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# Chorale Topic from Haydn to Brahms: Chorale in Secular Contexts of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

Eileen M. Watabe
*University of Northern Colorado*

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

Greeley, Colorado

The Graduate School


CHORALE TOPIC FROM HAYDN TO BRAHMS:
CHORALE IN SECULAR CONTEXTS OF THE
EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH
CENTURIES


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Eileen M. Watabe


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Accepted by the Doctoral Committee

_____
Jonathan Bellman, D.M.A., Research Advisor

_____
Carissa Reddick, Ph.D., Committee Member

_____
Marian Hesse, M.M., Committee Member

_____
Stephen Luttmann, M.L.S., M.A., Faculty Representative

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Accepted by the Graduate School

_____
Linda L. Black, Ed.D.
Dean of the Graduate School and International Admissions

# ABSTRACT

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Chorale as a genre originated in sixteenth-century Lutheran worship music, but chorales and chorale style did not really enter the vocabulary of secular concert music as a musical topic until the eighteenth century, as a semiotic code for ideas and feelings associated with chorales. Although the frequency of use as well as the range of contexts and implied meanings of chorale topic increased from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the scholarship of topical analysis concerning chorales has been vague and incomplete. Chorales by definition are congregational, identifying and expressing the sentiments of a group, and their most common associations are of purity, archaism, and of course spirituality.

When chorales are used topically, the range of their expressive perspectives broadens considerably, and varies widely depending on the context. Chorale topic can express a religious or nationalistic "We," a monumental and impersonal "It," or an intimate and personal "I." Within the category of "I" expressions, chorale topic can express the irony and despair of the "I" separated from the "We," or on the other hand, the comfort, guidance, or transcendence of the separated "I" seeking and finding its community or communion. Haydn was one of the first composers to regularly use chorale as a topic in slow movements of his symphonies and string quartets. Nineteenth-

century composers—Beethoven, Schubert, Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Schumann, and Brahms among others—provide examples of chorale topic of every expressive type and in many genres, including art song, oratorio, piano sonata, duo sonata, string quartet, symphony, opera, and piano nocturne.  Because of their resonance with actual religious practice, chorales and chorale topic remain perennially current, inherently accessible, and easily blended with other styles and topics.  Understanding the range of meanings that chorale topic can carry is thus essential to a solid stylistic understanding and hermeneutic competence with music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

**Chorale as Topic**

In rehearsals of nineteenth-century symphonic literature, orchestral musicians hear countless references to "The Chorale"—as in, "Let's begin at The Chorale, please." Though not much is made of the significance of these passages or themes, the players usually seem to know where to go (they know the sound or look of "chorale"), and the reference is frequent and assumptive, as if The Chorale were a commonly understood section of a symphony. Chorales are easy to come by also in other genres of instrumental or secular works from the nineteenth century, enough, it seems, to be taken for granted. But chorale itself is a genre: music for Lutheran worship originating from the sixteenth century. So the presence of a "chorale" in, for instance, a nineteenth-century symphony is not necessarily the presence of chorale as a genre, but of Chorale as a musical *topic*, i.e. a semiotic code for some idea or feeling associated with chorales. (From this point on, Chorale the topic will be capitalized to differentiate it from chorales or chorale-like passages.)

Lutheran chorales as worship music have enjoyed uninterrupted use from their inception to the present day, and Chorale has apparently been popular since at least some time in the nineteenth century. But the intersections of the genre and the topic, as well as the historical gap from sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, have been somewhat glossed over by music scholarship, particularly that of topic theory. In the scholarship

specifically concerned with defining and identifying topics, Chorale is curiously absent or

incompletely considered.  For instance, it does not appear in the lists of topics of either

Leonard Ratner in *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (1980)[1] or of Kofi Agawu

in *Playing with Signs* (1991).[2]  It does appear in Agawu's *Music as Discourse* (2008) in

his much-expanded topics lists for both Classic and Romantic eras, but—tellingly—with

no examples from Classic music, only from Romantic.[3]  As for Ratner's *Romantic Music:*

*Sound and Syntax*, interestingly, in the section on the various textures of the Romantic

era, he includes discussion of "full-chord texture," but not in connection to chorale style;

he associates this texture only with keyboard idioms and instrumental *tutti*.[4]

However, Ratner does use the word "choralelike" when he describes the full-

chord texture in Mendelssohn's *Song Without Words* No. 48, Op. 102, No. 6.

Significantly, he connects this style with "a more substantial depth of expression than a

simple melody and accompaniment could achieve as well as a "retrospective stylistic

orientation."[5]  In his book-length study *The Beethoven String Quartets*, Ratner's detailed

analyses include multiple identifications of Chorale as well as the ways Beethoven

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[1] Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980).  Ratner discusses chorale not as a topic, but as it existed in the Protestant church of the Classical era, in particular, how Johann Adam Hiller tried to simplify chorale settings from what he regarded as artifice in the settings of J.S. Bach (169–70).

[2] Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 30.  Agawu was not intending his list to be comprehensive; it is just supposed to represent the topics found in the works he analyzes. What is curious is that he does in fact identify chorale in one of his analyses (141).

[3] Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 43–9.

[4] Leonard Ratner, *Romantic Music: Sound and Syntax*. (New York: Schirmer, 1992), 25–6.

[5] Leonard Ratner, *Romantic Music: Sound and Syntax*, 241–44.

subverts or contradicts it.[6]  Although he makes only scant mentions of Chorale in his

other books, he clearly recognizes its significance as a topic.  But even in the discussions

of the string quartets, Ratner is sometimes vague about Chorale, or stops short of

postulating its exact meaning.  (Some of these works, as well as Ratner's analyses, will

be discussed in detail in the following chapters.)

  Janice Dickensheets includes Chorale in her lexicon of nineteenth-century topics,

but only under other headings, i.e. she does not give it separate treatment.  She considers

Chorale as one of the sacred musical symbols, along with chant and fugato, which often

enhance the demonic style (though she provides an example only for chant).

Additionally, Dickensheets also lists Chorale as one of various "archaizing" styles, with

the example of "the Chorale style…in 'The Great Gate of Kiev,' to portray the grandeur

of the ancient religious center."[7]

  Chorales are often identified in topical analyses, but not fully defined or

explained.  Authors such as Eero Tarasti and Robert Hatten, for example, certainly

mention Chorale in their analyses, but defining it is not their main concern.[8]  Holger

Stüwe's article on Chorale in relation to nineteenth-century "ambiguity" is perhaps an

exception; in it he notes the "virtual absence of any detailed discussion of chorale in the

literature on musical topics," but strangely, he cites this as evidence that Chorale "in

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[6] The specific movements in which Chorale appears include Op. 59, No. 2/II; Op. 130/I; Op. 131/VI; and Op. 132/III.

[7] Janice Dickensheets, "The Topical Vocabulary of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 2/3 (April 2012), 120, 124.

[8] Wye Jamison Allanbrook was mainly concerned with dance topics and Raymond Monelle with hunt, military, and pastoral topics; Byron Almén is less interested in individual topics than in theories of narrative.

instrumental music seems to be confined to Romantic music."[9]  Outside of the scholars

above, though, a good number of others have analyzed the role of Chorale in specific

works of the nineteenth century (e.g. Brahms' First Symphony), specific genres (e.g.

grand opera), specific composers (e.g. Mendelssohn), and specific aspects of chorale and

Chorale (e.g. the sociopolitical aspect of chorales in early nineteenth-century

revolutionary Europe).  Again, these scholars are all writing on Romantic era music

(Beethoven at the earliest), not Classic.  Chorale is without a doubt vastly more common

in Romantic music, but the idea that it is a strictly nineteenth-century topic is not true.

       Stüwe's earliest example of Chorale is from Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 132

(The "Heiliger Dankgesang" from the third movement), from 1825, and the first example

that he discusses in detail is Schumann's "Der Dichter Spricht" from 1838.  The focus of

his article is the self-reflective use of Chorale in the Romantic aesthetic, i.e. its generation

of subjective meaning through the dissolution of its conventional topical associations

(though this thesis itself dissolves by the end of Stüwe's article), but neither that idea, nor

any other Romantic aesthetic, nor the "Heiliger Dankgesang" appeared from nowhere.

As Chorale was used topically in the nineteenth century, its meanings seem connected to

uniquely Romantic ideas: the politics of inclusion and exclusion; the idealization of the

mixing of sacred and secular, of private and public, the objective and the subjective, the

monumental and the minute.  Not surprisingly, of course, these ideas had their roots in

the eighteenth century.

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[9] Holger M. Stüwe, "Musical Topics and Ambiguity in Nineteenth-Century Music: Towards a Reappraisal," *The Musicology Review* 8/6 (2010), 66.  Stüwe chooses Chorale as his case study for discussing Romantic ambiguity.

Various authors (Hatten, Ratner, and Tarasti, as mentioned above, and others) have identified Chorale in certain works of Beethoven, but it is difficult to find any encompassing studies on the subject.  As for earlier examples, H.C. Robbins Landon and James Webster both name one of Haydn's styles "hymnic," but their discussion of it entails only listing examples.[10]  Richard Will, on the other hand, is much more thorough in describing the role of chorales and hymns in various types of "characteristic" symphonies in the late Classic era,[11] though again, Chorale is not his central concern. These limited or peripheral references, then, perhaps reflect the limited or peripheral role Chorale played in the eighteenth century concert music.   Examples of it, however, not only exist, but also should be considered as precedent or context for nineteenth-century Chorale usage.

The present study does not seek to locate or catalogue every instance of Chorale or chorale in the repertoire, but rather, to trace how and why they came into secular concert music, as well as the changing nature of their meaning or purpose in this context. Wherever Chorale or chorales are found, their presence is not arbitrary; they are patently distinct in melody, rhythm, and texture, and this makes them stand in marked contrast to their surrounding material.  The variety of the melodies, though, as well as the wide spectrum of their locations, meanings, and treatments, seem to require differentiation and

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[10] H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works,* vol. II: *Haydn at Esterháza 1766-1790* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 563, 630; James Webster, "When Did Haydn Begin to Write 'Beautiful' Melodies?" in *Haydn Studies: Proceedings of the International Haydn Conference, Washington, DC 1975*, 385–88, ed. Jen Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer, and James Webster (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 387.
    [11] Richard Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

invite comparative analysis. This is what past scholarship investigating various facets of chorale and Chorale has not done in a comprehensive way.

Such analysis should reveal something about the nature of topical expression from Classic to Romantic eras, or mirror something about the nature of Classicism and Romanticism. While avoiding a strictly chronological march through composers or style periods, the focus in this study will instead be on defining and identifying usage types and their meanings. A certain amount of chronology is necessary, however, to trace the changing role and use of chorale as well as Chorale over time, from being purely in the province of Lutheran worship service and having no part in secular concert music, all the way to being a common and even assumed part of secular concert music. For a topic as common as Chorale, it seems necessary to realize the range of possibilities for its meaning and not make assumptions about its place or purpose in any piece of music. Chorale continues as a topic to the present day, but this study will include music from the eighteenth century through the middle of the nineteenth (plus a few examples from the 1870s), with the hope of laying a foundation for future study of later Chorale usage.

## Misidentified Chorale

With retrospective knowledge listeners may almost have come to *expect* a chorale in a long or complex form, perhaps because of its rhetorical function. Careless or casual uses of terms such as "chorale" or "hymnlike" are commonplace not only in orchestra rehearsals, but also in program notes, popular Internet sites and even in academic writing on music. In such cases these are default terms used to describe a texture or a timbre that has come to be associated with chorales—four-part homorhythm and/or brass instruments

playing loudly as a group.  The latter, however, may simply be a fanfare figure, a horn call, or a march tune in a loud iteration, and may lack the essential characteristics of chorales.

Since the development of orchestral style and sound in the eighteenth century, orchestral *tuttis*, often including brass, have been used for a sense of thrust and power, or for the establishment of solo versus ensemble sound.  Chorales can serve both these functions as well, but a *fortissimo tutti* does not necessarily constitute a chorale, though writers often act as if it does.  For example, Leonard Ratner himself uses the term to describe the opening of the finale of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, saying that "a brass chorale dominates the massive chordal texture."[12]  But the melody there is hardly a chorale, either in contour or connotation.  Similar moments can be found in many symphonic finales—Beethoven's *Eroica*, Schumann's Third, Tchaikovsky's Fourth and Fifth, and elsewhere.  The point is not to correct such designations—an impossible task—but rather to provide clear criteria for understanding what kind of collective utterance is being evoked.

## Lutheran Chorale and Chorale Cantatas

Casual contemporary usage also often treats "chorale" and "hymn" as interchangeable.  Even Robert Hatten is less than careful with his terms, as in his description of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, Op. 109, first movement, for which Hatten uses

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[12] Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 154.

"religious," "hymnlike," and "chorale-like" all in the same paragraph.[13] "Hymn" is the

more inclusive term, as it can be applied to any religious song in praise of God—ancient,

pagan, Lutheran, Catholic, post-Calvinist, Byzantine, Orthodox, and so on. In English, a

"chorale" is a Lutheran congregational hymn. Lutheran chorales were originally simple

(stepwise, limited in range, syllabic, and generally metrical), monophonic melodies to be

sung congregationally, whether their sources were medieval chant, secular folk song, or

newly composed melody.

Lutheran chorales were not the first example of congregational or vernacular

sacred song. But what is special is that the Lutheran chorale comprises a huge repertory

and a huge variety of texts and melodies (and later, harmonizations) designed in a

popular, accessible style. It also elevated vernacular, congregational song to liturgical

status, and the repertory was widely disseminated via hymnbooks.[14]

Lutheran chorale harmonizations, particularly in what became the traditional,

four-voiced, homophonic texture, subsequently became associated with the terms

"chorale" and "hymn" just as much as the melodies themselves, regardless of

denomination. These harmonizations can range in complexity, from simple settings such

as those of Johann Adam Hiller, to the more elaborate (and most famous) ones of J.S.

Bach.[15]

Hymn and chorale melodies, moreover, have often been treated polyphonically or

included as movements in larger sacred compositions, since long before the time in

question here, in masses, cantatas, chorale preludes, and so on, drawing on Medieval and

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[13] Robert Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 175.
[14] Chapter One will discuss in more detail the history of chorale.
[15] Contrasting examples given in Ratner, *Classic Music*, 169–70.

Renaissance cantus firmus traditions.  Of these, the most significant to this study are

those in which chorales are presented at one or more points in the compositions, in their

original forms, without elaboration.  The reason for this is twofold: 1) It is the

unelaborated, four-part, homophonic texture that marks Chorale, and 2) Chorale never

appears alone as actual chorales do when they are a genre unto themselves.  Topics—

musico-semantic codes with associative or referential meaning—by definition need a

larger context in order to carry out their function.  So in a work such as a chorale cantata,

the placement of the chorale in a simple "hymnbook" setting, or *Cantionalsatz*, within the

larger composition has a rhetorical significance, and this is a starting place for

considering how Chorale functions in the context of secular works, especially inasmuch

as rhetoric and structure are connected to topical function.

## Catholicism and Nationalism

Four-part Lutheran chorales or imitations of their sound eventually even found

their way into Catholic services.  The eighteenth-century reforms of Emperor Joseph II in

Catholic Austria included the encouragement of congregational singing in the Lutheran

manner.[16]  Furthermore, in response to political reorganizations of Germany and

nationalistic trends in the early decades of the nineteenth century, "Catholic composers

now felt free and even called upon to incorporate Lutheran chorales" into works

performed for and by Catholics.  Even ardently Catholic composers such as Carl Loewe

seemed to have no qualms about using Protestant musical styles; all his oratorios, for

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[16] Bruce C. MacIntyre, "Religion and Liturgy," in *The Cambridge Mozart Encyclopedia*, ed. Cliff Eisen and Simon P. Keefe, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 417; Richard Will, *The Characteristic Symphony in the Age of Haydn and Beethoven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 84.

instance, incorporate Lutheran-style chorales.[17]  There were Catholic equivalents at this

time, but Loewe may have been familiar with Lutheran chorales, as he was a student of

Lutheran theorist and composer Daniel Gottlob Türk, who in turn had studied under

Hiller.

Both Richard Taruskin and Mark Evan Bonds have explored the link between

chorale revival and nationalism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Taruskin links it to concurrent nationalistic trends and the romantic idealization of the "I"

finding fulfillment in the "We," in which religious chorales were co-opted as legitimizing,

authenticating "folksongs" in the name of nation rather than of faith.  He explains that as

Lutheran Prussia and historically Catholic territories became bound together

politically, the Lutheran chorale came to be "considered the common property of all

Germans irrespective of creed" and the revival of chorale singing was encouraged.[18]

Romanticism sacralized ideas of both nation and art, and choral singing was described—

for example, by Swiss educator Hans Georg Nägeli—as a bonding, harmonizing, uniting

force—just as St. Basil had described choral psalm singing in the fourth century.[19]

Secular choral societies (*Männerchöre* and other types) became enormously popular in

these decades.

As nations formed (or re-formed) and as nationalism itself became increasingly

important, national songs were also created; it can hardly be a coincidence that they are

called national *hymns* or *anthems* and that they very commonly use the Lutheran chorale

style.  The spread of the Lutheran/Protestant denomination, the spread of chorale style

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[17] Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 3 of *The Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 164–65.

[18] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 164–65.

[19] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 163.

into other denominations, and the adoption of the style by the national hymn put the

Lutheran chorale style into the general musical consciousness; it could thus become a

recognizable topic in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and could also carry even

more levels or types of meaning.

<div align="center">**Chorale vs. Chorale Topic**</div>

For passages in instrumental and/or secular music to be classified as Chorale, the

typical identifying elements are: 1) a melody of moderate range, stepwise motion, even

phrases, and simple, metrical rhythm which quotes or evokes traditional church hymns or

other solemn ceremonial music; 2) four- or five-part homorhythmic harmonization in

choir registration; 3) generally simple harmonic progressions and avoidance of

dissonance;[20] 4) slow to moderate tempo.  The aspect of tempo is of particular

significance, as it often is with topical identifications, since many chorale tunes can

sound like marches or dances at faster tempi.  Authors writing on church music in the late

eighteenth century emphasized slowness as a proper characteristic for chorales; this in

fact represents a presentation of chorales different from how they sounded in previous

eras.[21]  5) Finally, at a certain point in the history of Chorale, instrumentation (in the

orchestral context, of course) can be a relevant factor.  Trombones in particular are

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[20] This can vary somewhat, but harmonic complications in a chorale are uncharacteristic and demand interpretation; for an example, see Chapter 3, Example 3-6a and 3-6b—the "Pilgrims' Chorus" from Act III of *Tannhäuser*.

[21] Sieghard Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," in *Beethoven Studies 3*, ed. Alan Tyson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 173–74; Robert L. Marshall and Robin A. Leaver, "Chorale: The Enlightenment," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*; accessed 30 May 2014.

associated with chorales and church music in general, an affinity reaching back to the Renaissance.

During the late Classic and early Romantic eras when Chorale entered secular music, contemporary writings from the 1780s and 1790s on church music by authors such as Türk further stressed that chorale melodies should not be altered by passing tones, ornaments, or accidentals, and that the harmonization should avoid modulation. These stipulations represent a puristic view that chorale harmonizations such as those by J.S. Bach were too complex and did not represent the "true" nature of the chorale.[22]

When actual Lutheran chorales appear in concert music, the degree of their topicality varies. In an opera with a religious-themed plot such as Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*, or a religious-themed symphony such as Mendelssohn's Fifth, the chorales are themselves, i.e. they are meant to be recognized and their intended signification is fairly evident—Lutheran religion, and in the case of Mendelssohn perhaps the German nation as well. The same goes for nationalistic or revolutionary hymns in overtly programmatic national or battle pieces, such as "God Save the King" in Beethoven's *Wellingtons Sieg.* On the other hand, as will be shown in Chapter One, Mozart's opera *Die Zauberflöte* also uses an actual Lutheran chorale (in the scene of the "Two Armed Men" in the finale), but in that case, the topical signification is rather more complicated, and has nothing to do with Lutheranism.

The signified meanings of Chorale include the wide range of subjects and moods of actual chorales: profession of faith, benediction, celebration, funeral, solemn ritual, rousing call to action, transcendent prayer, etc. In a more general way, chorales represent

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[22] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 175.

the sacred, the sanctioned, and the congregational—an expression of a unified "We." Sixteenth-century Lutherans, for example, connected with each other as a discrete group in the singing of hymns by the use of the vernacular and the denomination itself, and by their right to participate in the service or even in the sermon. By the eighteenth century, when the genre was still in use but already considered very old, chorales accrued additional associations of archaism and purity. Additionally, as Bach and others used chorales in passions and cantatas, they took on the rhetorical function of peroration, summarizing the message or guiding the interpretation of the aria (the "sermon"), much as the chorus functioned in Greek dramas or Baroque operas, providing a perspective with which the audience members might identify themselves. "Chorale," after all, comes from "choral," which is nothing more than an adjectival form of "chorus." This legacy may well inform the use of Chorale in large secular instrumental forms of later centuries.

Chorale topic can be combined with other topics or styles (for instance, such tropes as chorale + aria, or chorale + march, etc.), which complicates both its identification and its implications. Furthermore, in nineteenth-century works of a Romantic, self-reflective nature, Chorale takes on additional layers of meaning and complexity. For instance, unlike actual chorales in actual religious services, Chorale can also refer to a "We" by someone on the outside, thereby making the "We" more like a "Them." Chapters Three, Four, and Five will use various pronouns (We, It, I, Me, Them, You) to organize the different types of expressions of Chorale and the implied perspective or "voice" behind each one. The communal "We" is implicit in all chorales, but other voices emerge when Chorale is placed in the context of other topics and genres.

Briefly: "We" is a communal and public expression, something that is accessible and understandable to everyone in a community, and moreover expresses shared identity and sentiments; "It" is similar to "We" in that it concerns something larger than the individual, but it is more impersonal—it is *about* that thing or group rather than from its perspective; "I" is an individual, personal, and private expression; "Me" and "Them" are similar to "I" and "We," but again are objectifying—something *about* me rather than simply from my perspective, and *about* "Them" in relation to "Me," an individual looking at a group from the outside rather than feeling part of it. Finally, "You" refers to the tertiary rhetoric of conversation between composers and/or their works through allusions and references. Various shades and nuances of these categories of expression will be explained as they arise in the discussion.

The use of chorale style in national hymns could, in a sense, be called one of its first topical uses, since so employed, its associations—the sacred, old, and communal— lend their significations to a new context. The following chapter will explore national hymns, depictive music, and "hymnic" works of Franz Joseph Haydn as eighteenth-century locations for the beginnings of Chorale in secular music.

CHAPTER ONE

LATE CLASSIC ORIGINS

**The Sacred in the Secular**

In Act II of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (1791), before Tamino enters his final trial

of fire and water, two Armed Men lead him to a pyramid and read to him its inscription:

> He who walks this path to the trial's crest,
> By fire, water, air, and earth is tested.
> If he can but conquer fear of death,
> He soon will rise to heaven from earth.
> Enlightened, he will at last understand
> All of those mysteries of Isis he can.[1]

They sing these words to the tune of the Lutheran chorale "Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh

darein" (Ah God, look down from heaven), which Mozart sets as the cantus firmus to a

Bach-style chorale prelude (see Examples 1-1a and 1-1b):



Example 1-1a. "Ach Gott, vom Himmel sieh darein" as used by Bach in Cantata BWV 2, Chorale, mm. 1–4.

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[1] Translation by J.D. McClatchy, *Seven Mozart Librettos*: A Verse Translation (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011), 1145.

