuses; in the latter it is moral naïvety and moves. Schiller, *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, pp. 5 - 6

21. "There are moments in our life when we accord to nature in plants, minerals, animals, landscapes, as well as to human nature in children, in the customs of country people and of the primitive world, a sort of love and touching respect, not because it pleases our senses nor because it satisfies our intellect or taste (the opposite of both may be the case) but merely because it is nature." Op cit p. 1.

22. "This kind of interest in nature only takes place under two conditions. In the first place it is necessary throughout, that the object affecting us in this way is natural, or at least that we perceive it to be so; secondly, that it is naïve in the widest meaning of the word, i.e. that nature stands in contrast to art and shames it. As soon as the last approaches the first and not the other way around, nature becomes naïve." Loc. cit.

23. "nothing more than the independent existence, the existence of things through themselves, the existence through their own unchanging laws." Loc. cit.

24. "From this it emerges that this sort of pleasure in nature is not an aesthetic but a moral one; because it is conveyed by an idea, not produced directly by observation; nor is it governed at all by the beauty of forms ... It is not ... [natural] objects, it is an idea represented by them that we

love in them." Op. cit. p. 2

25. "They are what we were; they are what we should become again." Loc. cit.

26. "We are free and they are necessary; we change and they remain one." Op. cit., pp. 2 - 3

27. Op. cit., pp. 2 - 3

28. Op. cit., p.3

29. Loc. cit.

30. Loc. cit.

31. "Our childhood is the only state of undisturbed Nature which we still find in cultivated people. Thus it is no wonder that every spoor of Nature outside us takes us back to our childhood." Op. cit., p. 16

32. "The child is thus a manifestation of the ideal, not, indeed, the fulfilled [ideal], but that which has been given up, and it is thus in no way the image of its [the child's] needs and limits, on the contrary, it is the image of its pure and free power, its integrity, its eternity, which move us." Op. cit.
p. 4

33. Loc. cit.

34. Loc. cit.

35. Loc. cit.

36. Op. cit., pp. 4 - 5

37. In this way the entirely unique phenomenon comes into existence[;] an emotion in which cheerful mockery, respect and sadness unite." Op. cit., p. 5

38. For naïvety to exist, it is necessary that Nature should triumph over art. This happens either without the knowledge and will of the person, or with the full consciousness of that person. In the first place [this phenomenon] is naïvety of surprise and amuses; in the latter it is naïvety of disposition and moves. Op. cit. pp. 5 - 6

39. Loc. cit.

40. "It is thus necessary that nature should not triumph over art through its blind violence as a dynamic force, but through its form as a moral force, in short that it should triumph over art, not as an outward need, but as an inner necessity. [It is] not the inadequacy but the invalidity of art which must have given nature its prize, for inadequacy is a deficiency, and nothing which springs from a deficiency can command respect." Op. cit., pp. 6 - 7.

41. "I should perhaps say quite briefly: [the triumph] of truth over pretence; but the concept naïvety seems to include rather more, in that all simplicity, which triumphs over affectation, and

natural freedom, which triumphs over stiffness and compulsion, excite a similar feeling in us." Op. cit. p. 6n

42. "The naïve is childlikeness where it is no longer expected, that is exactly why the actual state of childhood cannot be described as naïve." Op. cit., p. 6

43. Op. cit., p. 8

44. Loc. cit.

45. Op. cit., p. 10.

46. "Genius is the talent (natural gift) which gives art its norms. Because talent, as the inborn productive capability of the artist, itself belongs to nature, one can also express it thus: genius is the inborn natural aptitude (*ingenium*) through which nature gives art its norms." Kant, pp. 178 - 179

47. Schiller, p. xvii

48. Op. cit., p. 11

49. "Only for the genius is it possible to be always at home outside of what is familiar and to extend nature without going outside it." Loc. cit.

50. Loc. cit.

51. Loc. cit.

52. Op. cit., p. 12.

53. Loc. cit.

54. "they are the words of God from the mouth of a child." Loc. cit.

55. "This kind of expression, where the term completely vanishes in what is being referred to and where speech leaves the thought which it expresses as it were naked ... this is what in style one calls above all inspired and genius." Op. cit., pp. 12 - 13

56. "The only flame on which the poetic spirit nourishes itself." Op. cit., p. 22

57. "the simplicity, truth and inevitability of Nature." Loc. cit.