Example 1-1b.  Mozart, *Die Zauberflöte*, Act II, Finale, "Der, welcher wandert diese Straße,"
vocal score, mm. 17–26.

The text of the original chorale is fitting (probably not coincidentally), appealing

as it does for God's mercy in showing lost souls the correct path and helping them endure

their trials, which are likened to the tests by fire of pure silver.  For the most part,

however, audiences in Mozart's Vienna would not have known this melody,[2] particularly

with a different text, and in the magical, Masonic, quasi-Egyptian context of *Die*

*Zauberflöte*.  Neither Mozart nor his environment was Lutheran, and no Lutheran

meanings can be interpreted from this chorale (besides the hidden meaning of the original

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[2] Christoph Wolff, *Mozart at the Gateway to his Fortune: Serving the Emperor,*
*1788–1791* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2012), 121.

text); Mozart's aim, achieved through rather unconventional means for his time, seems to have been the evocation of a sense of archaic and absolute authority, cited in an obsolete language—Egyptian hieroglyphs on stage and Bach-style counterpoint in the music.[3] This archaic style is in stark and delightful contrast to the music in the remainder of the scene, in which Pamina and Tamino are reunited, and the previously stern Armed Men excitedly encourage them.

Use of actual church music, depiction of Christian rites, and sacred themes in general are somewhat scarce in opera of the eighteenth century; the prevailing thought of the time saw an inherent blasphemy in mimetic representation of the sacred. Eric McKee has identified a chorale-like idiom used to signal religiosity in scenes with priests in eighteenth-century opera, with examples from Lully, Gluck, Piccinni, Mozart, and others (one is given in Example 1-2). As is *Die Zauberflöte*, however, the settings are again pre-Christian, and therefore not likely to offend. McKee attributes the transcendent religious feeling in these passages not only to the simple rhythms, chorale texture, and slow tempo but also to the harmonic progression I-V7-vi found in his examples.[4] (This will be discussed again in Chapter Four.)

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[3] Wolff, *Mozart at the Gateway to his Fortune*, 122.
[4] Eric McKee, "The Topic of the Sacred Hymn in Beethoven's Instrumental Music," *College Music Symposium* 47 (2007), 23–28.

Example 1-2. Gluck, *Iphigénie en Tauride* (1779), Act 4, Scene 2, "Hymne" (Chorus of Priestesses), vocal score, mm. 1–16.

When such scenes or themes increased to the point of pervasiveness and assumed a more central role in specifically Christian-oriented plots in the grand opera repertory after the French Revolution, they were often met with censorship or alteration.[5] If opera

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[5] James Parakilas, "The Chorus," *The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 76–92; Francesco Izzo, "Verdi, the Virgin, and the Censor: The Politics of the Cult of Mary in 'I Lombardi alla prima

was in fact seen as an inappropriate setting for sacred music or sacred rites, Mozart may
have avoided censure or condemnation in spite of using an actual church hymn by using
archaic *Lutheran* music—perhaps not too heinous an act in Catholic Vienna.

Could it have been an assumed taboo to use actual church music in concert music
as well as stage works?  Broadly speaking, religion and government were more bound up
with each other prior to the Revolution, but perhaps more significantly, the eighteenth
and nineteenth centuries had different concepts of religion and its relationship to art: the
nineteenth century tended to celebrate rather than condemn the union of the sacred and
secular, including the idea of *Kunstreligion*, or imbuing art with sacred attributes and
treating it as religion.  But even if eighteenth-century aesthetics were more cautious in
this regard, the examples below will show that actual chorales were apparently perfectly
permissible in various concert works of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
So it seems less accurate to extrapolate from theatrical/operatic censorship that the same
might apply to instrumental concert music, especially considering chorale *topic* as
opposed to actual chorales.

The late eighteenth century was also a time when the listening habits of the public
were changing, a subject to which both Richard Will and Mark Evan Bonds have devoted
attention.[6]  Concerning Haydn's *The Seven Last Words*, Will comments:

> No work more obviously demanded the silent, quasi-devout concentration
> that would become the norm for listening to instrumental music.  If any
> reference to a recognizable subject matter drew attention to symphonies,
> the works with the most elaborate texts and thus the greatest semantic
> ambitions helped make the argument that every moment of an orchestral

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crocciata' and 'Giovanna d'Arco,'" *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 60/3
(Fall 2007), 558.  For more on grand opera, see Chapter Three.

[6] Mark Evan Bonds, *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of
Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

performance was significant.  One could hardly treat the utterances of the crucified Christ, even intermittently, as background music.[7]

The idea of the elevating or deepening secular genres by adding religious references is proto-Romantic; the combination of sacred and secular creates a union greater than the sum of its parts.

It is certainly interesting that Kofi Agawu felt compelled to add Chorale to his list of Classic era topics in his second book, even though he has no examples.  In fact, he lumps Chorale with some of the most typical Classic era topics in order to illustrate the continuity of their usage into the Romantic era.[8]  But Chorale is not a common Classic topic, and the more likely explanation, rather than censorship or taboo, is simply that chorales in the eighteenth century had not yet acquired, or were just starting to acquire the associations and meanings that will be explored in this study.  Will has acknowledged that apart from chorales found in battle pieces and pastoral symphonies, and scattered examples of Gregorian tunes or chorale-*prelude* topics in Haydn symphonies (Nos. 22, 26, 30), using church music or church styles, let alone chorales, was not a common practice, but that nobody seems to have complained specifically about it, either.[9]  Sieghard Brandenburg has postulated the following in the way of a reason for this:

> As an art form the chorale presents a double aspect.  As the property of school teachers and village organists, it was commonly regarded as primitive, inartistic, and provincial, and it held little attraction for most composers and virtuosi.  But from another point of view it corresponded

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[7] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 13.

[8] Kofi Agawu, *Music as Discourse: Semiotic Adventures in Romantic Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 42.

[9] Richard Will, personal email, 10 November 2014.  There are scattered examples of Gregorian chant in works of Mozart as well, but they tend to be sacred, such as his Offertory "Benedictus sit Deus," K. 117, or occasional, such as his *Maurerische Trauermusik* (Masonic Funeral Music) K. 477.  See Mark Evan Bonds, "Gregorian Chant in the Works of Mozart," *Mozart-Jahrbuch* (Jan 1980), 305–10.

precisely in its artlessness to the ideal of simplicity, naturalness, and closeness to the people, and this always guaranteed a certain dutiful respect…Türk and other choir-masters…describe the chorale somewhat defensively as one of the most important musical genres: 'Perhaps there is nothing in music to surpass the chorale melody, which if it is properly treated contains so much that is noble, sublime, solemn, touching, and reverent, that anyone who is not entirely insensitive must be filled with emotion' [*Von den wichtigsen Pflichten eines Organisten* (1787), 44–45].[10]

Because of their integral and ubiquitous role in the Lutheran church service, chorale texts since their inception have served almost all categories of religious expression, including penitence, praise, comfort, declaration of faith, supplication, and mourning, which means that referencing chorales topically could be a reference to any of those categories.  Another important facet of both chorale texts and melodies is that they have followed different developmental trends regarding their tone, within the history of Lutheranism and its offshoots.  These variations are too many to mention here (and this is not a hymnological study), but certain phases of chorale's history have particular relevance to the evolution of Chorale.

In the first part of the Baroque era (ca. 1600–75), the simple, four-part harmonization with the melody in the top voice became the norm, and new chorales were conceived in this form.  Furthermore, new texts flourished and reflected a personal and subjective tone, partly due to the prevalence of home devotions (rather than church services) during the Thirty Years' War.  The music likewise was increasingly modeled on art song rather than folk song or chant (as had been the case in the sixteenth century), and

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[10] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 173.

for these reasons the newer chorales have been termed "Ich-Lied" chorales.[11]  In the later

part of the sixteenth century, the strain of Lutheranism known as Pietism represented a

peak in the emphasis on the individual soul of the believer cultivated through personal

behavior, private devotions, fervent prayer, and intense Bible study.

      Pietist hymnody is known for the strong imagery and emotionalism of its texts,

such as detailed description of the bloody wounds of Jesus and the experience of those

beholding them.[12]  One such chorale is "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" (known in

English as "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"), made famous by Bach's adaptation of it

and subsequent use of it in the *St. Matthew Passion*.  The text has its origins in a

Medieval Latin poem, but was translated to German by Paul Gerhardt, and set to the tune

of a secular song (of Leo Hassler—a Protestant, incidentally) by Johann Crüger.

      Both Gerhardt and Crüger are figures associated with Pietism, and their influence,

along with that of Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen (compiler and hymn-writer of the

best-known Pietist hymnal) is felt in late Baroque hymnody.  The career of J.S. Bach

overlapped with the Pietist movement, and although there is no real consensus regarding

his relationship to the various influences of his time—Pietism, Lutheran Orthodoxy, and

incipient eighteenth-century rationalism—what is noteworthy is that his chorale settings

are harmonically rich and complex, and usually involve quick harmonic changes as well

as abundant passing tones, appoggiaturas, and the like.  Whatever their differences may

be from each other, all the strains of Baroque chorale, including Bach's settings, stand in

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[11] Robert L. Marshall and Robin A. Leaver,  "Chorale: Baroque Era," *Grove Music Online.  Oxford Music Online*; accessed 30 May 2014.

[12] Robert L. Marshall and Robin A. Leaver,  "Chorale: Pietism and Orthodoxy," *Grove Music Online.  Oxford Music Online*; accessed 30 May 2014; Robin A. Leaver, "Hymns and Hymnals," *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, vol. 2, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (New York: Routledge, 2004), 772.

definite contrast to the chorale of the Classic era and Enlightenment thinking, which in general terms is entirely counter to Pietism—valuing reason and "enlightenment" over soul and piety.

Chorales of the Enlightenment represent a move away from the personal and subjective texts, and the more complex musical settings of the Baroque. In church services, moralizing sermons overshadowed prayer; chorales were simplified, slowed down, and returned to the easy, folklike idiom. The motivation behind these Enlightenment trends was ostensibly the preservation of the original "purity" of the chorale, even if chorales in Luther's time may have sounded rather different than the way Enlightenment theorists imagined. This applies as well to the preference for "old" modal melodies, since eighteenth-century and sixteenth-century concepts of modality differ considerably. Brandenburg postulates that this was *not* from "a historicising, Romantic enthusiasm…[but rather] a reaction against the *galant* styles…not aimed at stylistic copying but at the formulation of ideals."[13]

Whatever the case may have been, the Enlightenment era saw the beginning of a trend (which would only intensify in the nineteenth century) in which the chorale was considered old and otherworldly, the rarified epitome and very essence of all spirituality, regardless of denomination, or sometimes, even religion (as in Mozart's quasi-Egyptian/Masonic chorale and many other far-flung examples in the nineteenth century). In this notion, the simpler and the slower, the better.

In the church music of Catholic Vienna, Emperor Joseph's reforms affected the liturgy in his encouragement of congregational hymn singing, use of the vernacular, and

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[13] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 177.

overall simplification of the music—all for the greater participation, inspiration, and edification of the laity. This resulted in the publication and distribution of hymnbooks specifically prepared for German Catholics. Michael Haydn went even further when in 1790 he "augmented and corrected" the German Catholic hymnbook—which had already adopted the Lutheran chordal style—by removing trills, appoggiaturas, and other ornaments.[14] Given the correlation between these goals and Luther's original Protestant reforms, it is interesting and even funny to note that these new Catholic hymns regularly disappointed their intended audience. The eighteenth-century German writer Friedrich Nicolai, for instance, described the new German sacred music that he encountered in Vienna as lacking the "herzerhebende Kraft" (uplifting power) of Protestant chorales.[15] That style, though, gradually worked its way not only into Catholic church music, but also the concert music of composers of all religious persuasions.

As for those "uplifting" Protestant hymns themselves, Johann Adam Hiller "reformed" Protestant hymns in the 1790s by drastically simplifying their settings, removing all traces of the learned style that can be seen in Bach's settings.[16] Lutherans also began to adopt a more universal attitude toward chorales; poet, translator, and pioneer Romantic August Wilhelm Schlegel—son of a Lutheran pastor and hymn writer—in 1801 extolled the sound of the chorale as "an intimation of harmonic

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[14] Reinhard G. Pauly, "The Reforms of Church Music under Joseph II," *The Musical Quarterly* 43/3 (July 1957), 374–75. This hymnbook was first published in 1777 under the title *Der heilige Gesang zum Gottesdienste in der römisch-katholischen Kirche*. Michael Haydn's revision is often referred to by the term *Singmesse* and the first line of the opening hymn, *Hier liegt vor Deiner Majestät*.

[15] Quoted in Reinhard G. Pauly, "The Reforms of Church Music under Joseph II," *The Musical Quarterly* 43/3 (July 1957), 375–76.

[16] Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 169–70.

perfection, the unity of all being that Christians imagine through the image of heavenly bliss."[17]  As Brandenburg quoted above, Türk in 1787 spoke of the superiority of the chorale for inspiring "so much nobility, grandeur, solemnity, compassion, and devotion that anyone not completely devoid of sensitivity will be filled with emotion," but stressed that this effect hinged greatly on proper treatment—namely, *plain* treatment and well-chosen harmony.[18]

The ramification of all this for Chorale is that when these super-simplified hymn settings are placed in the context of a larger musical work, the contrast of their topicality is all the more pronounced, and they simultaneously represent both authority and popularity.  Their archaic, holy associations are similar to those of Baroque imitative counterpoint, but without the counterpoint—in fact, the total opposite: homorhythmic texture designed for congregational singing.  It is also easy to see why chorale style was co-opted by national or revolutionary hymns, i.e. popular music, which simultaneously profited from the exalted religious connotations.

Good examples of this can be found in two of the first national hymns in the modern sense: England's ("God Save the King") and Austria's, which was created from one of Haydn's most popular and most enduring choral works—his so-called *Kaiserhymne* ("Emperor Hymn" or "Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser"), written in 1797 on a commission from the Austrian government to set the words of a patriotic poem.  The

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[17] August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Vorlesungen über schöne Litteratur und Kunst: Erster Teil* (1801–02) (Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprints, 1968), 257; Mark Evan Bonds, *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 21.

[18] Daniel Gottlob Türk, *Von den wichtigsten Pflichten eines Organisten*, trans. Margot Ann Greenlimb Woolard (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 16–17.

nationalistic *Kaiserhymne*, an Austrian folklike melody[19] set in a Protestant style by a

Catholic composer, was eventually re-borrowed for the Protestant hymn "Glorious things

of Thee are spoken" and the Catholic hymn "Tantum Ergo."   Haydn also reused it in the

second movement of his String Quartet Opus 76, No. 3 (1797), where is serves as the

theme for a set of variations (see Example 1-3).



Example 1-3. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 3/II, mm. 1–8.

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[19] For more on the combination of *Volkslied* and religious character in "Gott erhalte," see H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: The Years of 'The Creation' 1796–1800,* vol. IV of *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 271–83.

**Depictive and Occasional Music**

This increasingly pan-denominational and/or nationalistic aspect to the Lutheran chorale style is nowhere more evident than in instrumental music in the time of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars that took on the commercially successful role of commemorating, interpreting, and promoting military and political events.   If there were any issues with using a church style in secular music, nationalistic associations or usage for actual events would safely eliminate or soften those issues.

Battle Pieces

Richard Will describes how these narrative pieces relied on conventionalized depictions of marching, fighting, lamenting, and celebrating.[20]  The marching and fighting of battle pieces were represented mainly by marches, directly imitative sounds, and formulaic depictions of running, horses, flying bullets, etc.  Additionally, chorales of supplication, bolstering resolve, thanksgiving, and celebration evoked associations external to literal battle.  Beethoven used "God Save the King" in *Wellingtons Sieg* (1813), indicating the nationality of the English forces by their national air, and commemorating their victory over Napoleon (see Examples 1-4a and 1-4b).  "God Save the King" is another example of a chorale-like setting for a national hymn.

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[20] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 188–241.

Example 1-4a.  Beethoven, *Wellingtons Sieg*, Part II, clarinets and bassoons, mm. 62–67.



Example 1-4b. Beethoven, *Wellingtons Sieg*, Part II, strings, mm. 162–172.

This example is well known, as is the way Beethoven couldn't help but "mediate" the raw material of the hymn tune with a *fugato* treatment (see Example 1-4b).  Other composers, though, used their chorales in much more literal and unadulterated form. Frantisek Kotzwara also chose "God Save the King" for his descriptive fantasy, the influential *Battle of Prague* (ca. 1788), which perhaps set the example for all battle pieces that followed it.

The choral numbers—one at the beginning and one at the end—in Peter von Winter's *Schlacht-Sinfonie* (Battle Symphony) (1813), which commemorated another battle against Napoleon at Leipzig, call for an actual chorus to sing them, and are unabashedly patriotic—"Come forth, come forth, come forth!  He is no German man,

whose breast knows not a swelling heart…He is no hero true, who in the name of the

Fatherland, wields not his sword with lusty hand" etc.[21] (see Examples 1-5a and 1-5b).

Example 1-5a.  Peter von Winter, *Schlacht-Sinfonie*, choral score, mm. 31–37.

Example 1-5b.  Peter von Winter, *Schlacht-Sinfonie*, choral score, mm. 112–17.

[21] Poetry by Steurrat Badhauer, translated by Donald G. Henderson, "Text of the *Schlacht-Sinfonie*," in *The Symphony: 1720–1840*, Series C, Vol. XI, ed. Barry S. Brook (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1982), 327.

The musical topics of this piece are primarily military march and national hymn; although the music was newly composed by Winter, the audience at its performance clearly responded to these, reportedly roaring their approval continuously while the chorus sang.[22] The homorhythmic texture that this music borrows from congregational chorale is emblematic of the communal spirit "seemingly blessed with sacred associations."[23]

Johann Friedrich Reichardt's *Schlacht-Sinfonie* (1814), also for the Battle at Leipzig, leaves out the actual chorus, but uses two actual chorales—"Jesus, meine Zuversicht" (Jesus, my sure defense) and "Nun danket all Gott" (Now thank we all our God). The first one functions as prayer before battle, and the second as celebration and thanksgiving after a victorious outcome.[24]

One additional function for Chorale in a battle symphony is lamentation for the dead. English composer George Anderson (1793–1876) commemorated the Battle of Waterloo in a piano piece by that title (ca. 1818), using the standard musical depictions of marching, galloping, cannon fire, retreat, rejoicing, etc. The piece concludes with a section titled "Lamentation for the slain"—a standard ABA chorale type melody even though the texture does not exactly conform to chorale style (see Example 1-6). A later edition of the piece from 1896 adds a page for an actual chorus to sing the patriotic song "Britons, strike home!" adapted from an air by the same name by Henry Purcell. Though this was added on afterwards, it fits the formula well; in battle pieces Chorale is for

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[22] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 230.
[23] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 237.
[24] Described by Will (192, 282); this symphony exists in manuscript at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.

prayer and inspiration before battle, lamentation of the fallen afterwards, and rousing

celebration of victory.  In all cases the utterance is communal and with sacred undertones.



Example 1-6.  George Anderson, *The Battle of Waterloo*, "Lamentation for the slain," mm. 1–24.

## Funeral Pieces

A genre related to the battle symphony was the funeral symphony for heads of

state, military leaders, etc.  As the *Battle of Waterloo* demonstrates, lament and suffering

could be part of battle symphonies, but was less commonly depicted than action and

victory.  Mourning was typically dealt with separately, in funeral pieces or movements,

with their own vocabulary of topics and gestures.  For instance, the consonant, smooth

lines of chorales, consoling or prayerful, often contrasted the jagged rhythms of the

funeral procession and pulsing syncopations representing grief and emotional turmoil.[25]

The *Bisättningsmusik* (Funeral Symphony) (1792) of Swedish composer Joseph Martin

Kraus was written upon the death of King Gustav III, and provides an example of a

"movement" entirely occupied by a four-part chorale, "Lät oss thenna kropp begrafna"

(Let us bury this body) from the Swedish Lutheran chorale book[26] (see Example 1-7).



Example 1-7. Joseph Martin Kraus, *Bisättningsmusik*/III, mm. 1–21.

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[25] For more on depictions of death and mourning, see Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 216 ff.

[26] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 219.

The simplicity and serenity of this chorale—major key, homorhythmic, half-note motion, simple melody—give a sense of consolation and prayer in contrast with the minor mode and the jagged rhythms of the funeral procession that begins the first movement, as well as the pulsing syncopations representing grief and emotional turmoil in both of the first two movements. After the chorale, Kraus then interpolates its melody throughout the fourth movement, the longest and most complex of the symphony—a set of variations and a double fugue. Kraus calls upon a variety of textures and styles for this movement, including chorale prelude, vigorous scales, syncopated agitation, and (surprisingly) a lengthy, lyrical horn solo.

As unsophisticated or trite as Kraus's funeral symphony may seem, the topical contrasts of the first three movements followed by a complex integration of styles and topics in the fourth movement paint more than a one-dimensional picture of grief and mourning, and this represents a formula to be repeated in programmatic and non-programmatic pieces where lament and grief are present. Significant also is the ending of the symphony: after the brighter moments of the chorale prelude and horn solo, and the seemingly transformative fugal treatment of the chorale theme, the lugubrious funeral march and "uneven pulses of grief" from the first movement return. Gustav had not merely died; he had been assassinated at a masked ball that Kraus, who knew the king well, also was attending. For this reason, there may be some truth to Will's statement that the shock of this "was simply too great to allow for the more optimistic conclusions of many other funeral pieces."[27]

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[27] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 224.

Another type of funeral piece—and an important source for Chorale topic—is not Lutheran at all, but rather originated from a local funereal tradition in Linz, Austria, and was perhaps a fusion of Pavane and Lied, according to Othmar Wessely.[28]  This is the tradition of the so-called *equale*.  Generically, an *equale* is any piece written for like instruments (like both in type and range, so a string quartet, for example, would not qualify); in the area of Linz, a specific tradition of equali for trombones came to be associated with funeral processions.  Beethoven's *Three Equali*, WoO 30 for trombones is the most famous example of the genre (see Example 1-8).  During a visit to Linz in 1812 Beethoven was commissioned to write these, and they later were arranged for use (alternating male chorus and trombone quartet) at Beethoven's own funeral.  The function of equali, though definitely funereal, is less of a "we" or "we, weeping" expression, but rather, a solemn announcement that the service is beginning or ending.[29]



Example 1-8.  Beethoven, Equale No. 1, mm. 1-11.

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[28] Othmar Wessely, "Zur Geschichte des Equals," in *Beethoven-Studien: Festgabe der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zum 200. Geburstag von Ludwig van Beethoven*, ed. Erich Schenk (Vienna: Hermann Bohlaus, 1970), 351.

[29] Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): A New Perspective," in *Historic Brass Society Journal*, vol. 14 (2002), 227.