58. "The poet, I propose, is either [one with] Nature, or he must seek it. The former [phenomenon] makes the naïve, the latter the sentimental poet." Loc. cit.

59. "He functions as an undivided sensory unit and as a harmonising whole." Loc. cit.

60. "an internal inevitability of existence" Op. cit., p. 58

61. Loc. cit.

62. "His experiences are not the formless play of chance, his thoughts not the empty play of representation; the former are governed by the law of inevitability, the latter spring from reality." Op. cit., p. 22

63. "Every true genius must be naïve or he is no genius." Op. cit., p. 10

64. Schiller (1): p. 14.

65. Schiller, p. 21

66. "thus all sensory harmony is neutralised in him, and he can only express himself as moral unit, i.e. as one striving for unity." Op. cit., p. 22

67. Op. cit. p. 23

68. "But when you are comforted over the lost happiness of nature, then let her perfection serve your heart as a model." Op. cit., p. 15

69. Op. cit., p. 57

70. "[The sentimental genius] only begins his operation where the [naïve genius] ends his; his strength lies in his ability to supplement an unsatisfactory object from within himself, and to transfer it, by his own power, from a limited condition to a condition of freedom." Loc. cit.

71. Op. cit., p. 26

72. Op. cit., p. 27

73. Loc. cit.

74. Op. cit., pp. 17-18.

75. "Poets are the protectors of nature in every way, even with respect to their thoughts. [Even] there, where they can no longer entirely fulfil this role and experience the destructive influence of arbitrary and artificial forms in their very selves, or even where they have done battle with these same influences, they will appear as the witnesses for and avengers of nature. Either they will be [one with] nature, or they will seek for [nature] which has been lost. In this way two entirely different ways of being a poet spring into existence, through which the whole field of poetry is created and its dimensions defined." Op cit, p. 18

76. Op. cit., p. 22

77. "One frequently finds both genera, not only in works of the same author, but even unified in the same work." Op. cit., p. 23n

78. "The opposite of naïve feeling is namely reflective understanding, and the sentimental mood is the result of the attempt to restore again the substance of naïve emotion even under the

conditions of reflection. This would happen through the fulfilled ideal in which art encounters nature once more. If one goes through these three concepts ... then one will find nature, and the corresponding naïve mood, ... art as the suspension of nature through freely functioning reason ..., and finally the ideal in which the perfected art returns to nature." Op. cit. p. 55n

79. "For we must finally allow that neither the naïve nor the sentimental character, when regarded alone, can quite live up to the ideal of noble humanity which can only emerge from the intimate combination of both these qualities." Op. cit., p. 71

80. Schiller (1), p. 16.

81. Loc. cit.

82. "But if the naïve poet triumphs over the sentimental on the side of reality and brings to real existence that for which the other can only awaken a lively desire, so the latter again has the great advantage over the former in that he is able to give the desire a greater object than the former did and [indeed] was able to do. We know that all reality falls short of the ideal; everything which exists has its limits, but thought is limitless." Schiller, p. 56

83. Schiller (1), p. 15

Chapter Four

1. Schiller, p. 9

2. Reginald Spink: *Hans Christian Andersen and his World*, p. 66.

3. Op cit, p. 5.

4. Loc. cit.

5. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 16, p. 143.

6. Dahlhaus, pp. 18 - 19.

7. Op cit, p. 26

8. Dahlhaus, p. 21.

9. Rudolf Elvers (ed): *Felix Mendelssohn A Life in Letters*, p. 87.

10. Bauer-Lechner, p. 113.

11. Brahms: *Lieder*, Band III, p. 93-94.

12. Dahlhaus, p. 69.

13. Einstein, A.: *Music in the Romantic Era*, p. 56

14. Dahlhaus, p. 106.
15. Op cit, pp. 106 - 107
16. Dahlhaus (2): *Between Romanticism and Modernism*, p. 7.
17. Howard S. Becker: *Art Worlds*, p. 259.
18. Wassily Kandinsky: "On the Question of Form" in Kandinsky & Franz Marc (eds): *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, p. 174.
19. Op cit, p. 176.
20. Oto Bihalji-Merin, *Modern Primitives*, p. 7.
21. Loc cit
22. Op cit, p. 31.
23. Op cit, p. 32.
24. Kandinsky, p. 178.
25. Op. cit., p. 158.
26. Op cit, p. 165.
27. Op cit, p. 153.
28. Op cit, p. 163.
29. Bihalji-Merin, p. 8.