The specific use of the trombone for equali is not insignificant.  Trombones had long been used to double vocal lines in church music and to signify solemn occasions, as when Mozart used them in *Die Zauberflöte*.[30]  Additionally, they had an association specifically with death and funeral, as in the "Tuba mirum" from Mozart's *Requiem*, or in *Don Giovanni* when the Commendatore returns from the dead.[31]  Gluck's use of trombones was to "foreshadow mystical, supernatural, and/or religious events."[32]  This timbrally specific association may later have been extended to brass instruments in general, and to chorales, Lutheran or otherwise, in general.  This will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

<div align="center">Pastoral Pieces</div>

In addition to its place in battle and funeral pieces, Chorale may also have a place in another depictive genre, the pastoral symphony.  Although its presence in the examples below is largely by a rather loose definition of Chorale, it is included here in order to address two issues: 1) Passages in some of the most famous pastoral symphonies have been variously labeled "Hymn," "Chorale," and "Choral Song," and 2) Beethoven's "Pastoral" includes a passage *not* normally identified as such, though interestingly it is the one example here that most closely conforms specifically to traits of chorale.  Will explains how the eighteenth-century pastoral symphony (a genre to which Beethoven's

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[30] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 154.
[31] Daniel Jacobson and Andrew Glendening, "Schuberts D. 936A: Eine sinfonische Hommage an Beethoven?", in *Schubert durch die Brille*, Mitteilungen 15, (Baden bei Wien, Austria: Journal of the International Franz Schubert Institute, June 1995), 118.
[32] Andrew Glendening, *The Use of the Trombone in Schubert's Mature Symphonies and Symphonic Fragments, D. 729, D. 759, D. 944, and D. 936A*, (DMA Diss., Indiana University, 1992), 8.

self-categorized Pastoral Symphony belongs) provided a "meeting ground" for sacred and secular music, particularly with its frequent references to rural nativity traditions and Christmas carols. If they were structured in four movements, pastoral symphonies could fit perfectly in a secular concert; just as easily, "worldly" minuets could be omitted, and the symphonies could be used as sacred music.[33] Similarly, pastoral signifiers such as horn call, lilting 6/8 meter, and *Landvolk*-oriented text infiltrate a work such as Haydn's oratorio *Die Jahreszeiten* (The Seasons). The close connection between the pastoral and the religious is typical of the nature worship or sacralization of nature associated with German Romanticism.

Christmas carols lack the liturgical weight of true church chorales, and they are also not associated with four-part harmonization, but they do share with chorales the traits of being religious, communal, and popular. Following Taruskin's idea of chorale *as* folksong, there is correlation and precedent here with folklike Christmas carols used as themes in pastoral symphonies. Will in fact discusses at length two pastoral symphonies without Christmas references that use a different folklike religious style instead— Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, and its often-cited predecessor, Justin Heinrich Knecht's *Le Portrait Musical de la Nature* (1785).

Both of these works are comprised of a series of countryside scenes, including a storm episode, and then a concluding hymn of thanksgiving and restoration. Knecht's score is highly descriptive: "La Nature transportée de la joie éleve sa voix vers le ciel et rend au créateur les plus vives grâces par des chants doux et agréables" (Transported by joy, Nature raises her voice to heaven and gives the creator the most lively thanks

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[33] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 87.

through sweet and pleasant songs).  Knecht also titles the movement as "L'Inno con

variazioni" (Hymn with variations).  This "hymn" is a little binary melody more galant

than chorale-like in style (even though Will uses the word "chorale"),[34] but repeated

multiple times, perhaps in the manner of song verses; the variations are superficial (see

Example 1-9):



Example 1-9.  Knecht, *Le Portrait musical de la nature*/V, strings, mm. 1–8.


Beethoven's title for his final movement, "Hirtengesang.  Frohe, dankbare

Gefühle nach dem Sturm" (Shepherds' song.  Glad, thankful feelings after the storm),

was originally wordier and included specific mention of God.[35]  Mark Evan Bonds quotes

[34] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 168.
[35] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 181–82.

an anonymous reviewer in Leipzig's *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* describing this movement as "a choral song (*Chorgesang*) in praise of nature."[36]  Just as in Knecht's symphony, Beethoven also treats the principal theme "as if it were a church hymn…always…twice or three times in succession, as if accommodating a series of verses, and…in a striking passage toward the end of the movement in a scoring that recalls the texture of a chorale (mm. 237–44)."[37] (See Example 1-10.)



Example 1-10.  Beethoven, Symphony No. 6/V, mm. 237–44.

The melody of the principle theme—originating from the horn call that opened the movement—is really not chorale-like, and the texture is homorhythmic in all parts only in one measure.  Nevertheless, Will's comparison of this passage to "chorale" is borne out by the sudden simplification of the texture and the strings-only instrumentation; A. Peter Brown notes that in Beethoven's sketchbook, this section is captioned, "Ausdruck des Danks…O Herr wir danken dir" (Expression of thanks…O Lord we thank Thee).[38]  With the *sotto voce* indication, it almost foreshadows the quiet "breakthrough" moment in Schumann's Symphony No. 1 (to be discussed in Chapter Five), in which a quiet, strings-only chorale appears near the end of the symphony in the midst of an

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[36] Bonds, *Music as Thought,* 66.
[37] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 182.
[38] A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire, Volume II: The First Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 502.

exuberant coda.  The effect in both symphonies is a moment of unexpected transcendence and intense focus.  In Beethoven's symphony, this "chorale" forms one end of the frame of the movement.  The other side of the frame is actually at the end of the fourth movement (the storm episode).  Will describes how in mm. 146–53 the oboes transform one of the staccato storm motives into "a song-like legato,"[39] but one aspect he does not notice about this passage is that it is also a little chorale fragment (Brown calls it a "hymn fragment"[40])—and this one does have a stepwise melody moving evenly in half notes and set in four-part homorhythm (see Example 1-11).  The oboe parts (not shown in the reduction) double the melody in a sort of high obbligato.



Example 1-11.  Beethoven, Symphony No. 6/IV, mm. 146–54, reduced score without oboe obbligato.

The strophic orientation of the finale's main theme and the religious implications of Beethoven's original title notwithstanding, Beethoven does not ever really set the theme in a chorale texture.  Regardless, however, of whether or not this theme is to be heard as Chorale or just choral, it is framed on both ends by chorales of another sort— quiet, serene, and serious—functioning in a way very similar to the solemn beginning and ending announcements of the funereal equali, though of course in a distinct context.

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[39] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 163.
[40] Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire, Volume II: The First Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony*, 500.

Will differentiates between the precise meanings of the religiosity in Knecht's and

Beethoven's finales,[41] but in both cases, Chorale in the pastoral symphony shares one of

its functions in the battle and funeral pieces: communal prayer, thanksgiving, and

celebration after some sort of struggle or violent event. The way Beethoven integrates

his chorales is sophisticated—using fragments of chorale based on previous melodic

motives from the same piece, rather than quotations of complete, unaltered, or literal

hymns.

<h3 style="text-align:center">Haydn's Hymnic Style</h3>

The examples in the preceding section show a clear infiltration of sacred hymns

and chorales into secular, instrumental, programmatic music. Many of the examples use

actual church tunes, which in this context and especially with a nationalistic connection,

seemed to have been perfectly permissible—as they perhaps would not have been in

opera. As with opera, though, chorales are scarce in normative eighteenth-century

symphonies and string quartets, i.e. the three- or four-movement type that eventually

solidified into a well-defined sequence of movements. Again, maybe it would simply

have been considered inappropriate, or something a composer would not even conceive

of; this is why Mozart's use of a Lutheran chorale in *Die Zauberflöte* is so boldly

original.

Chorale *style*, however, with original melodies, does have a life in the so-called

"hymnic"[42] slow movements of Franz Joseph Haydn, beginning in the late 1770s, with

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[41] Will, *The Characteristic Symphony*, 184.
[42] "Hymnic" is the adjective given by H.C. Robbins Landon and James Webster. I will use the term "chorale" or "chorale-like" in specific reference to the four-part

multiple and easily found examples in both symphonies and string quartets. By comparison, a thorough scouring of Mozart's symphonies, string quartets, and string quintets yields no examples of chorale textures; the chorale-type slow movement is generally credited to Haydn alone.[43] In those movements, in this century, the meaning is not so clear as in the explicitly characteristic symphonies; symphonies of this era were not necessarily the unified, "organic" structures that they later came to be. As will be seen, Haydn's chorale-like slow movements may nevertheless have some referential meanings. At very least, they seem to be an experiment with a new type of slow movement; their texture and religious mood are quite original in this instrumental context.

Haydn's "hymnic" melodies are most typically in 3/4, with mostly feminine endings until the final cadence—in other words, what would sound like lovely Viennese minuets if they were faster. But what makes them chorale-like and imparts a tone of reverence, prayer, or contemplation is the mostly stepwise motion, the four-part homorhythmic setting and the significantly slow tempo—*Adagio*, *Largo*, or *Langsam*. Moreover, a further support to reading these passages as spiritual is that in first set of examples below, in which the melodies are all strikingly similar, two of the examples appear in sacred Masses, while another is titled "Hymne."

In addition to the triple meter type, Haydn also has another "hymnic" melodic type in duple meter. Again, though, chorale aesthetic is filtered through Austrian or perhaps operatic melody; this could be folklike, as in the *Kaiserhymne*, or aria-like, as in

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Lutheran-type hymn setting. Whatever we call it, the affect Haydn was going for is the same.

[43] Mozart did use cantus firmi (as in the finale of the Symphony No. 41) and learned style, but not Chorale per se.

some of the examples from Haydn's string quartets, below.  In all cases, though, Haydn

brings together the sacred and the secular.

The slow movements of Haydn's Symphony No. 75 and Symphony No. 98 are

noticeably similar.  Balázs Mikusi outlines various proposals, including his own, that the

slow movement of No. 98 (from 1792, shortly after Mozart's death) was meant as a

"Requiem for Mozart," and at the same explains the possible connection to No. 75.[44]

Donald Tovey based his reasoning on the similarity of its second theme to the second

theme of Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony.  Tovey did not, however, provide a similar

model for the first theme—the chorale part—of Haydn's symphony (see Example 1-

12a).[45]

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[44] Balázs Mikusi, "Haydn's 'Requiem for Mozart'?: Revisiting the Slow Movement of Symphony No. 98," *Ad Parnassum: A Journal of Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Instrumental Music*, 7/13 (April 2009), 43–58.
    [45] Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis. Volume I: Symphonies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), 153–54.  For a summary of Tovey's argument (and lack of argument) see Mikusi, 44–46.

Example 1-12a.  Haydn, Symphony No. 98/II, strings, mm. 1–10.

Landon unconvincingly suggested that it was derived from "God Save the King,"[46] but Mikusi's more coherent theory about Haydn's inspiration bolsters Tovey's idea of the symphony as tribute to Mozart: the theme and its treatment are similar to that of the *Agnus Dei* from Mozart's "Coronation" Mass.  Haydn likely alluded to Mozart's *Agnus* melody in the *Agnus* of his *Harmoniemesse* of 1802 as well (see Examples 1-12b and 1-12c).

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[46] See Mikusi, "Haydn's 'Requiem for Mozart'?", 47.  In Landon's 1955 book *The Symphonies of Joseph Haydn* he says the melody was "obviously inspired by *God Save the King*;" in the 1978 *Chronicle and Works*, vol. II he says it is "so close in spirit."

Example 1-12b.  Mozart, "Coronation" Mass, Agnus Dei, vocal score, mm. 9–14.



Example 1-12c.  Haydn, *Harmoniemesse*, Agnus Dei, vocal score, mm. 8–11.

Finally, two further close and fitting parallels for the melody come from Haydn's own Symphony No. 75, begun in 1779—the same year as Mozart's "Coronation" Mass—and his *Hymne an die Freundschaft* (Hymn To Friendship) (date uncertain) (see Examples 1-12d and 1-12e).   Mikusi explains that although there is some argument as to whether the melody is Haydn's or not, he clearly knew it, and used it in multiple places. Furthermore, Mikusi also gives evidence that Mozart knew and admired Haydn's Symphony No. 75; who borrowed from whom in such a close relationship of two mutually admiring composers is perhaps irrelevant, if they were both referencing the same affect.

Example 1-12d.  Haydn, Symphony No. 75/II, mm. 1–16.

Example 1-12e.  Haydn, *Hymne an die Freundschaft*, mm.1–18.

Apparently Haydn also acquired an association of death with the slow movement

of Symphony No. 75, after an incident at a 1792 performance of the work in London.

According to Haydn's recounting of the story,

> On 26th March 1792 at Mr. Barthelemon's Concert, there was an English
> clergyman who sank into the deepest melancholy on hearing my Andante [here
> Haydn cites the opening of the second movement of symphony no .75], because
> the night before he had dreamt that such an Andante was a premonition of his
> death. —He immediately left the company and took to his bed, and today, the
> 25th of April, I learnt from Herr Barthelemon that this Protestant clergyman had
> died.[47]

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[47] Georg August Griesinger, *Biographische Notizen über Joseph Haydn* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1810), Facsimile edition with afterword & notes by Peter Krause (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1979), 45.

If Haydn were in fact honoring his friend Mozart's passing with his Symphony No. 98, his choice of this chorale type would be more than coincidental. Though this symphony as a whole can hardly be seen as a "funeral symphony," a chorale is not at all a far-fetched choice for elegy, prayer, or consolation, in the same way that chorales function in the funeral pieces.

Like many others, including A. Peter Brown, Elaine Sisman, and James Webster, Landon also describes the *Largo* of Haydn's Symphony No. 88 of 1787 as one of Haydn's "hymn-tunes."[48] The scoring, though, is not in a congregational four-part chorale texture, but instead features the melody in the oboe, doubled at the octave by a *solo* cello—an unusual scoring for Haydn. The widely spaced melody, the rhythm of the phrase endings, and the sighing suspensions over the bar lines likewise suggest not so much a church hymn as the aria of a sweet operatic heroine. Compare, for instance, the contour and mood of the melody with Mozart's "Porgi amor" from *Le Nozze di Figaro* (1786) (see Examples 1-13a and 1-13b).

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[48] H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works,* vol. II: *Haydn at Esterháza 1766–1790* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 630; A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire, Volume II: The First Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 229; Sisman, *Haydn and the Classical Variation*, 168–69; James Webster, "When Did Haydn Begin to Write 'Beautiful' Melodies?" in *Haydn Studies: Proceedings of the International Haydn Conference, Washington, DC 1975*, 385–88, ed. Jen Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer, and James Webster (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 387.

Example 1-13a.  Haydn, Symphony No. 88/II, mm. 1–8.



Example 1-13b.  Mozart, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Act II, "Porgi amor," vocal score, mm. 18–25.

Whether Haydn was intending something chorale-like, something aria-like, or some hybrid thereof, many listeners have heard the theme as a chorale or hymn. As happened with the *Kaiserhymne* becoming a Protestant chorale, this one from the Symphony No. 88 was later given the name "Brownell" and sung in English to the text "When, streaming from the eastern skies" or "The Lord my pasture shall prepare,"[49] as well as "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."[50] A scan through a modern hymn index, though, will reveal *dozens* of arrangements of tunes by Classical era composers, including Haydn and Mozart, some of them virtually unchanged from their original intent and form, such as "The Heavens are telling" from Haydn's *Creation.*

So what is of interest here is not how Haydn's melodies later became hymns or chorales, but rather, the instances in which he created chorale-like material—in melody, harmony, and texture—in his secular music, with the apparent aim of evoking a particular affect or topical meaning. Those who would like to hear the theme from Symphony No. 88 as chorale-like should note that the theme is not merely a self-standing quotation, but an integrated topic. Haydn creates chorale-like material, but he alters it, infuses it with other stylistic strains, and juxtaposes it with highly contrasting material played by trumpets and drums, whose presence was completely original for a slow movement of this time.[51] The music of the interjections is at first blaring and affirming, then blaring and stormy, entirely opposite to the calm and transcendent chorale theme. After the

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[49] "Hymn Tune Brownell," http://www.hymnary.org/tune/brownell_haydn, accessed 4 April 2014.

[50] Karl Geiringer, *Haydn: A Creative Life in Music*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 324.

[51] Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, vol. II, 629–30.

stormy episode, though, the chorale theme calmly begins again with a new stanza as if nothing had happened.

James Webster's list of Haydn's "hymn-like" movements is rather more liberal: Symphony Nos. 61, 64, 66, 75, 87, and 98; and varied in Nos. 83, 86, 88, 99, and 102.[52] One of these assignations is apt, the Symphony No. 87 from 1786 (see Example 1-14):



Example 1-14. Haydn, Symphony No. 87/II, mm. 1–8.

The others, though, seem to qualify for Webster's list on the basis of a lovely melody with a *Largo* or *Adagio* disposition in 3/4 meter, rather than by a consideration of the characteristics of music for congregational worship. The same is true for Landon's inclusion of Symphony No. 92.[53]

Neither Haydn nor Mozart seems to have written any chorale-like movements in piano sonatas, but two possible examples exist in Mozart's piano concertos. One is in the slow movement of his Piano Concerto in B-flat Major, K. 450, from 1784. The large

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[52] James Webster, "When Did Haydn Begin to Write 'Beautiful' Melodies?" in *Haydn Studies: Proceedings of the International Haydn Conference, Washington, DC 1975*, 385–88, ed. Jen Peter Larsen, Howard Serwer, and James Webster (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1981), 387.

[53] Landon, *Haydn: Chronicle and Works*, vol. II, 563.

leaps and the syncopations in the melody are perhaps Mozart's inevitable stylistic stamp, but otherwise it looks rather like Haydn's chorale type, and rather *un*like the rest of Mozart's slow movements. The overall rhythmic evenness, the conjunct motion, the homorhythm, the phrase structure, and the mood all support Elaine Sisman's belief that this movement is modeled on Haydn's new chorale type (she uses the term "hymnic"), specifically, the slow movement from his Symphony No. 75 (see Example 1-15).[54]



Example 1-15. Mozart, Piano Concerto in B-flat Major, K. 450/II, mm. 1–8.

The inspiration for the second example is clear: Mozart uses an almost literal quotation from the slow movement (marked *Andante grazioso*) of J.C. Bach's overture to Galuppi's *La calamità de cuori* (1763) for the main theme in his slow movement (marked *Andante*) of the Piano Concerto in A Major, K. 414, which he was composing at the time

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[54] Elaine Sisman, *Haydn and the Classical Variation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 202–207. Sisman presents multiple evidences of her theory: Mozart had jotted down the second movement theme of Haydn Symphony No. 75; then the manuscript shows that Mozart actually edited his movement to make it less identical to its model (i.e. modeled on it, but not just directly copied); finally, Mozart made several other overt references to variation movements by Haydn in the same time period—the early 1780s.

of J.C. Bach's death in 1782.  This is as clear a case for elegy or homage as one could hope for, especially since Mozart and Bach's close relationship is well known and documented.  Again, this music contains Mozart's stylistic stamp, but of all possible music he could have chosen to quote from Bach, he chose something that rather resembles Haydn's chorale type—again, as with Haydn's Symphony No. 98, not a coincidental choice for elegy, prayer, or consolation (see Example 1-16):



Example 1-16. Mozart, Piano Concerto in A Major, K. 414/II, mm. 1–8.

Mozart and Haydn—two of the composers most central to the Viennese school and the Classic style—were, of course, Catholics working in Catholic locations, while chorales are Protestant music.  (Ratner gives the *alla breve* style as the Catholic equivalent of the Protestant chorale.[55])  But even though Haydn has been credited with "inventing" or "developing" a so-called hymnic style, it might actually be J.C. Bach who should receive the credit for providing a first example—J.C. Bach, who in spite of his

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[55] Leonard Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer, 1980), 169.

later conversion to Catholicism came from a Protestant family, and whose father is the one figure most closely associated with the use of Protestant chorales.

Landon and Webster ought perhaps to have included Haydn's string quartet repertoire in their lists of "hymnic" slow movements, rather than stretching the definition for symphonic movements that really don't qualify. Of the six Opus 76 string quartets (1796/97) four of these, Nos. 1, 3, 4, and 6, all use Chorale in their slow movements, as if Haydn were working out this style in these quartets. They are all marked *Adagio* (or in the case of No. 3, *Poco adagio*), and No. 4 and No. 6 even have clearly related themes (see Examples 1-19 and 1-20 below). In all of them, Chorale opens the movements and sets the tone—quiet, contemplative, serious, perhaps prayerful. It also adds contrasting themes and/or treats the chorale themes in more than an ornamental way. These movements use chorale topically; they are certainly in an entirely distinct category from the chorale "movements" or episodes in the battle and funeral pieces, in which the chorale, in its unadorned entirety, constitutes the whole structure.[56]

Op. 76, Nos. 1 and 3 present the chorale in the form of a complete melody but with interesting treatments. In No. 1 the opening chorale is even and serene, especially since it is afforded a full sixteen-bar period. Haydn juxtaposes this with utterly contrasting material and quintessentially quartet-like "conversation": an intense duet between cello and violin with a pulsating accompaniment; cadenza-like figures in the violin; extremely high register; a violin duet in thirds; unabating, breathless offbeats

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[56] Landon did notice what he called the "profundity" and the slowness of these movements. By slowness, he explains, "we do not mean the tempo *marking* but the way in which the movement is constructed: long and sustained lines in a very slow-moving context." H.C. Robbins Landon, *Haydn: The Years of 'The Creation' 1796–1800*, Vol. IV of *Haydn: Chronicle and Works* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), 285.

culminating in a series of dramatic pauses.  All of these tearful and fitful gestures belong

to the *empfindsamer Stil*, and especially with the emergence of individual voices within

the quartet, the continual return of the homorhythmic chorale is all the more calming and

grounding.  (See Example 1-17.)



Example 1-17.  Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 1/II, mm. 1–21.

The *Kaiserhymne* of No. 3 (see Example 1-3) is by itself already a fusion of the religious, the patriotic, and the folk (in contrast to another contemporary national song, the very march-like *La Marseillaise*).[57]  Then when Haydn uses it as the theme for a variation set in this slow movement, he adds additional layers to it.  One is the learned style, with the hymn tune acting as an unmodified cantus firmus for increasingly complex counterpoint in each variation.  Another is the pastoral, or perhaps again *empfindsamer Stil*, or some combination of the two; the patriotic *Kaiserhymne* here is treated with a strikingly gentle tone: *piano* dynamic for the entire movement; the additional indications at the beginning of *dolce* and *cantabile*; the sweet sounds of duet parts in thirds and sixths throughout; the sighing, syncopated figures in the third and fourth variations (see Example 1-18); the melody played in extremely high registers of various instruments throughout; the lack of a minor variation; and finally, after the authentic cadence of the melody in m. 100, a drawn-out "Amen" of sorts over a tonic pedal, *pianissimo* (see Example 1-19).[58]

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[57] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 130.
[58] The final chord sequence is I-V7/IV-IV-I-V7/IV-IV-I-viiº7-I.

Example 1-18.  Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 3/II, mm. 60–68.

Example 1-19.  Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 3/II, mm. 96–104.

The *Adagio* of Opus 76, No. 4 opens with what seems to be a *fragment* of chorale—just two measures, ending on a fermata, and then proceeding by sequence. Although Haydn does make a chorale-like eight-measure phrase with an authentic cadence out of it, this is not exactly a complete chorale melody.  The two-bar fragment and the eight-bar phrase are enough, though, to signal the topic and its connotations, and Haydn refers back to it throughout the movement, all the while departing from chorale characteristics in every way, almost immediately.[59]  (See Example 1-20.)

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[59] These stylistic departures (chromatic motion, register shifts, ornamentation in the soprano) presage a Romantic trope of Chorale, which fuses the topic with operatic or Lied style.  This will be discussed more in Chapter Four.

Example 1-20. Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 4/II, mm. 1–24.

Opus 76, No. 6 seems to take up the slow movement of No. 4, first of all in its

key—E-flat, which was the key of the *Adagio* of No. 4.  Then the slow movement of No.

6, interestingly labeled *Fantasia-Adagio*, takes up the melody of No. 4 also, and turns it

into a much more proper and complete chorale melody, only in the remote and extremely

contrasting key of B major (see Example 1-21).  (One can't help but think forward to the

same key scheme of E-flat major to B major in Beethoven's chorale-like slow movement

of his Emperor Concerto—to be discussed in Chapter Four.)  The movement is indeed a

fantasy on the melody, presenting it multiple times in the manner of strophic repetition,

but in an array of differently-timbred keys (B major, E major, B-flat major, B-flat minor,

A-flat major) and with all manner of chromatic modulations—including a recurring,

chromatically wandering solo line which emerges from the end of the chorale texture, as

in mm. 16–19.[60]  This is all in stark contrast to the completely non-modulating variation

form (with not even a *minore* variation) of the first movement.