Chapter Five

1. "It would be entirely wrong to bring sentimentality, pathos or irony into Mahler's songs. Some composers handle the folklike with an in itself very delicate and supercilious irony; Mahler's songs are not ironic in this way. The composer enters into them, he does not stand above his melodies or above his text. It must be repeated: Mahler, the one who knows, organises and leads is naïve as a creator." Stefan, p. 95.
2. Floros I, p. 53
3. Loc. cit.
4. "[My music] is natural sound - always and everywhere." Op cit., 215.

5. "Indeed Wagner made the means of expression of symphonic music his own, just as now on the other hand the symphonists, entirely entitled to do and fully conscious of what they are doing, take [as their own] the wealth of expressive possibilities gained through Wagner's works. In this sense all the arts, yes even Art [itself], are connected with Nature." Op cit., pp. 187 - 188.

6. Walter, p. 151.

7. Bauer-Lechner, p. 62.

8. Op. cit., p. 149.

9. Op. cit., pp. 96 - 97.

10. "the mysterious Sanskrit of Nature expressed in tones"
Floros I, p. 146.

11. "A song sleeps in all things, / Which dream on and on, / And the world begins to sing, / If you only find the magic word." Loc. cit.

12. "it is the speech of dreams" Op. cit., p. 147.

13. Loc. cit.

14. Op. cit., pp. 147 - 148.

15. "something the like of which the world has not yet heard. It gives all Nature a voice and tells so deep a secret, as one perhaps knows in a dream." Mahler (1924), p. 163.

16. Schiller, p. 6.

17. "The actions and speech of children, therefore, only give the pure impression of the naïve so long as we do not remember their inability in the realm of art and only take account of the contrast between their naturalness and the artificiality in us." Loc. cit.

18. [H]e was so naïve, and that I could not at first believe. He was childish. One could not at once understand this, if one heard him speak for the first time." Alma Mahler-Werfel: *Mein Leben*, p. 27.

Chapter Six

1. Bauer-Lechner, p. 130.

2. Dargie, E., *Music and poetry in the songs of Gustav Mahler*, p. 301 - 302.

3. Arnim and Brentano, p. 692.

4. Op. cit., pp. 676 - 677.

5. Op. cit., pp. 245 - 246.

6. Bauer-Lechner, p. 34.

7. "The style of these songs is particularly peculiar with respect to harmony; through open fifths or fourths, through cross relationships, a free approach[?] and many other abrupt usages he achieves the effect of artlessness, of natural sound, of the folksonglike, through the simplest and near exquisite art. He dispenses here with all chromatic and enharmonic [harmony], allows the tonality free rein in the most unfettered manner, in such a way that he prefers to do away with modulation and places the keys immediately one after the other; which creates an immensely harsh, archaically powerful impression. And one which is the opposite of the artistic, which has [nothing to do with] the studios of dandies. Specht, p. 166.

8. Mahler-Werfel, p. 27.

9. "And their melodic style is also as if forgotten songs wish to awaken; one hears for the first time these most simple, tunes, created apparently without refinement, and sounding in youthful freshness and happiness and sorrow like the immediate sounds of the young heart, and they are instantly familiar, as if one had sung them a hundred times and then forgotten them; - they carry forth the fragrance of the folk song." Specht, Loc. cit.

10. Floros: *Mahler II*, p. 173.

11. Siegfried Borris: "Mahlers holzschnitthafter Liedstil" in *Musik und Bildung* (Nov. 1973), p. 580.

12. Floros II, p. 141.

13. Bauer-Lechner, p. 32.

14. Op cit, p. 33.

15. Op cit, p. 235.

16. La Grange, p. 764.

17. Bauer-Lechner, p. 34.

18. Op cit, p. 32.

19. Floros II, p. 311.

20. Mahler (1940), p. 93.

21. "It is somewhat different that, with complete consciousness of the nature and tone of this poetry (which is essentially distinguished from every other kind of 'literary poetry' and can almost be designated more Nature and Life -that is the source of all poetry - than Art) I have dedicated myself to them body and soul." A. Mahler (1924), pp. 254 - 255.

22. Dargie, p. 170.
23. Mitchell, p. 145.
24. Walter, p. 95.
25. Loc. cit.
26. Bauer-Lechner, pp. 58 - 59.
27. Op. cit., p. 33.
28. Op. cit., p. 32.
29. Walter, p. 97.
30. Loc. cit.
31. Arnim and Brentano, pp. 245 - 246.
32. Dahlhaus, p. 113.
33. "A decisive factor in Mahler's handling of Wunderhorn texts is that poetic patterns are not set to music in the traditional sense, that texts are far rather included as material in the composition process as a whole." Kurt von Fischer: "Gustav Mahlers Umgang mit Wunderhorn Texte", *Melos/ Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* Vol. 4, 1978, p. 107.
34. Bauer-Lechner, p. 33.

Chapter Seven

1. Mitchell, p. 145
2. Op. cit., p. 146.
3. "Mahler's 'folk tone' - if one wishes to call it that - is neither affirmatively nationalist like Dvorák's, nor folklorist like that of Bartók and, in places, Janáček. Mahler does not idealise in the sense of the puristic folklore of the nineteenth century, but rather shocks with its analytical objectivity, with which he utilises all sorts of sounds from his environment without any aesthetic censorship. Folk sounds are thus seen with regard to their content: not as symbols of the beautifying of the seen milieu, but as voice of the raw mundane, as a view on social behaviour." Karbusický, p. 70.
4. Dahlhaus (1985), p. 109.
5. Mitchell, p. 145.
6. Loc. cit.
7. Loc. cit.

8. Op. cit., p. 145.

9. Dahlhaus, p. 108.

10. Op cit, pp. 108 - 109.

11. Op cit, p. 110.

12. Danuser, H., *Gustav Mahler und seine Zeit*, p. 70

13. "One would fall short of the mark, if one were to read into this statement that, in the stylisation of natural sounds, Mahler would have perceived an artistic end in itself. Rather this [statement] shows that, when it comes to the meaning of natural sounds in his music, in the end, the function which they fulfil in the context of the organised whole work is the deciding factor." Loc. cit.

14. Walter, p. 97.

15. Danuser, pp. 68 - 69

16. Bauer-Lechner, pp. 58 - 59.

17. Op. cit., p. 33.

18. Op. cit., p. 32.

19. Op. cit., p. 32.

20. Loc. cit.

21. Walter, p. 131.

22. Op. cit., p. 132.

23. Bauer-Lechner, p. 32.

24. Op. cit., p. 32.

25. Op. cit. pp. 32 - 33.

26. Dargie, p. 354.

27. Op. cit., p. 359.

28. Op cit, p. 346.

29. Floros II, p. 173.

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bells in "Nicht wiedersehen" occurs in bb 3 - 4 and 17 - 20 and even before the indication is given it seems to imply a low melodic percussion instrument. In "Aus! Aus!" the march style suggests a military band. This is supported by the drumroll type figures in bb 19 - 25 and 67 - 70. Furthermore, knowledge of Mahler's orchestral music might lead one to deduce that the birdsong figure in "Ich ging mit Lust" heard for the first time in bb 6 - 8 and in its more extended version in bb 24 - 28 might imply the sound of the flute or even of the solo violin. A special case among these songs is "Ablösung im Sommer" which Mahler adapted and orchestrated as the third movement of the Third Symphony, giving one a clear idea of how the sound of this song was conceived.

The use of the orchestra in plumbing the depths of the subject, as Mahler puts it, occurs at both the general and the specific level. At the general level, Mahler uses his orchestra to imitate two different instrumental ensembles connected with the world of folk music, or the music of the people. The first of these, used in the largest single group of songs, is the sound of the military band, which Mahler recreates symphonically through an emphasis on brass and percussion instruments, and, in some cases, the piccolo.

Mahler's settings of texts with a military theme ("Der Schildwache Nachtlid"; "Lied der Verfolgten im Thurm"; "Trost im Unglück"; "Revelge"; "Der Tambour'sell") abound in drum rolls and fanfares; the effect is of a genuine military band. In "Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen", the effect is muted (both literally and figuratively). The horn calls and drum rolls are mournful and distant.

The second ensemble that Mahler imitates is that of the village orchestra or dance band. Mahler creates the sound of this ensemble by using the four strings, the basic four wind instruments (flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon), horns and, in most cases, triangle, in a manner almost reminiscent of a chamber orchestra bringing to mind the discussion of the Bohemian musicians