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[60] For full chromatic analysis, see James Baker, "Chromaticism, Form, and
Expression in Haydn's String Quartet Op. 76, No. 6," *Journal of Music Theory* 47/1
(Spring 2003), 41–101.

Example 1-21.  Haydn, String Quartet Op. 76, No. 6/II, mm. 1–27.

These occurrences of Chorale—from Op. 76, No. 4, and to a greater extent, its continuation from Op. 76, No. 6—stand out for the fact that here it is the chorales rather than the contrasting material that are harmonically or otherwise unstable. In both quartets, the chorale, or a motive from it, moves through many different keys and configurations, and in No. 6, the overall key of the movement is radically remote from the home key of whole quartet. These may be the first examples of many to come, in the music of Beethoven and his successors, in which the composer uses Chorale in a way counter to its conventional associations of centered, unchanging stability and solidity. The affect here is not one of irony or distortion, though; rather, the feeling is one of a personalized expression of spiritual searching or conversation, with eventual transcendence or resolution. In No. 6 especially, the remote key lends an otherworldly character. In this way, these chorale-like slow movements prefigure Beethoven's chorale-like slow movements with their transcendent or otherworldly feeling. Those movements will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

Two final examples also come from string quartets, Opus 74, No. 3 (1793), and Opus 54, No. 2 (1788); both of them demonstrate the wide range of Haydn's innovations with Chorale and look forward to Romantic topical usage. The slow movement of Opus 74, No. 3, marked *Largo assai*, has all the trappings of homorhythmic chorale style, but as in Symphony No. 88, also contains strong features of a contrasting style and a melodic compass that begins compactly enough but quickly expands beyond a comfortable congregational range. The contrasting style in this case is the *style hongrois* which Haydn used on many occasions; its markers in this movement are virtuosic violin flourishes, simultaneous double stops in three parts, surprising chord changes, use of

parallel major and minor, sudden dynamic changes, and drone fifths in the lower parts.[61]

Furthermore, the more unconcealed presence of *style hongrois* in the outer movements of

the quartet bolsters the validity of interpreting those elements in the slow movement as

*style hongrois* as well (see Example 1-22).



Example 1-22.  Haydn, String Quartet Op. 74, No. 3/II, mm. 1–22.

[61] Jonathan Bellman, "Toward a Lexicon for the *Style Hongrois*," *Journal of Musicology* 9/2 (Spring 1991), 224–25.

Even if the combination of Chorale and *hongrois* is on the subtle side in Opus 74, No. 3, Haydn himself set the precedent for it in Opus 54, No. 2, in which it is not subtle in the slightest.  The first violin part is a clear *hallgató*-style solo (a slow, rhythmically free, improvisational solo)[62] over a regularly phrased AABA chorale in the lower three parts (see Example 1-23).



Example 1-23.  Haydn, String Quartet Op. 54, No.2/II, mm. 1–14.

[62] Bellman, "Toward a Lexicon for the *Style Hongrois*," 220–21.

The trills in the chorale do no diminish its character, but rather conform to the *hallgató*. Likewise, the regular phrase structure does not diminish the *hallgató*, but rather conforms to the chorale. This is a true amalgamation; the chorale has its own integrity, rather than just being quasi-improvised long chords that might accompany a true Gypsy *hallgató*.[63] The C minor mode (in this bright C major quartet) reinforces the stereotyped dark mood of the *hallgató* performance tradition, in which "the soloist looks into a customer's soul, (supposedly) perceives and understands his personal sorrows and concerns, and expresses them on his instrument.[64] Placing this with a mournful chorale is simultaneously jarring and symbiotic.

The foregoing examples of the combination of Chorale and *style hongrois* prefigure multiple examples, and intensely meaningful ones, in the music of Schubert. After examining all the examples given above—national, elegiac, combined with contrasting styles, in symphonies, in string quartets—it seems that Haydn really was developing a chorale style for his instrumental writing, in which the chorales are truly topical and prefigure the intense, chorale-like slow movements of Beethoven.

In any case, the importance of tempo must be emphasized—almost all of the examples of chorale-type movements here are in triple meter, vs. the preferred common time of Lutheran church chorales. At a faster tempo they sound like minuets (or, as in Haydn's Symphony No. 98/II, polonaise). But, even at slow tempo, where they sound like chorales rather than dances, the overlay of a lilting galant style is still present, and as in some of the above examples, overlays of other topics as well. This is the essence of Chorale in eighteenth-century concert music: a novel way for chorales and what they

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[63] Bellman, "Toward a Lexicon for the *Style Hongrois*," 221–22.
[64] Bellman, "Toward a Lexicon for the *Style Hongrois*," 221.

represent to live outside the church and outside of literally depictive music, and start

behaving topically.  Haydn was accessing the public code of an archaic, sacred genre but

using it in an intimate way, in novel combinations, and in secular contexts.  These

experiments perhaps—and perhaps hand-in-hand with the chorales of the programmatic

pieces—provided a model or inspiration for future composers (Beethoven, Schubert, etc.)

who experimented, in turn, with integrating them and imbuing them with deeper or more

intentional topical meanings.

CHAPTER TWO

ROMANTIC AESTHETICS AND CHORALE

**Topical Usage in Romantic Music**

Discontinued Topics

Topical usage in Romantic music both continues and expands Classic precedents.

On the one hand, certain eighteenth-century topics fade from relevancy in the nineteenth-

century milieu, as for example dances no longer fashionable.  Baroque dances such as the

sarabande or courante, which may have maintained a diminished presence in the

eighteenth century, have none or almost none in the nineteenth.  The eighteenth-century

minuet, a very common topic and movement type, gradually gets displaced in the

nineteenth century by the *Ländler* or the waltz, but still appears occasionally, often with

an archaic connotation.  Likewise, another topic (or style) tied very specifically to

eighteenth-century current events, the so-called Turkish style, co-exists with and in some

cases gradually mutates into the so-called *stile hongrois* from the end of the eighteenth

century onward.


New Contexts for Old Topics

In contrast, many other topics enjoy uninterrupted usage either because their

associations/origins were still current, or because allusions to them were still relevant.

Agawu gives the example of the march as a public-oriented topic whose "communal

ethos or sense of unanimity… remains largely invariant."[1] As another example, the aristocratic hunt, while losing ground in the nineteenth century as an activity, was nevertheless still practiced, and reference to it via its musical signifiers remains meaningful. As Raymond Monelle thoroughly documents, however, its exact meanings evolve along with the changing culture.[2] Changing contexts give old topics new and different meanings, and chorales in the nineteenth century acquire a variety of new contexts.

<div align="center">Public vs. Private Topics</div>

Still other nineteenth-century topics are relatively new. Besides those (such as the waltz) that owe this to simple cultural currency, many others owe it to aesthetic trends. Dickensheets discusses the prevalence in the nineteenth century of surface languages specific to composer (such as Schumann's idiosyncratic codes and ciphers) or region (whether this be "exotic" or "folkloric"—Gypsy, Oriental, Spanish, and so on).[3] Agawu goes further in his discussion of the "ascendancy…of figures born on a private realm, figures that bear the marks of individual composerly idiolects."[4] This idea is essential to the difference between topical usage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Agawu summarizes eighteenth-century topics as an essentially public language, invoked "without pathos," implying thereby that nineteenth-century topics were acquiring a tendency to be

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[1] Agawu, *Music as Discourse*, 42.
[2] Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2006).
[3] Dickensheets, *Topical Vocabulary of the Nineteenth Century*, 98, 128–32.
[4] Agawu, *Music as Discourse*, 42–43.

invoked *with* pathos, although what Agawu actually says in this particularly passage is more general—he speaks of "burgeoning expressive possibilities."[5]

This lack of specificity, however, is not to be faulted, since pathos is not the one and only manifestation of Romantic sensibility (and Agawu's whole aim is to address the range of the discourses of Romantic sensibility).  In an earlier study, Agawu had already described the nature of Romantic topical expression as a "transformation of sign into symbol…Romantic music…often prefers a break with the outside world by entering into private, biographical realms in which the cryptic sign holds the key to the meaning of the musical work."[6]

Ironic Use of Topics

Pathos is an important element in Romantic aesthetics, though, and it, in turn, can be invoked in various ways.  In modern usage, "pathos" involves pity or sadness, but pathos in the rhetorical sense has to do with emotional appeal as opposed to logical appeal; this is from the original Greek πάθος, meaning "suffering" or "sensation"—something a person experiences or feels.  While certainly not unknown to Classic music, an especially Romantic way to invoke pathos is through ironic, distorted, or disjunctive use of topics.  Stüwe terms this as a "reflective" approach to topics, or one which, although still based on conventional meanings, uses topics "in a way that goes against the grain of their established meaning" so that new meaning is generated by "dissolution of particular topics and their meanings."[7]  For instance, Dickensheets gives an example of

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[5] Agawu, *Music as Discourse*, 48.
[6] Agawu, *Playing with Signs*, 137–38.
[7] Stüwe, "Musical Topics and Ambiguity," 60.

the "inversion" of the sanctity of sacred musical symbols: the combination of the witches' dance and the *Dies Irae* in Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. Agawu likewise acknowledges that the "referential discontinuity…is already implicit within the bounds of the Classic style; Romanticism merely exaggerates that tendency."[8]

Eero Tarasti goes even further in analyzing the exact nature and various aspects of irony in Romanticism as well as how it is manifested in different regions, eras, and philosophical/literary schools of thought. Of particular importance to ironic use of Chorale in the nineteenth century is the linking of Romantic subjectivity with the idea of irony—the ironic, unbridgeable gap is found in the *relation* of the self to itself, to others, and to the world.[9] For example, the inherent "we" connotation of Chorale and the "I" of Romantic subjectivity provide a powerful location for this type of irony. Moreover, as Stüwe notes, the chorale in the nineteenth century came to represent both the archaic and the otherworldly, and, when used ironically as a topic, the simultaneous impossibility of returning to either of them.[10]

<div align="center">Genre as Topic</div>

The style of a genre has the potential to become a topic within another genre, as for instance when fugue is used in a symphony (generally as allusion via fugato rather than as a full fugue), or a symphonic idiom used in a solo piano work. Entire genres can also be combined, as in symphonic cantatas or songs without words for piano, in which the overall genre of the work is the combination of two original genres. Such genre

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[8] Agawu, *Playing with Signs*, 137.
[9] Eero Tarasti, *Semiotics of Classical Music: How Mozart, Brahms and Wagner Talk to Us* (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2012), 119–20.
[10] Stüwe, "Musical Topics and Ambiguity," 66.

mixing can serve simply to enlarge the definitions of the constituent genres, and/or the different genres can act as meaningful symbols, or topics—for instance, because of the absence of words, the significance of a vocalise can be interpreted in terms of the ineffability of the sentiment.

The writings of John Daverio and Jeffrey Kallberg on the subject of genre mixing are pertinent to the discussions of specific works in the remaining chapters of this study, and we will spend more time with them further on.[11]  Relevant to Chorale, though, are two key points: 1) In nineteenth-century music, just as the invocation of pathos and irony is in no way unique but increasingly prevalent and even imperative, so too is genre mixing; in particular, nineteenth-century aesthetics celebrated the combination of sacred and secular genres.  2) In the context of secular works, chorales can sometimes function as a genre, i.e., a type of song for congregational worship and unity—but in new, secular contexts; in these instances, which will be detailed later, one could say it is both topic and genre at the same time.

Allusion and Topic

Identifying musical allusions—intentional and specific references to other works—is often rather subjective, since the similarity of the materials is not always exact and the composer's intention to make an allusion is not always explicit.  As with topics, allusions, too, rely on listener recognition in order to convey meaning, but of course allusive conversations can be private also.  A lack of transparency also does not

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[11] John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer, 1993), 127–54; Jeffrey Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor," *Nineteenth-Century Music* 11/3 (Spring 1988), 238–61.

necessarily invalidate connections that an individual listener may perceive or that the composer may have intended.[12]  As for Chorale: since chorales are a very public genre containing a wealth of recognizable and—importantly—*texted* specimens, allusion and topic can easily coincide when composers quote actual chorales.

Additionally, in the nineteenth century, an employment of Chorale can be a reference to the way another composer used Chorale, or simply a reference to another composer, just as much as, or in addition to a reference to chorale itself.  Mozart's apparent allusion to J.C. Bach, and Haydn's allusion to Mozart (both discussed in Chapter One) as elegies or homages gain particular significance from the fact that they are chorales—conventionally apt for this purpose—rather than any other type of melody or setting.  But while the conflation of topic and allusion is again not unique to the nineteenth century, it is more common in that century specifically for Chorale, simply because both chorale and Chorale have such a small presence in eighteenth-century concert music, and such an ample presence in the nineteenth.

**Connotations and Associations of Chorale and Chorales**

All these tendencies of nineteenth-century topical usage apply to Chorale— changing cultural contexts, expansion of meaning, personalization of meaning, distortion of meaning, allusive meaning.  Moreover, part of the changing cultural context is the change in attitudes toward chorale itself, as a genre.  These two modes of presentation—

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[12] For more on allusions, see Christopher Alan Reynolds, *Motives for Allusion: Context and Content in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

chorale and Chorale—are of course related in many ways, including the various paradoxes of their connotations and associations.

The interest in and rediscovery of old liturgical traditions, both Catholic and Protestant, became more specific in the nineteenth century; these were spurred in part by discoveries in the nascent discipline of musicology and dovetailed with nationalist sentiments and the desire to find cultural roots that could help define and unify national and cultural groups. In the Catholic tradition this meant attempts at the restoration of medieval chant and Palestrinian polyphony. For Protestants, "old" meant Bach revival, including Mendelssohn's watershed 1829 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*, as well as the restoration of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Lutheran music.[13] E.T.A. Hoffmann's 1814 essay on "Old and New Church Music" generally decries the "frivolity" of contemporary practice and idealizes the church music of the past. Hoffmann mentions the church music of both Catholic and Protestant composers from bygone eras, from Palestrina to Bach, as authentic and free from effect, gaudiness, striking modulations, and so forth. He concludes that "only the works of these composers, and the few who in the present age still remain faithful servants of the church now *vanished from the earth* [italics mine], can truly elevate and edify the pious mind."[14] The chorale in particular came to be a symbol of the golden past and a counter to the secularizing Enlightenment.

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[13] For more on this, see Robert L. Marshall and Robin A. Leaver, "Chorale: 19th and 20th centuries," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, accessed 30 May 2014; Basil Smallman and Alex Lingas, "Church Music," *Grove Music Online*. *Oxford Music Online*, accessed 2 February 2015; John Ogasapian, "The Restoration of Sacred Music in Romantic Germany," *Journal of Church Music* 30/3 (March 1988), 9–12, 30.

[14] E.T.A. Hoffmann, "Old and New Church Music," in *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 360.

Thus, when nineteenth-century composers thought "old" in reference to chorales, they may have been thinking Bach-old, or Luther-old, or some vague, nonspecific approximation. The significance of Bach may have been more in conveying a sense of greatness of the chorale heritage, rather than the sound per se of his settings, since the notion that simpler was equivalent to more authentic still persisted into the nineteenth century. Romantic composers and theorists may have thought they were preserving the long-lost archaic purity of the chorale with slowness, modal inflections, and simplicity of melody and harmony, even if their reconstructions were not necessarily accurate or specific to a particular phase of the Lutheran chorale.

This era was also the time when *Volkstumlichkeit* (folklike-ness) was emerging as a highly valued characteristic, and chorales became entwined with German nationalism, both as co-opted "folksongs" and in the chorale-style of many national hymns. "Chorales…whether sung by a congregation or merely heard by an audience, furthered *Gemeinschaft*, the sense of community that could as easily foster nationalism as Protestantism."[15] In addition to the unifying power of choral singing in general as described by Taruskin, Bonds and others, Lutheran chorales in particular carry the association of the dignified resistance to papal authority of Luther and the original Lutherans. In the service of stirring revolutionary sentiment, one need only focus on the element of dignified resistance, minus the Lutheran part.

As with all questions of historical periodization, the characteristics defined by the historian for one period do not end cleanly at the beginning (also defined by the historian) of the following period. The paradoxes, then, of chorale in the nineteenth century come

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[15] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 165.

from the jumble of sometimes-conflicting ideas about it, ideas that persist from the preceding eras, possibly being altered in the process. Chorale is variously an embodiment of intense, personal expression; artless, pedantic rule-following; primitive (and thus *unattractive*) folklike music; primitive (and thus *attractive*) folklike music; universal, mystical purity and long-lost archaic church music in general; ever-current popular style and cultural/national unity. In the later part of the century and into the twentieth, chorale additionally acquired associations of being stodgy or smarmy, square, smug, and bourgeois. Again, though, these ideas coexisted with all the others.[16]

Finally, in spite of (or parallel to) any espoused notions of historical preservation or reconstruction, nineteenth-century composers simultaneously integrated chorales and Chorale into their own secular works, in both affirming and deforming ways. The object of the next chapters is not rigid classification; of course many or most pieces will fit more than one category, or fit a category imperfectly. Rather, the object is to provide examples that make the range of meaningful possibilities clear, given the tendencies of Romantic topical usage and the background of nineteenth-century connotations of chorale.

### Genres and Contexts for Communal and National Expression

Since one of the principal connotations of Chorale is that of communal expression, a word about the broader context of communal expression in the nineteenth century will be helpful. Attitudes and ideas about the genre of the symphony in the nineteenth century also reflect changing cultural contexts. The increasingly public nature

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[16] For more on this see Rodney Stenning Edgecombe, "Blessed Assurance: Some Secular Uses of the Chorale," *The Musical Times* 151, no. 1913 (Winter 2010), 43–54.

of the symphony in the eighteenth century continued in the nineteenth, including the

perception that the symphony was unique in its ability to unite diverse voices in the most

inclusive and communal way. As opposed to chamber music and early incarnations of

the symphony, nineteenth-century symphonies were conceived for large forces, and for

performance in large public spaces. Furthermore, the diverse voices were not only

greater in number than in chamber music, but timbrally diverse as well (unlike, for

instance, the timbrally similar voices of the string quartet). Importantly, however, a

hallmark of symphonic expression is the synthesis of the voices and the communal

contribution toward creating the whole; no single voice predominates. Even considering

that the strings—or more specifically, the first violins—predominate in general, they hold

no monopoly, and moreover, the roles of every other instrument become increasingly

prominent throughout the nineteenth century.

Mark Evan Bonds has thoroughly detailed the connection of this idea with the

democratically oriented social and political movements of the early nineteenth century—

"the symphony as a projection of an ideal state in which personal liberties could flourish

within a structured framework, and in which the needs of the community could function

in harmony with the needs of the individual."[17] In this perception, the symphony was

heard as an essentially polyphonic "chorus" for diverse instruments and subject to

negative criticism if overly lyrical (i.e. privileging one voice). Bonds cites music critic

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[17] Mark Evan Bonds, *Music as Thought: Listening to the Symphony in the Age of Beethoven* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 63.

Adolf Bernhard Marx[18] comparing the symphony to the hymn in that they both express the emotions of a large body.[19]

These analogies gain an additional layer with the consideration of Chorale within the symphonic genre. Chorale—be it instrumental or vocal—stands out for being patently *not* polyphonic, and not merely homophonic, but homorhythmic as well. It is also lyrical and thus more accessible than the more learned aspects of symphonic construction, but does not feature an individual voice to the same degree as a song does. Moreover, Chorale has sacred connotations. Thus, the presence of Chorale in a symphony privileges a very particular type of communal voice within an already communal genre, in the same way that Daniel Beller-McKenna describes choral works— particularly large choral-orchestral ones—as producing "a community-building effect in nineteenth-century Germany—even more directly than the symphony, to which that function is often assigned by modern commentators."[20] Even more specifically, with Chorale, *everyone* can join in, or at least understand.

The connection between choral singing in general and early nineteenth-century nationalism is in fact a central discussion for Bonds. He chronicles the rise of various outlets of veiled political expression in the repressive and also nation-building era of the 1820s in Germany-to-be—ostensibly non-political and non-religious reading societies and choral societies that were nevertheless decidedly nationalistic in their focus on icons

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[18] This view echoes the thinking of Türk, with whom Marx studied for a short time (see Chapter One, p. 21—Türk extolling chorales as having "so much nobility, grandeur, solemnity, compassion, and devotion that anyone not completely devoid of sensitivity will be filled with emotion.")

[19] Bonds, *Music as Thought*, 64–66.

[20] Daniel Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 2.

of German culture. For the choral societies, this meant cultivation of both sacred and

secular songs, but most importantly, German songs reflecting a German folk style. The

explicitly communal genre of *Männerchor* (men's chorus) singing achieved prominence

through these societies, and is intimately bound up with—and sometimes

indistinguishable from—chorale singing of this era: amateur, communal, oriented toward

folk music or folk style, linked to nationalism, and typically sharing the same

homorhythmic texture and close harmonies. Choral festivals, in turn, brought together

multiple choral societies from different corners of the German-speaking territories,

reinforcing the idea of cultural nationalism.[21]

Matthew Gelbart traces the invention and construction of the divisions between

folk and art, or "low" and "high" music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,

particularly in relation to nationalism, nature, the idea of genius, and the idea of

traditional authenticity. One of Gelbart's observations is that prior to the eighteenth

century the criteria for distinguishing between high and low had to do with the function,

sentiments, and character of the music, but that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

the criteria had more to do with the origins of the music.[22] German Romantic ideology

was able to valorize low folk music to high art status with the idea that universal and

timeless masterpieces are thus because they absorb the folk collective into the mind of the

individual composing genius.[23]

Sacred music in general stands outside of both folk and art categorizations, and

does not really enter into Gelbart's study. The chorale, however, relates to both the high

[21] Bonds, *Music as Thought*, 79–83.

[22] Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music": Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 16.

[23] Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music,"* 11, 209.

and low strata; its origins in and function as liturgical music are inherently high, but its origins and function as music of common people is inherently low. Importantly, though, the chorale is also the official music of the Lutheran church, and used by the clergy, so it unites the social strata in a truly communal way. Composers of art music also absorbed the "folk" music of chorales and integrated that style into their work. Chorales themselves became part of national consciousness and chorale style permeated national songs.

Also in line with the notion of cultural nationalism, the early decades of the nineteenth century saw the cultivation of a specific German musical identity: pride in the likes of Bach, Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven as icons and heroes, as well as in genres perceived as German—in particular, the symphony, for both its instrumental aspect and its "serious" aspect.[24] This pride was celebrated in another type of festival—the music festival—usually centered on performances of symphonies and oratorios, again with implicit religious-nationalistic overtones. While it is not surprising to find chorales in the genre of oratorio, they take on an additional nationalistic association in the context of nationalistic music festivals, where the oratorio narratives served as allegories for the contemporary German national narrative.[25] It cannot be a coincidence that Lutheranism and the Lutheran chorale were also considered property and symbol of Germany, and that

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[24] Bonds observes that the string quartet should likewise have been perceived in national terms, but was not due to the fundamentally intimate nature of the music itself (*Music as Thought*, 88). Perhaps this is explains the gentle, "intimate" tone of Haydn's *Kaiserhymne* quartet movement.

[25] For more on this see Richard Taruskin, "The Liturgy of a Nationhood" and "The Oratorio Reborn," in *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. 3 of *The Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 158–66.

chorales and Chorale became a staple element of *symphonic* vocabulary as well in this

era.  This is where Chapter Three begins.

CHAPTER THREE

THE VOICES OF WE AND IT

**Communal "We" Chorales**

National Symphonies

The idea of a "national symphony" would seem to grow naturally in the political and cultural milieu described in the previous chapter; the entire genre of the symphony was being celebrated in a German nationalistic context, and depictive battle and funeral pieces, including so-called "symphonies," were already staples of the repertoire. The idea of a national symphony, though, was not limited to Germany or to German composers. It was not even new to the nineteenth century—in 1789 Haydn proposed, but never fulfilled, plans to write a "National Symphony" for France. Regardless of national affiliation, however, these national symphonies often use chorales with a strong "We" connotation, and they can be seen as successors of a watershed "national" symphony— Beethoven's Ninth—which used its "chorale" (with actual vocalists) in a structurally novel way, and set the standard for affirmative, rousing, and celebratory symphonic endings, forever thereafter to be one of the two *loci classici* (the Fifth is the other) of the "minor to triumphant major" trajectory. (The national aspect of the Ninth will be discussed below.) In some symphonies of this type, the rousing finales rely on Fanfare, March, or Processional, as perhaps in Beethoven's Fifth (1807/08), but the Ninth (1824) firmly establishes the choral type (although of course it had predecessors—Beethoven's

own Choral Fantasy, Peter von Winter's *Schlacht-Sinfonie*, Daniel Steibelt's Eighth Piano Concerto, and probably others).

At this point it is necessary to re-open the issue of the "hymn" versus the "chorale" since many of the examples in this chapter are known as hymns but are not particularly suggestive of music for church service, Lutheran or otherwise. The terms were and are sometimes used interchangeably, and in many instances the names are inconsequential when their significant musical traits (chordal style and popular melody) are the same, and when composers use chorales or hymns for the same reasons, as in the rousing finale of a national symphony.

For instance, Haydn's *Kaiserhymne* was indeed originally conceived as a patriotic hymn for the Kaiser—not a church chorale—and shortly after it became Austria's national anthem. But in this era, these things are often conflated—God and Emperor and Nation; singing in church, singing in a national music festival; genuine old, (re)constructed old, and the new modeled on the old. As mentioned in Chapter One, both the Protestant and the Catholic churches eventually adopted the *Kaiserhymne* as a church hymn/chorale. The *Kaiserhymne* melody also now serves as alma mater for countless modern-day schools; the musical style is accessible, attractive, and able to blend with other things, such as patriotism, Catholic Mass, singing clubs, school allegiance, or any kind of reverential or community activity. The *Kaiserhymne* and other national hymns like it do have a different sound melodically and harmonically from chorales of earlier eras, but they share the guiding principles of musical style, as do other hymns and chorales from the late eighteenth century. Recall from Chapter Two that Franz Joseph's brother Michael was "Lutheranizing" the Catholic hymnbook at this time.

Thus, for discussion of a genre such as the national symphony, the term "chorale" can include both chorales and hymns. Whether instrumental or actually sung, when the finales of these symphonies are specifically "chorale" finales—and not simply choral— they reference the actual voices of the people, and an activity that common people actually can and do participate in, whereas marches and fanfares are things people generally just *watch*. A certain number of works discussed in this chapter feature chorale-*like* music, or borrow characteristics from chorale, even though they may rightly be said to veer toward or simply belong to other genres. The purpose of including these hybrid types stems from the fact that they are often grouped with or referred to as chorales; the question is whether or not there is any good reason to do this.

The same goes for *choral* finales such as the "Chorus Mysticus" from Liszt's *Faust Symphony*, which can be viewed as a commemorative symphony as well, written during Liszt's time in Weimar amid enthusiastic discussions in Liszt's circles about Faust as a central figure of German literature; the symphony was premiered in 1857 for the inauguration of the Goethe-Schiller Monument in Weimar. The symphony is often listed with other "post-Beethoven Ninth choral symphonies," but it is not of the "we-the-people" sort; Liszt is more concerned with the literary and philosophical aspects of the Faust story rather than its being a German emblem. The choral finale is without doubt extremely grandiose and so therefore rousing in some way, but it inspires a feeling more like Catholic or theatrical awe rather than Protestant participation and a sense of belonging. The "choral" part of the men's chorus is almost entirely in unison, and constructed of short, intoned fragments (two measures or less), while a tenor soloist offers his operatic

lines in between the fragments. This symphonic finale does indeed include a chorus, but no part of its musical style borrows from the *chorale* aesthetic.

Another commemorative piece but with a quite different flavor is Berlioz's *Grande symphonie funèbre et triomphale* from 1840, the result of a commission for a celebration of the 1830 July Revolution. Its triumphal choral finale shows in a different way that choral definitely does not necessarily mean chorale; here the military wind band and chorus create the rousing effect purely through March and Fanfare.

As for Beethoven's "Choral" Symphony, whatever cosmopolitan ideas he (or Schiller) may or may not have had, the Ninth Symphony—in its time—took on decidedly nationalistic associations because of it ubiquity and popularity at German music festivals.[1] (The "We" in this symphony is noble and universal even if "universal" means "German.") Similar to Haydn's *Kaiserhymne*, Beethoven's *Freudenthema* is more a hymn than a chorale in the archaic Lutheran sense, but achieves the same lofty and simultaneously popular unifying effect through aspects of Chorale, albeit with overlays of March and other topics. The various permutations of the setting throughout the finale demonstrate the importance of texture, tempo, and rhythm in projecting topical references, but at the heart of them all is a communal song with exalted connotations, and it is presented more than once in a way that highlights those aspects (see Example 3-1). Richard Wagner's comment on the *Freudenthema* underlines the sacred aspect: "This theme becomes the *cantus firmus*, the chorale of the new church around which, as in the church chorales of S. Bach, harmonious voices join in counterpoint."[2]

[1] Bonds, *Music as Thought*, 99.
[2] Quoted in Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 161.

Example 3-1.  Beethoven, Symphony No. 9/IV, chorus, mm. 543–58.


Thus, whereas in the eighteenth century chorales were episodes in the simpler depictive battle pieces, or reflective slow movements in Haydn's symphonies, nineteenth-century symphonies start to locate Chorale in grand finales—as apotheosis, rousing triumph, or celebration, continuing the vein of Winter's and Reichardt's earlier battle symphonies.  Unlike those battle symphonies, however, these are "proper" symphonies in the sense that they (nearly) all follow a four-movement structure and possess an internal musical logic in addition to their explicit or implicit programs.

The function of a chorale as apotheosis in a symphony has as predecessor the concluding chorales of Baroque works, such as the passions and chorale cantatas of J.S. Bach, particularly in contrast to other chorale-based genres in which the chorales serve as cantus firmi for variation sets.  Especially in Bach's later cantata style, but even in some of his earlier cantatas (e.g. *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, BWV 4), he uses chorales *in congregational style setting* for the conclusion of the composition.  The rhetorical

function of peroration is to recall and summarize, and at the same time appeal or inspire; the special quality of using a chorale as peroration is that it involves the congregation in the reflection or in the conversation with God, as opposed to one person sermonizing. At that point in a Baroque cantata or in a nineteenth-century symphony, the congregation/audience can join in—literally or in spirit.

Mark Evan Bonds includes Clementi's Third Symphony "The Great National" (written in 1834 for his adopted country of England) on a list of "Nineteenth-century symphonies with implicitly choral finales."[3] Clementi quite naturally chooses "God Save the King," hinting at the melody in the second movement, and then stating it more emphatically in his climactic finale. The melody, however, is never presented in full— only the first phrase and treatments of it (retrograde, etc.) Moreover, Clementi never uses chorale texture—the fragments are given by solo instruments or by loud, orchestral *tutti*—and it is not the main thematic material of the finale. The majority of the movement, which is marked *Vivace-leggermente*, has more the aura of a light Haydnesque finale than a nineteenth-century triumphant apotheosis. Clementi is depending on the recognizability of the first phrase of the tune and the loudness of its presentation to effect it as his "Great National" symbol, but his treatment of the fragment is orchestral/symphonic rather than choral, and does not invite or suggest communal participation.

Smetana (more famous for his revolutionary Czech sentiments) composed his "Triumphal Symphony" to commemorate the wedding of Habsburg Emperor Franz

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[3] Mark Evan Bonds, "Beethoven's Shadow: The Nineteenth Century," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Symphony*, ed. Julian Horton (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 341.

Joseph in 1854. Smetana likewise makes an extremely straightforward hymn selection—

Haydn's *Kaiserhymne* turned Austrian national anthem. As Clementi had done, Smetana

also integrates the melody throughout the work and saves the triumphant version for the

final moments of the symphony, but unlike Clementi he presents it in full, such that one

could easily imagine an actual chorus singing it. Joachim Raff's Symphony No. 1 "An

das Vaterland" fits the same mold, and even uses the D minor to D major key scheme.

"An das Vaterland" is a setting from 1825 by Gustav Reichardt of the patriotic poem *Was

ist des Deutschen Vaterland?* (What is the German's Fatherland?) by Ernst Moritz Arndt.

The poem invokes God and describes God in Heaven singing German Lieder (i.e., God is

on Germany's side); again, this is not a church chorale (it probably fits in the category of

*Rheinlieder*), but it capitalizes on sacred associations and communal singing.

In the way of a purely German and more explicitly religious example,

Mendelssohn's Fifth Symphony was likewise commissioned for a commemoration

event—the 300th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession; Taruskin describes this

commemoration as "the official beginning of German Protestantism as a genuine 'ism'

and a national church."[4] The religious references could hardly be more German: The first

movement contains the "Dresden Amen," which is variously linked to both Protestant

and Catholic practices, but in either case, is specifically linked to the city of Dresden,[5]

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[4] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 167.
[5] Arnold Whittall, "Dresden Amen," *The Oxford Companion to Music. Oxford Music Online*; accessed February 9, 2015; Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 167; Gerhard Poppe, "Neue Ermittlungen zur Geschichte des sogenannten 'Dresdener Amen,'" *Die Musikforschung* 67/1 (2014), 48–57. Taruskin (without citing a source) calls the Dresden Amen a Lutheran response formula and traces it to a sixteenth-century German Passion oratorio by Joseph Schlegel; Whittall places it in the Catholic Church and attributes it to Johann Gottlieb Naumann in the second half of the eighteenth century. Poppe discusses the use of the Dresden Amen in both denominations, although the

and by extension Germany.  R. Larry Todd also analyzes the staggered entrances of the "Jupiter" motto (alluding to Mozart's "Jupiter" Symphony) in the first movement as "Palestrinian imitative writing" and thus a reference to Catholicism.[6]  Whether Mendelssohn intended to make denominational references with the "Jupiter" motto and the "Dresden Amen," both motives set a historicizing tone for a piece that commemorates of the beginnings of Protestantism; the more indisputable meaning of  "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott" as the ultimate symbol of the Reformation comes in the finale.  The implicit choral finale and the key scheme of the symphony—D minor eventually transformed to D major—may be yet another historicizing and Germanic reference to Beethoven's Ninth.  Significant to this study is that Mendelssohn chose an actual church chorale as his symbol of Lutheranism and German nationalism, and placed it as the main theme in his culminating, triumphant finale.

These national symphonies were occasional works (even if they aren't treated that way now), and their chorales are really not so much topics as they are specimens of the *genre*, transplanted from church service or sacred cantata to secular symphony.  Art (or a Romantic conception of Art) and Nation replace religion; the concert becomes a worship service, and the chorales are retained, serving the same rhetorical purpose.  They remind

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evidence he presents suggests that the Catholic practice predates the Protestant—which was not widespread until *after* the composition of the "Reformation" Symphony.  Poppe also observes that Mendelssohn had never visited Dresden prior to composing the symphony, but may have had indirect knowledge of the "Amen" formula.

[6] R. Larry Todd, "Mendelssohn," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*; accessed 11 November 2014.  See also James Garratt, *Palestrina and the German Romantic Imagination: Interpreting Historicism in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 218–221.  Garratt disputes the Palestrinian interpretation and provides a full discussion of the various polarized readings of Mendelssohn's symphony.

the "congregation" who they are and what group they belong to; they edify and perorate,
rouse and rally, awaken the distracted, and invite everyone to join in (even if only
symbolically).  Taruskin's phrase "The Liturgy of a Nationhood" succinctly expresses the
phenomenon.[7]

Other symphonies, and in fact, works from other genres, from the first half of the
nineteenth century, while not always explicitly nationalistic, share the same constructs as
well as constructions, with truly chorale finales.  For example, the Second Symphony
(1834) of Carl Loewe—the same Catholic Loewe who included Lutheran chorales in all
his oratorios—has the same type of rousing, grand chorale finale as in the national
symphonies just discussed.   And once again, as in Beethoven's Ninth, the overall
harmonic trajectory is from D minor to D major from beginning to end of the symphony.
In this instance—rather rare for him, it seems—Loewe wrote his own chorale instead of
using an actual one.  The fourth movement begins solemnly with the chorale strikingly in
F-sharp major; the *adagio* indication and the choir-like setting for strings make Loewe's
chorale much more chorale-like than Clementi's or Smetana's, in spite of the
instrumental-type sixteenth-note elaborations of the lower parts, which don't begin until
the second phrase—the simpler texture of the first phrase is enough to establish the
chorale character.  As with Mendelssohn's "Reformation" finale, the movement opens
with a full presentation of the chorale (see Example 3-2).

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[7] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 158.

Example 3-2.  Loewe, Symphony No. 2/IV, mm. 1–23.

Then after full symphonic treatment (contrasting variations, secondary themes, wide-ranging modulations, different tempos and colors, and even a fugato section) the mood becomes increasingly rousing, and concludes the symphony, fully scored, in a triumphant D Major.

Opera and Oratorio

Oratorios figure prominently in Taruskin's narrative as well, including a detailed

description of Mendelssohn's oratorio *Paulus* as autobiographical for Mendelssohn in

that it tells the story of a converted Jew preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles.  The

oratorio was performed with great success in 1836 at the Lower Rhine Music Festival,

and is replete with actual Lutheran chorales—"Wachet auf," "O Jesu Christe, wahres

Licht," and Luther's tune for the Nicene Creed, "Wir glauben all' an einen Gott."

Taruskin emphasizes how this chorale is "enshrined in an oratorio given its first

performance before an audience largely made up of Catholics, to consecrate an ideal of

national religious union."[8]  Again, these chorales are located in an entirely appropriate

genre, but as with the chorales in the national symphonies, are less topical than

transplanted.

Predating *Paulus* was another oratorio that Howard Smither calls "the most

widely performed and historically significant oratorio between Haydn's *Jahreszeiten*

(1801) and Mendelssohn's *Paulus* (1836).[9]  This was *Das Weltgericht* (The Last

Judgment) (1819) by prolific oratorio composer and conductor on the festival circuit,

Friedrich Schneider.  His interpretation of the apocalypse is one in which everyone,

including Satan, is ultimately saved, but naturally not without multiple battles and

contrasting depictions of good and evil.  Musically, Schneider's oratorio marks a stylistic

shift from earlier oratorios in that it is dominated by choruses—easy, homorhythmic

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[8] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 166–71.

[9] Howard E. Smither, *The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Vol. 4 of *A History of Oratorio* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 127.

choruses—perhaps with the idea of their being performed *en masse* by amateur singers at festivals.[10] Even among all these choruses, though, Schneider uses different styles to identify the forces of good and evil, for instance, in No. 5 from the first part of the oratorio. Here a chorus of "Believers" (*Gläubigen*) sings a four-part (SATB) Lutheran style chorale in half notes, with simple orchestral accompaniment, or sometimes even *a cappella,* in contrast with the arrogant and worldly chorus of "Conquerors" (*Eroberer*) whose rhythmically jagged music is unison and for men's voices only (TB), with racing accompaniments from the orchestra (see Examples 3-3a and 3-3b).



Example 3-3a. Friedrich Schneider, *Das Weltgericht*, "Chor der Gläubigen," mm. 1–25.

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[10] Smither, *The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, 133.

Example 3-3b.  Friedrich Schneider, *Das Weltgericht*, "Chor der Eroberer," mm. 57–62.

Again, *Das Weltgericht* by itself does not have a blatant nationalistic connection, but in the context of implicitly nationalistic music festivals in an era when the Lutheran chorale was commonly equated with the nation of Germany, the audience and the performers would naturally identify with the chorus of Believers and their eventual triumph.

Related to the effect of Chorale in national symphonies and oratorios in nationalist settings is its use in operas with plots involving denominational strife.  It is impossible to avoid or disguise the symbolism of a chorale such as "Ein' feste Burg" in Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*, although "the choice of a hymn…from a non-French

denomination…may have been calculated to avoid both censorship and controversy in the nation for which the opera was created."[11] Meyerbeer treats the chorale in a thoroughly operatic manner, presenting it in several different dramatic guises in the overture, then as a solo aria in Act 1, and as a women's chorus in Act 5—all in a variety of keys and tempos. But its significance is never anything other than the Lutheran identifier; the different treatments are for storytelling, not for commenting on the chorale. Parakilas points out that denominational hymns in operas are used as battle hymns at moments when the characters are facing danger or enemies.[12] Moreover, just as with the historical oratorios, listeners of the time could identify with the plots, especially with the aid of "we" chorales. The denominational strife depicted in operas such as *les Huguenots* offered dramatists and composers a historical model "for the ideological political strife of their own era… in those societies in Europe in the wake of the French Revolution where a person's identity was no longer fixed at birth, but was a matter of choice and therefore susceptible to conversion."[13]

## (False) Chorale Hybrids

In the preceding examples, the "we" connotation is clear because of the explicit programs or performance contexts of the works. They all share a similar effect: homorhythmic, communal bonding based on chorale style and/or allusions to pre-existing hymn melodies. But the "We" connotation can also overlap with an "It" connotation in

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[11] James Parakilas, "The Chorus," in *The Cambridge Companion to Grand Opera*, ed. David Charlton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 90.

[12] Parakilas, "The Chorus," 91.

[13] Parakilas, "The Chorus," 90.

the sense of identifying with a group—any type of "Folk"— even if they aren't exactly defined or exactly "Us."  What makes a musical passage rousing or unifying has to do with performance context, tempo, harmonic context, rhetorical placement, and accompaniment (including interjections)—all these are just as or more important than the melody itself.  This is where stylistic lines can blur and lead people (even renowned scholars) to call any loud *tutti* a chorale—and maybe rightly so.  Perhaps the rhetorical function of a culminating loud *tutti*—whether the original tune was chorale-like or not— does have its roots in or is related to the chorale as it functions rhetorically in church services and in cantatas.  Such passages, though, are not necessarily true Chorale.  If anything they might be called orchestral chorales, with the idea that they combine orchestral idiom with chorale or chorale function.

Schumann's *Overture, Scherzo und Finale* (1841), a sort of almost-symphony that moves from E minor to E major, contains an example of such an orchestral chorale.  John Daverio, in fact, uses those exact words when speaks of the "breakthrough" moment in the coda of the finale "with the transformation of the opening fugue subject into a full orchestral chorale."[14]  This moment is in the home key, it is the main theme, it is affirmative and celebratory, and it does have a communal "We" aura.  In this case, the loud orchestral *tutti* iteration of the fugal main theme does happen to reveal a certain chorale-like aspect of that theme in spite of the fanfare figures (the eighth-note pick-ups) (see Example 3-4).  This is in contrast to Ratner's labeling as a brass chorale the opening of the finale in Beethoven's Fifth, in which the melody is really not chorale-like at all.

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[14] John Daverio, *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 178.  Daverio also uses the term chorale somewhat carelessly when he describes the theme of the trio from the *Scherzo* movement as "choralelike" (279), in spite of its very fast tempo.

Example 3-4. Schumann, *Overture, Scherzo and Finale*, Finale, from rehearsal H.

Another type of rousing or unifying orchestral music that involves "choral" settings is one that borrows from the sound of *Männerchor* singing. Matthew Gelbart observes that Mendelssohn in his Third Symphony made the music "Scottish" by filtering his impressions of Scottish music through German aesthetic principles, particularly in the "hymnlike coda." Here the melody uses the "Scottish" fragment of scale degrees five to six to one, but set in a way that suggests the German *Männerchor* style, apparently even by Mendelssohn's own description.[15] Gelbart goes on to say that with his German influences Mendelssohn "reinterpreted Scotland as proto-German, and hence universal."[16] Neither the melody nor the setting in this coda is chorale-like, but the fact that it gets called "hymnlike" again reveals the overlap in function between chorale and hymn and various choral types (as well as the general terminological confusion—"hymn"

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[15] Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music": Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner"* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 250.

[16] Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of "Folk Music" and "Art Music,"* 252.

in this case is used broadly to mean a folklike melody set in *Männerchor* style) (see

Example 3-5).



Example 3-5.  Mendelssohn, Symphony No. 3/IV, strings, mm. 396–403.


Finally, a hybrid topic known as Pilgrims' Processional is defined by Robert

Hatten as a "chorale-type melody and march-like accompaniment."[17]  In Wagner's

*Tannhäuser*, pilgrims are literally processing as they sing the famous "Pilgrims' Chorus,"

which does indeed combine a chorale-like disposition with march-like rhythms and at

first appears nicely diatonic as well (see Example 3-6a).  In his typical custom, however,

Wagner transforms his Chorale by endlessly avoiding harmonic resolution within the

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[17] Robert Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures, Topics, and Tropes: Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 89.

diatonic section, and then in the "B" section of the chorale, launching into his fully

chromatic harmony and operatic melodic contours while retaining the four-part texture

(see Example 3-6b).  The result is not so much "false" Chorale as metamorphosed neo-

operatic Chorale, a wholly Wagnerian product, and the epitome of pious resolve.

Example 3-6a.  Wagner, *Tannhäuser*, Act III, "Pilgrims' Chorus," mm. 1–4.

Example 3-6b.  Wagner, *Tannhäuser*, Act III, "Pilgrims' Chorus," mm. 21–24.

Familiar symphonic examples of Pilgrims' Processional are all second

movements: Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* (1834), Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony (1833),

and Brahms's Symphony No. 3.   Mendelssohn's melody, however, is more folklike or

Lied-like than chorale-like, and is presented entirely in unison, with walking bass

underneath.  Likewise, although Berlioz titles his movement "Marche des pélerins

chantant la prière du soir" (March of the pilgrims singing the evening prayer), making the

religious setting quite clear, the melody itself is not typical of any kind of actual religious

music.  It features large intervals that constantly change direction, surprising chromatic

inflections, a wide range, and an unpredictable melodic structure.  Berlioz does use a bit

of four-part homorhythmic texture, but this "evening prayer" cannot at all be said to be

chorale-like, and really is not even very "hummable."  Typical for Berlioz, his aim is

colorful suggestion and depiction, rather than any kind of logic.

The preceding examples, then, may have religious connotations, and offer a sense

of a group—maybe more "It" than "We"—via communal song, but they do not use

Chorale, and in fact, are not typically described that way, except by Hatten's definition of

Pilgrims' Processional and his listing of *Harold* as an example.  In Hatten's discussion of

the second movement of Brahms's Third Symphony, however, he is more specific: "The

second movement implements the march as a pilgrims' processional…with the solemn I-

IV-I-IV progression…providing the harmonic cue, and the chorale aspect suggested by

orchestration and texture more than by melodic line."[18]  Hatten also notes the pastoral

character in the music, and Janice Dickensheets corroborates this view with her analysis

of the movement as "a Lied-Style melody with Chorale-Style harmony and Musette

inflection" (see Examples 3-7a and 3-7b).[19]

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[18] Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures*, 77.
[19] Janice Dickensheets, "The Topical Vocabulary of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Musicological Research* 31, no. 2/3 (April 2012), 106.

Example 3-7a. Brahms, Symphony No. 3/II, Clarinets and Bassoons, mm. 1–4.



Example 3-7b. Brahms, Symphony No. 3/II, Clarinets and Bassoons, mm. 15–20.

For Dickensheets, the effect of the topical trope is the creation of an "archaic atmosphere," and she does not elaborate further. Hatten's point, though, in analyzing this passage and other similar ones in the same movement as "Pilgrims' Processional" is to show the penetration and troping of march topic in the entire symphony, with an overarching narrative of "heroic struggle and ultimate redemption." The Pilgrims' Processional, he says, "plays a role in delineating the progressive stages of a spiritual struggle."[20] While this analysis is perfectly defensible, the lack of a chorale-type melody and the clear dominance of a solo melody cast some doubt on calling it Chorale. As for chorale-style harmony and texture, the I-IV-I-IV and I-V-I-V progressions in block chords (mm. 1–2 and mm. 16–18, respectively) along with Brahms's signature flat seven

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[20] Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures*, 89.

(m. 18) do lend a monumental, archaic tone, especially with their multiple recurrences, but again, whether this justifies calling the fragment Chorale is questionable.

This might be a case in which the topical troping is so complex that the essential characteristics of the constituent topics become blurred. In light of all the examples above except *Tannhäuser*, the better solution in the case of "Pilgrims' Processional" would be to modify its definition to include a broader selection of types of "spiritual" music. As will be seen in Chapter Five, Brahms has a definite connection with both chorale and Chorale, of a sort that probably could not be claimed for some of the composers in the present chapter. His use of Chorale can be subtle and difficult to interpret, but this does not give license to identify it indiscriminately. In any case, the example from Brahms's Third Symphony highlights the fact that topics can carry different shades of meaning depending on exactly how they are used.

### Development/Breakdown of the Funeral Chorale

If two measures of music with a hint of a chorale harmony in block chords are enough to suggest Chorale and its connotations in the midst of many other topics in an *Andante* second movement, this would mark the example from Brahms's Third as belonging to an entirely distinct category of Chorale usage than its use either in the position of rousing finale or reflective *Adagio* slow movement, where the Chorale presentation tends to be complete rather than fragmentary and with relatively uncomplicated significance (excepting Haydn's Op. 76 No. 4).

Brahms's Third comes from the far margin of the chronological scope of this study (and more will be said about Brahms in Chapter Five), but there are many

precedents to this sort of more complex topical usage. One location for this is in funeral music embedded in the larger form of a symphony, i.e. distinct from, say, Kraus's funeral symphony, in which the chorale was a complete and clearly delineated episode in the funeral proceedings, or Beethoven's actually funerary *Equali*. A funeral is an inherently public event, especially a funeral in the public genre of the symphony. An occurrence of Chorale in this context can still carry a "We" connotation in the sense of collective mourning of a fallen hero, or can also feel more like an "It" in the sense of religious consolation of personal grief (including collective personal grief—consolation coming from outside the individual).

Beethoven's *Marcia Funèbre* from his Third Symphony (1803) may contain such an example of consolation. Beethoven's heroic style supposedly declined after Napoleon's defeat, with the clearly occasional *Wellingtons Sieg* (celebrating victory over Napoleon) as prime example of a debased, "mock-heroic" style: preexisting patriotic tunes and direct imitations of gunfire, arranged narratively, rather than by internal musical logic. According to Nicholas Mathew, however, "true" and "mock" heroic styles might not actually be that different, and he sees *Wellingtons Sieg* as the hermeneutic key to the Third Symphony.[21]

Mathew might be a bit too willing to make *Eroica* into a battle symphony on a par with *Wellingtons Sieg*, but one could certainly make a case for the rhythmically jagged C minor funeral march that opens the second movement of the *Eroica* as sharing

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[21] Mathew, Nicholas, "History Under Erasure: *Wellingtons Sieg*, the Congress of Vienna, and the Ruination of Beethoven's Heroic Style," *The Musical Quarterly* 89/1 (Spring 2006), 17–61.

characteristics with other occasional funeral pieces.  After its first iteration, however, the

music is utterly contrasting, with a smooth, even contour in E-flat major, and one

measure of four-part homorhythm and simple harmonic progression (see m. 17 in

Example 3-8).  What follows that one measure—solo interjections, piquant harmonies,

and the repetition of the motif at different pitch levels and in varied configurations—

recalls Haydn's treatment of his "chorale" theme in the *Adagio* of Opus 76, No. 4.



Example 3-8.  Beethoven, Symphony No. 3/II, strings, mm. 14–27.

It is a very small fragment, but two considerations support interpreting it as a

small moment of Chorale with sacred associations.  It is the inversion of this four-note

theme—but retaining the exact rhythm—that becomes the primary theme of the F minor

double fugue later in the movement (see Example 3-9)—a fugue that recalls the double

fugue of the Kyrie in Mozart's Requiem.  Stephen C. Rumph notes this similarity as well,

and also with Handel's "And with his stripes we are healed," an F minor fugue from the

Messiah.[22]  Ratner associates fugal writing in the Classic era with Baroque forms,

particularly Church music,[23] and although Hatten rightly points out that fugal style has a

range of expressive connotations, not just sacred,[24] in this case of Beethoven's double

fugue within a funeral movement, the sacred reading seems like the correct one.



Example 3-9.  Beethoven, Symphony No. 3/II, mm. 114–21.


The second consideration is that Schubert may have heard something chorale-like

in the E-flat major motif as well.  The second movements of Schubert's "Great C major"

Symphony D. 944 and of Beethoven's Third share the same type of Gypsy-inflected

funeral march with oboe as soloist.  Curiously, Schubert also immediately contrasts his

funeral march with a smooth, homorhythmic chorale-like section. This happens also even

within the main theme itself (see Examples 3-10a and 3-10b).

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[22] Stephen C. Rumph, *Beethoven After Napoleon: Political Romanticism in the Late Works* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 81.

[23] Ratner, *Classic Music*, 260–71.

[24] Hatten, *Markedness, Topics, and Tropes*, 87.

Example 3-10a.  Schubert, Symphony No. 9, D. 944/II/second theme, mm. 93–97, strings.



Example 3-10b.  Schubert, Symphony No. 9, D. 944/II, main theme counterstatement, mm. 24–29, oboe.

Just as Beethoven, Schubert inverts the motif: the stepwise descent of the second theme seems to be an inversion of the stepwise ascent from the counterstatement in the main theme, which, especially given its placement in the *style hongrois* melody, is reminiscent of a striking passage in Schubert's *Divertissement à l'Hongroise* (piano four-hands) (1824).  In the midst of a long and wild movement in F-sharp minor, Schubert suddenly interjects eight bars of ascending, chordal half notes and quarter notes in F-sharp major, which Jonathan Bellman describes as "eye-wateringly angelic"[25] (see Example 3-11).

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[25] Bellman, *Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 126.
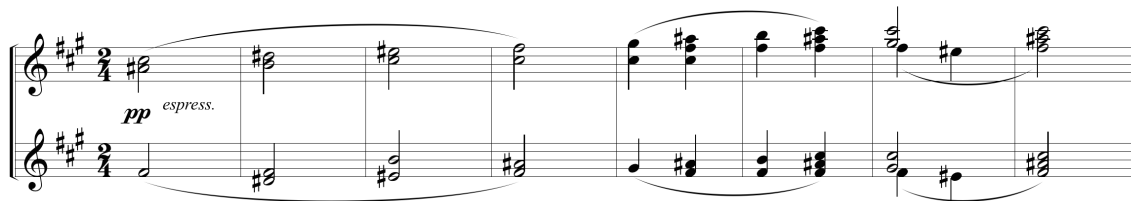
Example 3-11.  Schubert, *Divertissement à l'Hongroise*, Allegretto, Primo part, mm. 296–303.

The F major second theme of D. 944's second movement is commonly seen as tranquil and consoling, in contrast to the urgency and angst of the main theme, which of course reaches a point of dead-end crisis in m. 249, and is never whole again after that. Note that the second theme, at least in its first phrase, is diatonic and homophonic, and features stepwise motion and simple rhythm.  Even in the more complex phrases that follow (in the manner of a chorale *prelude*, perhaps), it still evokes a feeling of religious comfort, prayer, or request.  That religious connotation is also evident in the repeated lone horn notes that end the "B" section (mm. 148–156) and the exposed horn and trombone chords that precede the final iteration of the main theme (mm. 321–29). Schumann called the lone horn notes "otherworldly…a heavenly spirit…passing through the orchestra."[26]  As for the chordal trombone sonority, it may well suggest something funereal.

Note that with these examples we have additional rhetorical locations for Chorale within the large form of the symphony—as a contrasting theme in the slow movement. Schubert finds yet another place to put a chorale, again funereal, when he uses Chorale prominently in the first movement of his symphonic sketch D. 936a from 1828, but

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[26] Quoted in A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire: Volume II: The First Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 631.

places it differently and draws on the Equale tradition.  In D. 936a Schubert may in fact have made specific reference to one of Beethoven's Equale.

While the sketch of D. 729 (Schubert's so-called "Seventh" Symphony, discussed below) is a full orchestral score (though only partially fully orchestrated), the sketch of D. 936a is written on just two staves with occasional indications of instrumentation, and numerous cross-outs and revisions.  The main themes and the basic layout, though, are clear enough.  The key of the first movement is D major, with these first and second themes, traditionally enough in D major and A major, respectively (see Examples 3-12a and 3-12b):



Example 3-12a.  Schubert, Symphonic Sketch, D. 936a in D major/I, mm 1–7.



Example 3-12b.  Schubert, Symphonic Sketch, D. 936a in D major/I/second theme, measure number unclear.

The second theme is apparently taken from the opening number of Schubert's own opera *Der Zwillingsbrüder* (The Twin Brothers),[27] a one-act farce from 1818/19

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[27] Brian Newbould, *Schubert: The Music and the Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 386.

about elderly twin brothers whose confused identities temporarily thwart the marriage

plans of a young bride and groom.  In the opening chorus, the villagers and the groom are

singing a serenade to the fiancée.  The scene is light and innocent, and the music evokes a

rustic feeling (see Example 3-13):



Example 3-13.  Schubert, Act One, Scene One, "Verglühet sind die Sterne" from *Die Zwillingsbrüder*, D. 647, mm. 8–16, vocal parts.

As for why Schubert chose to reuse this melody in his symphony, it could be that

he was thinking in theatrical terms in general—Newbould notices a striking similarity of

simultaneous key and tempo changes in Schubert's D. 936a and Weber's *Euryanthe*

overture.[28]  In this light, the opening theme (see Example 3-12a) seems like a curtain-

raising overture.  Daniel Jacobson, on the other hand, suggests that Schubert meant the

entire symphony as an homage to Beethoven, particularly in his treatment of this theme

in the development, and with his choice of melody "demonstrating his compositional

kinship to Beethoven by using material from an opera called 'The Twin Brothers.'"[29]

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[28] Brian Newbould, *Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective* (London: Toccata Press, 199), 262–63.

[29] Daniel Jacobson, "Franz Schubert's D. 936a: A Symphonic Homage to Beethoven?" Unpublished manuscript, 14; revised version of "Schuberts D. 936A: Eine sinfonische Hommage an Beethoven?" *Schubert durch die Brille*, Mitteilungen 15. Baden bei Wien, Austria: Journal of the International Franz Schubert Institute (June 1995), 113–126.

Simpler explanations might be that Schubert liked his own melody, or that the similarity was coincidental.  What can hardly be coincidental, though, is what Jacobson points out about the treatment of the second theme in the development.  Schubert uses Chorale to transform his happy tune to a funereal chorale by changing the mode to minor and scoring it to resemble Beethoven's Equale; he even specifically indicates the use of trombones (see Examples 3-14a and 3-14b).



Example 3-14a.  Beethoven, Equale No. 1, mm. 1–11.



Example 3-14b.  Schubert, Symphonic Sketch, D. 936a in D major/I/trombone chorale, mm. 1–8.

*Die Zwillingsbrüder* contains no reference to a funeral and uses no trombones, so this transformation has to be significant.  The passage opens the development and could not be more clearly delineated.  The exposition ends with a cadence in A major, followed by the simultaneous key and tempo changes that Newbould observed as theatrical: a sudden shift to B-flat minor (with the preceding A serving as leading tone), and the tempo indication of *Andante*.  Sudden slowing of tempo in mid-sonata is not without

precedent, but usually for the reappearance of a slow introduction, rather than for beginning the development section.

Generically, an *equale* is any piece written for like instruments; in the area of Linz, a specific tradition of equali for trombones came to be associated with funeral processions, including the function of solemnly announcing the beginning of the service. Beethoven was commissioned to write his equali during a visit to Linz in 1812; they were performed in vocal arrangement at Beethoven's own funeral in 1827. Schubert would have heard them then, as he was a torchbearer in that procession, and he may even have had access to the scores since they belonged to one of Schubert's publishers.[30]

Newbould, Jacobson, and others, including Howard Weiner, have all contributed to a debate over whether Schubert was making an explicit reference to Beethoven in his D. 936a. In any case, Schubert was well aware of the genre of equale as well as the conventions of using trombones to signify solemn occasions and to allude to death and funeral,[31] so the passage still stands as a clear example of funereal Chorale. Its function in this symphonic movement does seem to be theatrical, in the way Schubert places it as a shocking scene change. The movement as a whole is rather cheerily major-mode, so the funereal chorale stands in contrast to that, in a reversal or embodiment of the pattern in which the chorale consoles grief; here the grief and the consoling are all in one. Perhaps the chorale also functions to announce or foreshadow the overwhelmingly mournful

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[30] Howard Weiner, "Beethoven's Equali (WoO 30): A New Perspective," *Historic Brass Society Journal*, vol. 14 (2002), 277.

[31] Andrew Glendening, *The Use of the Trombone in Schubert's Mature Symphonies and Symphonic Fragments, D. 729, D. 759, D. 944, and D. 936A* (D.M.A. Diss., Indiana University, 1992).

mood of the second movement in B minor, again with arguable traits of *style hongrois*

(see Example 3-15).



Example 3-15.  Schubert, Symphonic Sketch, D. 936a in D major/ii/reiteration of first theme, mm. 126–33.

Another symphony that Bonds includes on his list of "Nineteenth-century

symphonies with implicitly choral finales" is the Symphony No. 4 of Louis Spohr (1832).

It does indeed have an instrumental chorale in the final movement, but not anything like

that of the triumphant-type symphonies on the list.  Spohr's symphony is strongly in the

category of the programmatic or depictive, and in fact taps from pastoral, battle, and

funeral, all three.  It is based on a poem by Carl Pfeiffer, "Die Weihe der Töne" (The

Consecration of Sounds), and was never meant to be a proper symphony; the structure

follows the poem, or at any rate, Spohr's reading of the poem.  The third movement

contains a hymn of thanksgiving after battle, set as a Baroque style chorale prelude, and

the very somber final movement presents an actual chorale, "Nun laßt uns den Leib

begraben" (Now let us bury the body), complete and in the distinctly funereal F minor,

line by line, with interludes in between (see Example 3-16).  The whole movement (and

the whole piece) ends in F major, but quietly, *morendo*, with a tone of consolation.

Example 3-16.  Louis Spohr, Symphony No. 4/IV, strings and winds, mm. 12–18.

Jonathan Kregor observes that Spohr misreads Pfeiffer's poem—a paean to music—by emphasizing the battle and funeral, and that this symphony has all the elements of a battle/funeral piece, but without the heroism and triumph.  Kregor suggests that Spohr is making a statement about the tragedy of war, and in denying the victorious ending he may also have been making a statement about the heroic symphonic archetype.[32]  Whether this is the case or not (it could also just be formulaic depictive music), Spohr's finale unequivocally uses a chorale, but equally unequivocally a *funereal* chorale, and certainly not in the vein of a post-Beethovenian triumphant choral finale.

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[32] Jonathan Kregor, *Program Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 27–28.

**Monumental "It" Chorales**

In addition to its specific "We" connotations, Chorale can also indicate a more generalized sense of the spiritual, archaic, authoritative, or monumental—something important or absolute, and bigger than the individual, but not necessarily something to identify with in a personal or earthly way. The generally spiritual connotation is not even necessarily Christian, as when Mozart uses the Lutheran chorale in *Die Zauberflöte*. Sometimes the purpose of this is to announce that something solemn or important is happening, and that one should pay proper attention, and other times it can be a foil or a backdrop to more personalized sentiments. Both of these functions are similar to one of the functions of chorale in actual Lutheran services—to prepare the congregation for worship and reflection. Rosalie Athol Schellhous examines this function of the chorales in Bach's St. Matthew Passion as well.[33]

Monumental Frames or Announcement

Daniel Beller-McKenna discusses the use of the word "monumental" in music, particularly with reference to its definitions by Carl Dahlhaus and Arnold Schering, and the connection to notions of monumentality in other arts, especially architecture. "Monumental" is broadly used "to convey physical scale or is substituted for the sublime," but more specifically implies stasis, as opposed to the forward push of the dramatic; even though music, as a temporal art, inherently always contains forward push, monumental music can achieve the same effect as a plastic monument. Moreover, Beller-McKenna elaborates that "monuments must transcend the individual and the personal; they must

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[33] Rosalie Athol Schellhous, "Form and Spirituality in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*," *The Musical Quarterly* 71/3 (1985), 305–06.

convey ideas that are shared by the larger community and, in fact, help that community to define itself."[34]

Although Beller-McKenna does not mention chorale in this exact passage of his essay, the example of monumentality that follows his description in fact contains a chorale; the traits of "chorale" and "monumental" could not be more perfectly matched. The example is the quotation of the chorale "Nun danket alle Gott" (known in English as "Now Thank We All Our God") from Brahms's *Triumphlied* (1870–71). As has been explained multiple times above, Beller-McKenna likewise points out how chorales in general had achieved "symbolic status" in the nineteenth century, and how, quoting Sabine Giesbrecht-Schutte, this chorale in particular was one "whose exclusively Christian tradition became overlaid with a militant nationalism in the course of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries…after 1848 one can practically consider it a motto of Prussian *Expansionspolitik*."[35]

On top of all this, Beller-McKenna explains how Brahms achieved a monumental feeling in the sense of spaciousness in architecture: the chorale quotation is musically set apart by the spatial separation of the performing forces and the metrical contrast between different groups of performers. "By sharply distinguishing content and timbre, Brahms creates a sonic illusion to spaciousness…[and] the chorale, referred to here only by its incipit, is memorialized in the manner [of] an inscription on a monument."[36] For purposes of the current study, this is the sense of an objective "It" rather than a subjective "We."

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[34] Daniel Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 110–11, 225–26.

[35] Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit*, 114, 226.

[36] Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit*, 113–14.

Schubert's use of Chorale in his late symphonies, including incomplete

symphonic sketches, is one element that distinguishes these symphonies from the first six

of his earlier and more classically oriented symphonic output.  It is only one of many

distinguishing elements, but an important one to identify, because it works in conjunction

with the others to create the unique affects of these works, in particular their monumental

aspect.  This is exemplified in the symphonic sketch D. 729, which Schubert produced in

the years 1818–22, a period of many incomplete compositions.  At this time he was

working toward a weightier and grander concept of the symphony, perhaps in

confrontation with Beethoven's instrumental works, in particular, his piano sonatas and

symphonies.[37]  David P. Schroeder offers a slightly different perspective, commenting

that

> not unlike Goethe, Schubert's view of existence at this time was shaped by
> an understanding of polarities.  His new conception of the symphony
> became a much closer reflection of matters of existence, more so than a
> stylistic change intended to bring his symphonic works in line with those
> of another composer [Beethoven].[38]

William Kinderman likewise notes Schubert's interest in dualities and heightened

thematic contrasts in both his Lieder and his instrumental works of this period.[39]  The

issue does not require resolution one way or the other, since Schubert may well have been

aiming both for weight and grandeur *and* exploration of polarities, and in any case,

Chorale can contribute to both.

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[37] Martin Chusid, Preface to Franz Schubert, *Symphony in B Minor ("Unfinished"): An Authoritative Score, Schubert's Sketches, Commentary, Essays in History and Analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1971), 9–10.

[38] David P. Schroeder, "Polarity in Schubert's Unfinished Symphony," *Canadian University Music Review*, No. 1 (1980), 31.

[39] William Kinderman, "Schubert's Piano Music: Probing the Human Condition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert*, ed. Christopher H. Gibbs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 155.

In his analysis of D. 729 (1821), Brian Newbould describes the high contrast between the "solemn and dignified" slow introduction in E minor and the sparkling, almost Rossinian *Allegro* in E major, noting that Schubert achieved it without remote harmonies, even anticipating the E major at the end of the introduction. Newbould's analysis also highlights the unprecedented depth and grandeur of the symphony; the setting off of the second theme by a two-bar silence; and the character of the second theme, with short, repetitive phrases in a narrow range.[40] What Newbould misses in all this analysis is that the slow introduction and the second theme utilize Chorale.

The slow introduction presents two themes simultaneously: a steady processional dotted-rhythm figure (out of which the first theme proper will grow—see Example 3-18) played *pizzicato* in the strings, and on top of this, a melody in the woodwinds that has the sound of a chorale in its simple rhythm and harmony, regular four-measure phrases, four-part voicing, and stop-and-start phrases separated by fermatas (see Example 3-17).

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[40] Newbould, *Schubert and the Symphony*, 164–66.

Example 3-17.  Franz Schubert, Symphony No. 7 in E Minor, D. 729/I, mm. 1–8.

The opening of D. 729 is unlike Schubert's other slow introductions in its use of a minor mode chorale phrase that seems to announce the beginning of a grand and solemn event. It also immediately shows the transformative and joyous aspect of Chorale, with the second phrase stated in the parallel major.

The falling seconds and the half cadences of the opening are echoed in the exposition's second theme, which is even more clearly chorale-like, particularly in the restricted range and repetitive phrases of its melody.  This chorale draws on associations of triumphant, joyous celebration—similar to the triumphant finale type described above, but now in a very different rhetorical position: second theme of a sonata form.  As in those finales as well as in the chorales of the depictive battle symphonies, Schubert has incorporated military fanfare into the Chorale, both in the melody (anacrusis to m. 130) and in the accompaniment's interjections between phrases (mm. 123, 127, etc.).   The

theme begins in G major, and after one cadence in that key, is restated and cadences in B-flat major.  B-flat in turn leads to the key of the codetta—the dominant, B major.  Its affect, including its keys, is supportive rather than oppositional to the sparkling first theme in E major (see Examples 3-18 and 3-19).



Example 3-18. Schubert, Symphony No. 7, D. 729, first movement, first theme, mm. 36–46, (melody only).



Example 3-19.  Schubert, Symphony No. 7, D. 729, first movement, second theme, mm. 120–35, melody and interjections as sketched by Schubert, harmony as realized by Brian Newbould.

A later and interestingly similar chorale can be found in Schumann's "Auf, auf in das Feld" from his medieval-themed opera *Genoveva*, and there, the plot and the text make it clear that it is a battle hymn: "Off, off into the field [of battle] with the hero Duke Siegfried/He leads the army to honor!" etc. Here again, as with the other "battle hymn" Chorale examined in this chapter, the crusade of Schumann's hero Siegfried on a Crusade is a monumental backdrop to the main plot of domestic intrigue. Though Schumann's has only two- rather than four-part harmony, the settings of Schumann and Schubert share the same key (E major), orchestration (clarinets and bassoons), the interesting harmonies of the third phrase, and the interspersed fanfares (see Examples 3-19 and 3-20.) The D. 729 sketch was not hidden away or lost; Schubert's brother Ferdinand gifted it to Mendelssohn in 1845,[41] so it is theoretically possible that Schumann somehow saw it before writing *Genoveva* in 1850. In any case, the type and function of the two chorales is the same.



Example 3-20. Schumann, "Auf, auf in das Feld" from *Genoveva*, Act I, clarinets and bassoons (doubled by violas; chorus parts sung by Basses), mm. 1–15.

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[41] R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn Essays* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 281–82.

In Schubert's D. 729, fragments of both the first and second themes are combined in the codetta as well as the development, and the second theme enjoys prominent exposure in the recapitulation because Schubert omits the head of the first theme in the recapitulation, instead eliding the end of the development with the after-statement of the first theme. The modulations are all adjusted so that both the second theme and the codetta can appear in the tonic E major, and the mood remains triumphant and celebratory to the end. Schubert creates a mood of heroism and celebration with popular flavor that is at the same time framed with grand and proper seriousness. This is actually presented in summary in the first two phrases of the slow introduction: all the motivic elements are there, as well as both minor- and major-key statements of the melody.

<div style="text-align: center;">Monumental Backdrops</div>

The passage from *Genoveva* exemplifies the use of an "It" Chorale to suggest a monumental backdrop to a more intimate story, but this work of course was not the first to do so. *Les Huguenots* was actually relatively unique in its inclusion of the "We" Lutheran chorale to represent the Protestant denomination of the characters. Many religious-themed grand operas avoided genuine church music, perhaps to avoid censorship, but perhaps also because the religious aspect of these operas generally served merely as backdrop to the "real" plots of love and intrigue, and the primary objective of creating successful entertainments. For this, hints of church style suffice to make religious references, without any need for specificity or accuracy. Parakilas describes a list of "hymns" from grand operas,[42] but they largely take the form of vaguely *chant*-like

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[42] Parakilas, "The Chorus," 90.

material even if, again, the choice is only logical from the perspective of producing a grand opera—for instance, the strangely disjunct, strangely Latin, and pseudo-modal unison "chant" of the Anabaptists in Meyerbeer's *Le Prophète* (see Example 3-21).



Example 3-21.  Meyerbeer, *Le Prophète*, "Ad nos salutarem undam," vocal parts, mm. 1–13.

Occasionally, though, Chorale appears, as in Donizetti's *Les Martyrs* from 1840. The plot concerns the persecution of third-century Christians, and though much of the musical style has little direct relation to text or plot, Donizetti does use some vaguely chorale-style singing (adapted for grand opera, with a few of his own characteristic harmonies) to represent the oppressed Christians.  These are not Lutherans, but in the genre of grand opera, Chorale is as logical a choice as any for a recurring identifying motif.  The chorale is embedded in the overture, marked *Larghetto* and sung by off-stage chorus (see Example 3-22); the theme returns throughout the opera to represent the Christians, as in the finale when the lovers—by this time both converts—and the other Christians are about to be eaten by lions in a Roman arena (mm. 82–90 of the final scene, in C major).

Example 3-22. Donizetti, Overture to *Les Martyrs*, piano reduction, 259–73.

Schumann calls on Chorale to represent a non-Christian spirituality in the sixth

movement of his suite for piano four-hands *Bilder aus Osten* (Pictures from the East)

(1848). In Schumann's own introduction to the piece he reveals that he wrote the piece

with Rückert's version/translation of a medieval Arab epic by Al-Hariri in mind, but that

"with the first five pieces, the composer did not have concrete situations in mind, and

only the last one [movement VI] could perhaps pass for an echo of the last maqam

[scene], in which we see the hero, rueful and repentant, ending his cheerful life."[43] This

last movement is marked *Reuig andachtig* (ruefully or penitently devotional), for which

Schumann uses alternating sections of a B-flat minor chorale (see Example 3-23a), and a

highly elaborated chorale prelude ending in D-flat major, with the sound of a massive

church organ (see Example 3-23b). The rhythm of the chorale is absolutely simple and

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[43] Quoted in Balázs Mikusi, "Evoking the Exotic: Schumann's 'Danish' Manner," *The Musical Times* 149/1903 (Summer 2008), 41.

square, in common time, and purely homorhythmic.  Moreover, the widely spaced chords and the sonority of piano four-hands lend the chorale a distinctly monumental flavor. And, as an ultimate spiritual gesture, both the chorale Prelude and the chorale end with major key IV-I "amen" cadences.



Example 3-23a.  Schumann, *Bilder aus Osten*/VI, reduction for solo piano, mm. 1–10.

Example 3-23b. Schumann, *Bilder aus Osten*/VI, reduction for solo piano, mm. 41–49.

Although the character is Muslim, Schumann makes no attempt at depicting this musically. Mikusi quotes various musicologists "complaining" that the entire piece is not very "exotic," and he notes as well that even Schumann himself, in his preface to the piece, implicitly apologized for the lack of surface exoticisms when he explained his intention "to express the oriental poetry and way of thinking."[44] For Mikusi, this approach to exoticism is typical for Schumann—an approach in which he used the exotic story allegorically, being more concerned with "thoughts…[and] human substance" than surface costume.[45] Schumann's idea of projecting a long ago and faraway spirituality

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[44] Mikusi, "Evoking the exotic: Schumann's 'Danish' Manner," 36, 41–42.
[45] Mikusi, "Evoking the exotic: Schumann's 'Danish' Manner," 46. In addition to this approach, Mikusi also discusses the "indirect exoticism" of pieces such as Schumann's nationally labeled dances (38–39) and "snapshots" pictorialism for the sake of "bourgeois edification" (39).

in a "universally" understandable way is to translate it into monumental German church music.

This example from Schumann, though similar in many ways to other examples from this chapter, crosses a line: it is from a small, "private" genre, rather than the large, "public" genres (symphony, opera, oratorio) of all the others. Particularly in this era when the functional distinctions between public and private genres were more relevant than they are now, those public genres are inherently better suited for expressions of both communality and monumentality. However, it is also in this era (with seeds in the Classic era) that these distinctions begin to break down, and composers begin to use Chorale in genres both small and large, and with meanings both public and private. Chapter Four will explore this new territory.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE VOICES OF I, ME, AND THEM

**Pronominal Perspective**

The current and preceding chapters speak of Chorale in terms of its expressive "voice"—We, It, I, Me, Them—in relation to chorale as an inherently communal expression.  In this light, the "public" or "private" status of the genres containing Chorale is hard to ignore, especially as previously noted, in an era when the distinctions were more significant than they are now.  The expressive traits, however, of "public" versus "private" genres are by no means mutually exclusive, and the very definitions of the two categories are not fixed—they change as patterns and possibilities of dissemination and consumption change.  Furthermore, the criteria for determining what constitutes a private or personal versus a collective or public expression is likewise not fixed and rather subjective.

One criterion is scoring.  Individual topics may have a clear inherent voice, for instance Chorale as a "We" voice and Aria as an "I" voice.  But the voice does not necessarily correspond to the scoring of the music, especially when material is rescored within a piece (as in solo and tutti in orchestral music) or when all material is played by the same solo instrument (as in keyboard music).  Since chorales by definition are for SATB choir, the topic as well relies on multivoiced texture, and cannot be a solo.  A solo rendition of a chorale melody would have to be of a well-known, actual chorale, as "Ein'

feste Burg" in *Les Huguenots*, in order for the reference to be clear. The reference in such a case is so specific that it also retains the "We." This is why the implications of voice in the containing genre are particularly important to interpreting Chorale; for Chorale to be anything other than a "We" or an "It," the indication has to come from the context, which often involves questions of genre. In any given piece, a composer usually has an expressive intention and an intended audience in mind, and does not make choices at random concerning genre and the maintaining or thwarting of generic conventions.

## "I" Yearning for "We"

Polish Romantic Nationalism

Both Jeffrey Kallberg and Halina Goldberg suggest interpreting the Chorale in Chopin's works as an expression of Polish Romantic nationalism, in which Poland's political struggles took on a particular brand of "Christianization," especially among Polish exiles living in France. Kallberg describes this nationalism as a "philosophy of history that imbued the Polish cause with a special mission…the redemption of mankind…and the eventual domination of Christian morality in politics." Even more specifically, "Messianism" in Polish nationalism refers to the belief that a "redeemer, individual or collective, will mediate between heaven and earth in the process of history."[1] Kallberg sees this idiosyncratic blend of nationalism and religion mirrored in the nationalistic mazurka and religious chorale of Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor, Op. 15, No. 3 (1830–33) (see Examples 4-1a and 4-1b).

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[1] Jeffrey Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre: Chopin's Nocturne in G Minor," *Nineteenth-Century Music* 11/3 (Spring 1988), 256.

Example 4-1a. Chopin, Nocturne in G Minor, Op. 15/3, "mazurka," mm. 1–7.



Example 4-1b. Chopin, Nocturne in G Minor, Op. 15/3, "chorale," mm. 89–96.

Viewed in this light, Chopin's Chorale is an expression of "We" but from the perspective of an exile—an "I" separated from his "We." Moreover, the "host" genre in this case is a nocturne for solo piano; this implies something quiet, introspective, and private. Granted, Chopin was in a *community* of Polish exiles, so in that sense one could say he is speaking for all of them. The "I" speaking for a community of individuals separated from their homeland, however, is different from the straightforward nationalistic "We" expressions of the preceding chapter.

Also different is that Chopin's piece is tinged—no, distinctly colored—with melancholy. Winfried Kirsch notes the broken qualities of the mazurka—the halting rhythm, the odd phrasings, the phrases that repeat and repeat without seeming to get anywhere, and the increasingly anxious sequence toward the end of the section (mm. 69–

76) that dissolves into a "crisis" note (a repeated C-sharp ending a section that began in G

minor). Kirsch then analyzes the following chorale as antithesis to this in every way and

as "solution" to the crisis.[2] This view is plausible considering that the broken mazurka

never returns, as might be expected of a mazurka.[3] Instead, the mazurka and the chorale,

as well as both of their keys, morph with each other in the final section, and the piece

ends with rhythmic stability and a very peaceful and hopeful Picardy-type G major.

Kirsch also considers Chopin's marking of *religioso*—as opposed to the mere

tempo markings for the chorale sections in other works of his—not so much as a

characterization of the mood but as an indication of an actual event.[4] If so, it sort of

drops in "messianically," in the unrelated and unexpected key of F major, quiet and *sotto*

*voce*—an otherworldly nationalism, as Kallberg described. Again, this is more like a

personal vision, or the private prayer of exiles, rather than a public and victorious

homeland celebration.

Goldberg extends this type of messianic analysis to Chopin's use of Chorale in

general, and she quotes contemporaneous reviews of Chopin's works that corroborate this

interpretation, particularly in regard to the Fantasy Op. 49 (1841). Here, "the narrative of

the Fantasy ushers the listener through a network of recognizable patriotic musical topics,

alluding to national death and resurrection."[5] Those topics include a funeral march in F

minor, a heroic march in E-flat major, and a chorale in B major (reminiscent of the key

scheme in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 in E-Flat, Op. 73, "Emperor")—all public-

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[2] Winfried Kirsch, "Languido—Religioso: Zu Chopins Nocturnes in g-moll op. 15 Nr. 3 und op. 37 Nr. 1," *Chopin Studies* 5 (January 1995), 107.

[3] Kallberg, "The Rhetoric of Genre," 249.

[4] Kirsch, "Languido—Religioso," 110.

[5] Halina Goldberg, *The Age of Chopin: Interdisciplinary Inquiries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 68, 75–79.

type topics embedded in the improvisatory fantasy, and once again, the key of the chorale

lends it a miraculous otherworldliness (see Example 4-2).



Example 4-2.  Chopin, Fantasy in F minor, Op. 49, mm. 199–222.

In one place Goldberg calls the B major section "hymn-like" (76) and in other

places she refers to it as a "chorale" (77 and 78)—the familiar terminological confusion.

Jan Węcowski, in a study on religious references in Chopin's music, makes the claim that

"in Poland—unlike in other Catholic countries— songs collectively sung by everyone in

the vernacular took up a large portion of and played an important role in services as well

as the liturgy of the Mass (even in defiance of Church laws!)"[6] Whether this is the case

or not, the music of Chopin's *Lento sostenuto* is inconsistent in its texture, rather lilting in

its melody and rhythm, and rather chromatic in its harmony; it is not nearly as

ecclesiastical in the Lutheran sense as the *religioso* chorale of the G minor Nocturne.[7]

Chopin does, however, incorporate Chorale: the *Lento sostenuto* is structured in four neat,

four-measure phrases with an eight-measure interlude of sorts in the middle (this is found

in Example 4-2, mm. 199–202, 203–206, 207–214, 215–218, 219–222).  Each of the four

four-measure phrases ends with the same figure, which *does* employ strict homorhythm,

simple and even rhythm, and simple harmony.  Because of this, the salient characteristics

of a communal, religious utterance are as clear as in the unmistakable IV-I "Amen"

cadence that ends the whole piece.  Also clear is that as in the G minor Nocturne, the host

genre is of the personal, private type—here a fantasy for solo piano.


## Alienation and Despair

### "Me" vs. "Them"

The use of Chorale to express an "I" separated from its "We" can be hopeful or

idealistic, as in the examples above.  In other instances, though, the tone is ironic and

expresses the despair or pessimism of the alienated individual, hence the more

narcissistic "Me" and "Them" rather than "I" and "We."  This is a prime example of the

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[6] Jan Węcowski, "Religious Folklore in Chopin's Music," Polish Music Journal 2/1-2 (1999), http://www.usc.edu/dept/polish_music/PMJ/issue/2.1.99/wecowski.html, accessed 12 December 2014.

[7] Chopin includes an even more overtly prayerful chorale in another G minor Nocturne, Op. 37, No.1, which will be discussed later.

Romantic "pathos" discussed in Chapter Two, invoked through distorted or disjunctive use of musical topic.

Schumann's Lied "Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen" (At first I almost despaired), No. 8 from the Heine *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 (1840) contains only eleven measures of music: two measures of piano introduction, eight measures of sung chorale, and one measure of sung postlude (see Example 4-4). The opening melody is the chorale tune "Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten" (He who but suffers dear God to reign), used by J.S. Bach in several cantatas (see Example 4-3).



Example 4-3. J.S. Bach, Cantata No. 93 "Wer nur den lieben Gott läßt walten," chorale.

The literal copying of first phrase (mm. 1–4 in the Lied) makes the reference crystal clear, and Schumann feels free to make changes for the remainder. His text of course is different, too; while the original chorale speaks of the security that will come from trusting in God, Heine's poem insinuates something "more dubious than difficult"

about the remedy to the despair:[8] "At first I almost despaired, and I thought I would never bear it, and I have borne it, but never ask me: 'How?'"  Schumann even repeats this last question, appropriately set to a dangling half cadence in m. 11 (see Example 4-4).  With the minor key, the half cadence, and the text, nothing about this chorale is reassuring or secure.



Example 4-4.  Schumann, "Anfangs wollt' ich fast verzagen," complete.

Eric Sams correlates Schumann's chorale with Chopin's Prelude in C minor, Op. 28, No. 20 (1839), asserting that the "affinity…with the prelude…then just published in Leipzig, may not be unintentional."[9]  The prelude is sometimes included on lists of

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[8] Eric Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1993), 45.

[9] Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 46.

Chopin's use of Chorale (Goldberg's for instance);[10] although it is perhaps more Funeral March than Chorale, the two topics can of course be combined (see Example 4-5), and the plodding quarter notes and the voice motion of the bass do resemble the piano part in Schumann's Lied, adding another layer of irony to the song.  Sams summarizes: "His music is all humility and self-denial, a Bach chorale; yet coloured with frank regret and nostalgia, a Chopin prelude."[11]



Example 4-5.  Chopin, Prelude in C minor, Op. 28, No. 20, mm. 1–6.

Schubert uses ironic Chorale in one of his song cycles as well—*Winterresie* (1827)—and part of the irony here comes from the context of the narrative and the juxtaposition with an extremely contrasting topic.  Jonathan Bellman identified Schubert's use of *style hongrois* in nos. 20, 22, and 24 of *Winterreise*, where it represents different aspects of the Gypsy stereotype.  These are not literal depictions of Gypsies, but

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[10] Goldberg, *The Age of Chopin*, 68.
[11] Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 45.

suggestions of the mental or emotional state of the protagonist. There seem to be other examples of *style hongrois* in the cycle as well, but it is nevertheless significant that there is a concentration of it at the end of the cycle, as the protagonist is losing his sense of reality as well as his will to live, and becomes increasingly alienated.[12] The alternating songs, nos. 21 and 23—almost certainly by design, since Schubert rearranged the order of the poems from Müller's original[13]—are voiced as chorales and as such answer the declarations and complaints of the songs they follow. The two topics—*hongrois* and Chorale—are suitably opposite to achieve this effect. Chorale represents the pure, right, proper, communal, and Christian, while the implications of the *hongrois* lean toward the low, marginal, anti-social, wild, criminal, and heathen.

Song no. 20, "Der Wegweiser" ("The Sign Post") uses hints of *style hongrois* in the piano part to support the text that describes the protagonist as a wanderer, purposely avoiding other people and looking for a place of no return where he can rest alone. In the following song, the place he finds is a cemetery, which he speaks of as if it is an inn— "Das Wirtshaus"—and the musical language here is not just a hint of Chorale in the piano part, but a full-blown homorhythmic chorale in which both the voice and the piano participate (see Example 4-6).

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[12] Jonathan Bellman, *The Style Hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 150–57.

[13] Susan Youens, *Retracing a Winter's Journey: Schubert's Winterreise* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 22. "Der Wegweiser" and "Das Wirtshaus" were originally nos. 16 and 17; Schubert made them nos. 20 and 21. "Die Nebensonnen" was originally no. 20; Schubert inserted it as no. 23, in between "Mut" and "Der Leiermann."

Example 4-6. Schubert, "Das Wirtshaus" from *Winterreise*, D. 911, mm. 1–15.

The key of F major—having appeared up to this point in the song cycle only in brief modulations—is significant, standing in peaceful, pastoral contrast to the minor keys of the songs on either side of it. Furthermore, Schubert opens his *Deutsche Messe* (for the Catholic church) from 1827 (the same timeframe as *Winterreise*) with a very similar chorale, "Wohin soll ich mich wenden" (Whither shall I turn), also in F major (see Example 4-7). Thrasybulos Georgiades believes this was a paraphrase of the F-centered Kyrie from the Gregorian Requiem Mass, which Schubert would have known from his time singing in the Catholic Church.[14]

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[14] Cited in Youens, *Retracing a Winter's Journey*, 280–81.

Example 4-7.  Schubert, "Wohin soll ich mich wenden" from *Deutsche Messe*, D. 872, choral score, mm. 1–8.

  With the green garlands in the cemetery (an image from the second stanza) as a symbol of welcome to the traveller, he is no longer alone and shunning company, but participating in a communal funeral chorale—just not his own as he was wishing for, since this "inn" has no room and turns him away.  Arnold Feil even sees a connection in the way Schubert scored the music with the way a wind band would have played such a chorale in a funeral procession, with the upper voices of the instrumental accompaniment higher than the melody in mm. 12–15 (see Example 4-6).[15]  The irony of the Chorale in "Das Wirtshaus" is that the communal genre serves to intensify the poet's isolation, and the Christian imagery underscores that he is totally alone; no one walks with him.

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   [15] Arnold Feil, *Franz Schubert: Die Schöne Müllerin, Winterreise*, trans. Ann C. Sherwin (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1988, original work published 1975), 121.

In any case, "Das Wirtshaus" evokes something religious, and in this case, pleading or reverting to the faith and the desire for inclusion implicitly rejected in the *style hongrois* language of the surrounding songs.  That language is subtly introduced in "Der Wegweiser" and then is increasingly pronounced in song no. 22, "Mut."  There, the protagonist is not merely alone, but angrily, irreverently, and energetically defying traditional faith with a falsely cheerful tone in both the text and the music.  "If there is no god on earth, then we ourselves are gods," he proclaims.  Song no. 23, "Die Nebensonnen," follows.  Feil sees it as a stylized sarabande with obvious connections to "Das Wirtshaus," "related in their simplicity…far from melancholy, yet deeply sorrowful…they both bring something to a close."[16]  Making a connection between Schubert and the obsolete sarabande is something of a stretch (and in any case the metrical emphasis here is not quite right for a sarabande).  The music does feel like a heavy and slow processional, with the traveller stepping only on beats one and two; the empty third beat shows his exhaustion.  Whether "Die Nebensonnen" is based on dance rhythms or not, a connection to "Das Wirtshaus" that Feil does not mention is that Schubert also voices and harmonizes it as a chorale, or perhaps a chorale-like *Männerchor* piece.  Connecting Schubert to either of these genres is unproblematic (see Example 4-8).

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[16] Arnold Feil, *Franz Schubert: Die Schöne Müllerin, Winterreise*, 126.

Example 4-8.  Schubert, "Die Nebensonnen" from *Winterreise*, D. 911, mm. 1–8.

The text of "Die Nebensonnen" reveals the traveller now nearing a state of madness and exhaustion as he speaks of three suns in the sky and reiterates his desire to die, or at least be alone and absent ("Ging nur die dritt'erst hinterdrein!  Im Dunkel wird mir wohler sein"—If only the third would also set!  I will feel better in the dark.) Musically, the combination of Chorale, a slow processional in triple meter, and the key of A major illustrate this with poignant irony.  The traveller participates in a communal chorale, but he is fully alone, despondent, and possibly insane.  The Chorale aspect could be read ironically or as indicative of the traveller's definitive and proper exit from the world.  The alienated aspect of the *style hongrois* in the final song, "Der Leiermann," finalizes this destiny—and no chorale follows to console or correct it.

**The Dream of "We"—Unfulfilled Prayer**

The Chorale in *Winterreise* and *Liederkreis* Op. 24 above are examples of a particularly ironic use of the topic, because in the end, there is no consolation, no resolution, no belonging, no clarity, no faith. The Chorale in Chopin's other G minor Nocturne, Op. 37 (ca. 1839), No. 1, might fit in this category, too, since unlike in Op. 15, No. 3, the chorale is framed on *both* sides by the painful lament of the aria-like melody in the right hand and the processional feel given by the left hand (see Example 4-9a). The chorale in the middle is square and pious, and it feels grounded and secure with its unwavering quarter notes, low tessitura, and key of E-flat major. The vision of this chorale, however, is a dream; fermatas in four successive measures (61–64) at the end of the section signal the dreamlike quality, while superficially they resemble the fermatas of a Bach chorale setting. Time stops, and then with the "wrong" cadence (mm. 64–65), everything abruptly dissolves back into the reality of the lament (see Example 4-9b).



Example 4-9a. Chopin, Nocturne Op. 37, No.1, mm. 1–8.

Example 4-9b.  Chopin, Nocturne Op. 37, No. 1, mm. 41–69.

The potential for political interpretation of Chopin's works somehow makes this Nocturne seem less self-absorbed than the Lieder just discussed, hence the separate classification—Dream of "We" instead of "Me" vs. "Them." While these interpretations may be somewhat subjective, it still remains that "Anfangs," "Wirtshaus," "Nebensonnen," and Chopin's Nocturne Op. 37, No. 1 are all in the context of unresolved alienation and despair. The chorale in Schumann's "Anfangs" could almost even be heard as a minor version of the chorale in Chopin's Op. 37, No. 1 (compare Example 4-4 and Example 4-9b).

Another chorale with a dreamlike quality from a solo piano work is from Schumann's "Vogel als Prophet" (Bird as Prophet), No. 7 of the *Waldszenen* (Forest Scenes), Op. 82 (1848–49). Christopher Alan Reynolds elucidates the meaning behind the altogether eerie and sinister mood here, interpreting the "Bird as Prophet" as the "familiar trope of a songbird as harbinger of death or a voice of lamentation." Apparently Schumann originally included (and later suppressed) a poetic motto for each of the movements of *Waldszenen*; for "Vogel als Prophet" the quotation came from Eichendorff's "Zwielicht" (Twilight): "Be on your guard, be awake and alert!" In the poem a human voice warns the deer in the forest to beware of man, and in Schumann's piece, this seems to be reversed: an animal voice (the bird) warns mankind about death.[17]

Chorale appears in the middle of the piece, framed (as in Chopin's Nocturne) by iterations of the eerie warning/lament of the bird (see Example 4-10b). Reynolds does not identify it as such, but he does make several pertinent observations: it is completely

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[17] Christopher Alan Reynolds, *Motives for Allusion: Context and Content in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 77.

disjunct musically from the bird music (see Example 4-10a), and is even set off by one of

Schumann's trademark quotational devices—a complete pause (m. 18).



Example 4-10a.  Schumann, "Vogel als Prophet" from *Waldszenen*, Op.82, mm. 1–6.

Example 4-10b.  Schumann, "Vogel als Prophet" from *Waldszenen*, Op.82, mm. 16–27.

Reynolds further reveals that the melody of the chorale section is self-quotation from Part III of Schumann's own *Szenen aus Goethes Faust,* in which a boys' choir – portraying the spirits of innocent children who died at birth—sings of their happiness while Pater Seraphicus fills out the four-part texture in the bass, singing a different text about their blissful ignorance (see Example 4-11).[18]

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[18] Reynolds, *Motives for Allusion*, 78–79.  John Daverio describes this Chorus as "hymnic," by which he perhaps means chorale-like, since it is a simple, four-part

Example 4-11.  Schumann, *Szenen aus Goethes Faust*, Part III, "Chor seliger Knaben" (Chorus of Blessed Boys), mm. 13–19.

In "Vogel als Prophet" the chorale proceeds sweetly along, and then abruptly shifts up by a minor sixth to the key of E-flat major (mm. 23–24, Example 4-10b).  The effect of this is unearthly, and the allusion to the spirits of departed children ascending to heaven only adds to the dreamlike quality.  Furthermore, the switch back to the G minor "bird" music (mm. 24–25) is equally abrupt—again, as with the deceptive cadence in Chopin's Nocturne, we are jolted out of the vision, and the concluding bird music offers nothing but its unsettling spookiness—persistently accented chromatic notes, the gesture of the main motif, the final cadence with a barely recognizable tonic chord.  There is no peace or comfort here, no erasing of tragedy—Gretchen's drowning of the baby she conceived with Faust, or whatever danger the Bird Prophet foretells and laments.

## "I" Finding "We"

On the other hand, the lost or struggling "I" does sometimes find peace or find its way home—here in a spiritual sense, not the nationalistic sense.  The Chorale in these pieces functions within a variety of narrative trajectories and offers a variety of affects,

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homorhythmic setting (John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 380.

but always affirmatively, and unlike the Chorale of Chapter Three, in a personal or private context.  As always, the clues for the interpretive classification are both musical and contextual.

<p style="text-align:center">Consolation and Peace</p>

Another work of Schumann provides a signature example for Chorale in the context of consolation and peace—"Der Dichter Spricht" (The Poet speaks) from *Kinderszenen* (1838).  This epilogue to the twelve "Scenes from Childhood" has been analyzed in a variety of ways, including mention of the opening and closing material as being chorale-like, but it is hard to find a coherent explanation for identifying it as such, and more importantly, a coherent reading of its meaning.  Agawu's reading comes close in the way he dissects the music in terms of topic and what he calls "modes of enunciation," but he stops short of fully interpreting Schumann's topical and structural choices.  As Agawu puts it, "…the poet…enlists the participation of a community, perhaps a Protestant one," and the piece opens with a chorale (song mode) "as if in media res," followed by an introspective, improvisatory recitative ("speech mode in its most authentic state"), and finally, "the poet joins the congregation in beginning the chorale again…In song mode, we are led gradually but securely to a place of rest"[19] (see Example 4-12).

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[19] Agawu, *Music As Discourse*, 98–102.

Example 4-12.  Schumann, "Der Dichter Spricht" from *Kinderszenen*, complete.


      Agawu never ventures a theory, however, as to what purpose or narrative these

modes of enunciation serve, nor does he give any good reason to make a specifically

Protestant connection. In his earlier study, Agawu does provide interpretive insight: "It is in the realization of the [private] poetic idea that Schumann makes the most explicit use of a public code. The piece begins as a chorale, which carries implications of archaicness, age, authority, and a certain purity." Again, though, Agawu posits nothing specific about why Schumann chose the topics he did (and here he also includes one additional topic— "arabesque" in mm. 9–12), saying only that their sequence "has no syntax…the listener and performer are invited to construct a metaphorical scenario." [20]

*Kinderszenen* is a cycle of thirteen short, titled, and motivically interrelated character pieces for piano. The first twelve pieces are, as the title indicates, scenes from childhood, be they depictive (from an adult's perspective) or actually entering the mind of the child. The cycle begins with innocence—children's stories, games, desires (and fulfillment)—beginning in G major and then departing from there, but only to closely related sharp keys, realized in a stable and uncomplicated way. The sixth piece, however, titled "Wichtige Begebenheit" (Important Event) is a midpoint and turning point, after which the cycle takes on a larger-scale narrative aspect—not just individual scenes from childhood, but a narrative of the changes in the child's psyche through his experiences, i.e., the process of growing up and losing innocence.

The keys reflect this change, first shifting to the flat side: F Major for dreaming and the safety of the home, C Major for pure imagination. From this point, simplicity and innocence begin to slip away, both harmonically and rhythmically: syncopated G-sharp minor for unchildlike pensive melancholy; an extremely complicated return of G Major for a piece called "Fürchtenmachen" (Frightening) with many chromatic

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[20] Agawu, *Playing With Signs*, 140–41.

inflections, shifts to minor, and tempo fluctuations; then E minor for the penultimate piece—a lullaby (ending on subdominant harmony) for an apparently troubled child falling into an uneasy sleep.

Following this lullaby, the epilogue "Der Dichter spricht" represents a shift in perspective: no longer a scene from childhood, but a commentary from the poet-narrator, perhaps the child as an adult. This is the point when he must reconcile his adult self with these scenes of childhood and the ache at the observation of innocence and its subsequent loss. Given Schumann's poetic propensities as well as his own writings about *Kinderszenen*[21] it is no stretch to interpret the work poetically or narratively, with a fundamental conflict between childhood innocence and its loss, or the fact that innocence is only recognized upon its loss. Why Schumann would choose four-part homorhythmic texture to begin this moment of personal utterance concerning a moment of personal crisis demands interpretation.

The half-note rhythm, homorhythmic texture, stepwise melodic contour, mid-range four-part voicing, and four-measure phrase structure all support calling the opening four measures of "Der Dichter spricht" Chorale. Agawu is correct that it seems to begin in the middle of something, an episode already underway—note in Example 4-12 that the key has returned to G Major, but begins on a third inversion dominant chord. In a "normal" chorale, the second four measure phrase might then end on a tonic chord, with the melody in the top voice proceeding in half notes from B to A to G in mm. 7–8. Of course this is *not* what happens, and there are other signs of dissolution as well. The

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[21] For more on this, see Timothy Taylor, "Aesthetic and Cultural Issues in Schumann's *Kinderszenen*," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, 21/2 (December 1990), 161–78.

melodic ornament in m. 3 is in a rhythmically normal place, but the second one in m. 6 is

transferred to the tenor, in a rhythmically odd place, and its final note (G-sharp, which

now sounds like a leading tone) is unresolved.  Instead, it is followed by a rest, and the

four-measure consequent phrase is broken up rhythmically and harmonically, veering to

A minor instead of G major.  From here, the chorale motif morphs into plaintive

recitative in E minor that culminates with the fully diminished seventh chord of m. 16,

seeming to ask, "Why?  Why does it have to be this way?  What happened?  What went

wrong?  Why can't I get back?"

The chorale motif (mm. 1–2) resembles the motif from No. 5 "Glückes genug"

(Quite Content), and the accompaniment for the motif when Schumann fragments and

sequences it (mm. 9–12) (the part Agawu calls "arabesque") resembles the

accompaniment from No. 4 "Bittendes Kind" (Pleading Child).  These similarities

underscore the chorale as a symbol of a purity and wholeness from the past as well as its

loss, only now, the order is reversed: happiness followed by a plea to return to it, rather

than a plea for something followed by happiness at getting it.

Additionally, the choice of Chorale here serves to universalize the individual pain

of this poet, and shows him seeking help and reassurance.  The suffering "I" seeks

comfort and answers in faith and age, and the power of their communal expression.

Chorale in this way is a symbol of reconciliation, peace, and understanding, and of

returning whence you came.  Exactly opposite from "Vogel als Prophet," the Chorale

here is the frame rather than the middle section, and it is in the "right" key.  When it

returns after the recitative, Schumann does let it finally cadence securely and very

peacefully in G Major.  This is not chorale as applied from above or outside, a pure and

whole chorale, or a Protestant choir singing to the poet, but rather, chorale as filtered through Robert Schumann in a most personal of manners.

A moment strikingly similar to the chorale and recitative in "Der Dichter spricht" can be found in the third movement of Mendelssohn's Cello Sonata No. 2 in D Major (1843). Here the piano plays a Bach-style chorale (also in G major!) in huge arpeggiated chords, in alternation with the cello's plaintive recitative (see Example 4-13), and by the end, after the piano takes a turn with plaintive recitative, the movement ends peacefully on arpeggiated G major chords (i.e. from the chorale).



Example 4-13. Mendelssohn, Cello Sonata No. 2/III, mm. 1–16.

Mendelssohn famously had a keen interest in archaic music, especially that of J.S. Bach and including chorales. But just as the chorale in "Der Dichter spricht" was chorale as filtered through Schumann, chorale and archaic for Mendelssohn were not merely artifacts to be preserved or displayed (although he did this, too), but also to be integrated into his own music, as in the way he thickly voices and arpeggiates the chords in the Cello Sonata chorale. Chorale is simply a part of Mendelssohn's vocabulary. Unlike Chopin (as seen before) and Beethoven (see below), however, Mendelssohn does not tend to wax otherworldly with his Chorale; whether a rousing apotheosis in a triumphant national symphony or a grounding and consoling framework in a cello sonata, Mendelssohn's use of Chorale is strongly linked to a spiritual life—on Earth. The rousing type has examples in his chamber music as well: The sixteenth-century chorale "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ" (commonly known as "Old Hundredth" in English) makes a surprise appearance (beginning in m. 128) in the finale of Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor (1845), and ends up being a rousing, culminating melody. One additional example of Chorale (of a subtly different type) from Mendelssohn will be described below.

<div align="center">Beethovenian Transcendence</div>

Eric McKee has identified the harmonic gesture of the I-V7-vi chord progression as a consistent feature in depictions of transcendent spirituality or exalted states of consciousness in eighteenth-century opera; he explains the expressive opposition of the "weightless" I-V7-vi versus the gravity-bound I-V7-I.[22] McKee extends this association

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[22] Eric McKee, "The Topic of the Sacred Hymn in Beethoven's Instrumental Music," *College Music Symposium*, 47 (2007), 26–35. McKee uses the terms "hymn"

to the music of Beethoven, and also argues that Beethoven had a preference for the very

bright key of E major in "spiritual" pieces or passages, including the second theme of the

Piano Sonata in C Major, Op. 53 ("Waldstein," 1803–04).[23]

McKee seems more concerned with the I-V7-vi chord progression than with

chorale-like melodic and rhythmic disposition in his overall selection of examples, but he

does note that Beethoven "was one of the earliest composers to make consistent use of

this topic,"[24] and Op. 53 is indeed a fitting example. Here, unlike the previous examples

in this chapter, the formal expectations pertain to sonata, rather than nocturne, prelude,

art song, character piece or fantasy—all of which have arguably looser formal

expectations. Beethoven's first theme famously features a pounding left-hand figure,

extremely disparate use of register, uneven rhythm and phrasing, frenetic energy, and a

destabilized C major tonality (see Example 4-14a). Following an equally energetic and

long transition to the chromatic mediant E major, the closely voiced Chorale of the

second theme is even and serene, sweet and connected. The topic is also rather

unexpected, even though the key is prepared; this location for Chorale is quite possibly

innovative on Beethoven's part (see Example 4-14b).

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and "chorale" rather loosely in this article to describe an affect; most of the examples he
gives for "hymn topic" seem to fall under the category of "prayerful" or "meditative" or
"spiritual," and many of them do indeed feature I-V-vi progressions. The texture and
melody types, however, of his examples are quite diverse.

[23] McKee, "The Topic of the Sacred Hymn in Beethoven's Instrumental Music,"
41–43, 50.

[24] McKee, "The Topic of the Sacred Hymn in Beethoven's Instrumental Music,"
35.

Example 4-14a.  Beethoven, Piano Sonata Op. 53 ("Waldstein")/I, mm. 1–15.



Example 4-14b.  Beethoven, Piano Sonata Op. 53 ("Waldstein")/I, mm. 35–43.

Many commentators have pointed out the extreme contrast between the first and second themes in Op. 53, but once again, few have ventured an explanation or interpretation.  Eero Tarasti, for example, simultaneously calls the second theme "disengaged" (for its key) and "particularly engaged" (for its voicing), and applies multiple other semiological terms to it—but never quite addresses the topical aspect.  A second theme in a sonata is expected to be contrasting, often described as more "lyrical" or "introspective."[25]  McKee's explanation for why Beethoven specifically chooses Chorale for his second theme—to represent a transcendent state—is logical, and also opens the door to considering how poignantly common this affect is in Beethoven's music, or perhaps to considering the various ways Beethoven signifies transcendence.

Chorale is one of those ways, and McKee makes a convincing case for the I-V7-vi progression[26] and the bright key of E major—to which should be added bright keys in general (including the B major of Piano Concerto No. 5, Op. 73, and possibly the F Lydian of the "Heiliger Dankgesang"), especially when they are in high contrast to surrounding keys.  These elements are not necessarily all present in every case, of course, but the special quality of these moments in Beethoven's music stems at least partially

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[25] This concept of contrast in sonata form exposition belongs more to the nineteenth than to the eighteenth century; as James Webster explains, "the Romantics believed that a sonata-form exposition was governed more by the contrast between the 'first theme' and the 'second theme' than by the tonal polarity between the keys of the first and second groups."  James Webster, "Schubert's Sonata Form and Brahms's First Maturity," *Nineteenth-Century Music* 2 (1978), 18.

[26] The question of whether McKee's theory concerning I-V7-vi chord progressions is universally or generally applicable will not be taken up in this study.  It is interesting to observe, however, the examples here that do contain a prominent use of the progression: Chopin, G minor Nocturnes, Op. 15/3 and Op. 37/1; Schubert, "Wohin soll Ich mich wenden;" Loewe, Symphony in D Major; Schneider, *Das Weltgericht*; Donizetti, *Les Martyrs*; Haydn, Symphony No. 75 and String Quartets Op. 76/1 and Op. 76/6.  The similar disposition of Haydn's slow, chorale-like movements to Beethoven's use of transcendent Chorale suggests the debt of the latter to the former.

from them.  In addition, of particular interest to this study are the specific characteristics of Beethoven's use of Chorale, which often does not sound explicitly ecclesiastical, but even when it does, also feels intensely personal.

In the Op. 53 piano sonata, E major stands in bright contrast to the main key of the piece, C major, but because it is so strongly prepared, "the listener can relax into the euphoria of that tonality,"[27] i.e., in this case the chorale does *not* seem miraculous or unreal or dreamlike, as in the earlier examples, even though its key is more remote than in some of those cases.  Perhaps this is Classicism at work—thoroughly preparing the new key—but also, for Beethoven, this "far out" key is not that far out.   The sharp-side third relation of E major to C major is normal for Beethoven, while still providing the sharp contrast in key color and affect.  Significantly, even though the second theme is in the remote key, it feels vastly more stable than the first theme—Tarasti is exactly correct that it is both disengaged and very engaged.  Moreover, when the second theme returns in the recapitulation, its key is A major—also bright, but one degree less, and serving as a pathway to A minor, and finally to C major.  Again, this may be Classicism and the expectations of sonata form at work, but it still stands that in the end all is unified and brought into "true being" or "perfectiveness"[28]—the earthly and the transcendent, the personal and the absolute, the subjective and the objective, or whatever polarities one wishes to see.  The genius of the chorale in Op. 53 is that it is not necessarily clear which is which—and in the end it does not matter; the "We" and the "I" are one and the same.

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[27] Eero Tarasti, *A Theory of Musical Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 128.

[28] Eero Tarasti, *A Theory of Musical Semiotics*, 136–37.

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In the case of Op. 53, the opening chord progression (m. 35) is unequivocally I-V7-vi, and the melody is actually rather churchy—if "churchy" is taken to imply utterly simple, square, and stepwise. In the variation that follows the first iteration, Beethoven embellishes the unaltered melody with running triplets (recall from Chapter Two the contemporaneous church practice of leaving chorale melodies unchanged, no matter how one might decorate them, which seems to echo here). This treatment could fall under one of Robert Hatten's categories of "textural topic" in which "progressive rhythmic diminution often leads to a state of transcendent bliss." Hatten notes that this is a typical strategy in Beethoven's late variation movements, for which he gives as examples the slow movement of the "Archduke" Trio, Op. 97, the finale of Op. 111, and the Adagio of the Ninth Symphony.[29] This sort of variation by rhythmic diminution personalizes the Chorale, both musically, in the improvisational-type embellishment to the melody, and in the affect of bliss or ecstasy (not mere transcendence!).

In the Piano Sonata Op. 109 (1820), not just one section, but the entire three-movement piece is in the key of E major: two outer movements in E major frame a stormy inner movement in E minor. In this opus, sonata norms are defied (or are simply irrelevant) in too many ways to discuss here, but one of them is that the concluding movement is slow and lyrical, marked *Gesangvoll, mit innigster Empfindung* (Songful, with most intimate/heartfelt feeling). The movement is a set of variations on a theme that illustrates well a hallmark trait of Beethovenian Chorale, a trait that makes it sound more personal: the fusion of Chorale with operatic or Lied style, first mentioned in Chapter One with reference to the Chorale in the Op. 76 Quartets Nos. 4 and 6 of Haydn. As in

[29] Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures*, 249.

those instances, the theme in the third movement of Beethoven's Op. 109 contains too many large intervals and register shifts to be congregational, but the tempo, the phrasing, the setting, and the affect can rightly be interpreted as chorale-like (see Example 4-15). The I-V7-vi effect is not as immediate or obvious as it was in Op. 53, but is beautifully present in mm. 5–7 (see chord analysis in Example 4-15). Finally, here again the "transcendent" chorale is not far out or unreal, but rather, the frame and the core of the piece.



Example 4-15. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E major, Op. 109/III, mm. 1–16.

The second movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5, Op. 73 (1809–10) is a similarly operatic, transcendent chorale in its melodic contour and stretched out thirteen-measure phrase structure. The I-V7-vi progression is clear in m. 10, and arguably present in m. 7, and in both places, brought strongly to attention by the rest after the vi chord (see Example 4-16). The key of B major here is very striking in relation to the overall E-flat tonality of the concerto, but once again, the way Beethoven slides back

to E-flat for the finale, without pause between movements, integrates the heavenly

transcendence of the second movement with the earthly dance of the third.   This sense of

integration is also underscored by the interaction of the "I"-soloist (sometimes

ecstatically embellishing the melody) and the "We"-tutti (sometimes helping the soloist

finish its phrases).  The internal modulation to D major in the middle of the movement

also lends a feeling of stability and legitimacy to the key of B major; B major is not just a

strange and remote episode.  No alienation here.



Example 4-16.  Beethoven, Piano Concerto No. 5, Op. 73 ("Emperor")/II, mm. 1–13.


Conductor Benjamin Zander's article on interpreting Beethoven's metronome

markings illuminates once again the crucial importance of tempo in defining the character

of a piece or passage.  In his discussion of the *Adagio*—or rather *Adagio molto*—from

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, he likens it to the identically marked *Adagio molto* from

Beethoven's String Quartet Op. 59, No. 2, and labels them both as "chorale types in

minim motion."[30]  To this list might also be added the *Adagio cantabile* from

Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 13 ("Pathetique"), even though it is notated in 2/4 rather

than 4/4.  These examples do move in half-measure impulses and possess a mood

somewhere between prayerful stillness and ecstatic transcendence (depending on the

tempo), but they also veer from chorale characteristics in both texture and in the operatic

or Lied-like melodic contours with bigger intervals and bigger range than chorale-type

melodies.  Although it might be a stretch to call them chorales, the mutual influence of

Chorale and Opera/Lied, or of the reverential and the keeningly melodic, is relevant to

the examples in this chapter from Beethoven and Chopin, especially given the influence

of operatic melodic writing in the latter's piano works.  Operatic Chorale is another

variation on the use of a public code (chorale) in service of personal expression.

<center>Refuge or Retreat</center>

As the examples above show, the transcendent Chorale is sometimes

simultaneously grounding—and the two affects might just be different ways of wording

the same phenomenon, or two sides of the same coin (transcendence and immanence),

which in any case is affirmative and has an undistorted sense of well being and belonging.

While the line between "objective" and "subjective" and other polarities is not

necessarily always clear, the next two examples are given their own category as

"retreating" rather than "transcendent" because of their context, even though one could

argue a certain amount of transcendence as a result of the retreat.  Both appear in

surprising locations within fast movements, and even with a slight relaxation of tempo

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[30] Benjamin Zander, "Beethoven 9," http://www.benjaminzander.com/recordings/boston-philharmonic/beet9/review/130, accessed 11 July 2014.

(indicated in the score in one case, and implicitly felt by lengthening of note value in the other) the tempos are too fast to afford the same transcendent feeling as in the examples from slow movements in the previous section.  The chorale in Beethoven's Op. 53 is of course in a fast first movement, but the difference is in how the chorale plays out over the course of the movement.  The examples of this section do not exert the same kind of influence; instead, their presence is more like a temporary oasis of calm in the midst of storm, or a foil to the surrounding material, rather than a transcendence that spreads its glow over the surrounding material.   The genres of these pieces are also slightly but meaningfully different—the duo sonata and the piano trio, in which one could argue the presence of multiple protagonists, multiple "I"s in conversation more than in homophony. As such, when the voices briefly join together in the chorale sections, the effect is poignant and peaceful, but again, temporary, and while it adds to the total picture of their relationship, it does not exactly transcend the fundamental nature of their interaction.

Mendelssohn's early Viola Sonata in C minor (1824) features Chorale in a highly unexpected location: the trio of the second movement's minuet—again, as in Beethoven's Op. 53 above, a moment when contrast would be expected, but probably not in the form of a chorale.  The change in meter and texture as well as the simplicity of the melody and rhythm stand out.  This trio also provides an extended section in C major in an otherwise mostly C minor piece—all the movements are in C minor; the only other extended C major comes in the eighth variation of the last movement, but it, too, is temporary, as the piece ultimately reverts to C minor.

In the trio, the piano states the first phrase alone and is joined by the viola for the second (see Example 4-17b), with "interludes" in between (such interludes will be further

discussed below in the section on Beethoven's "Heiliger Dankgesang").  Whether this

piece is viewed as a duo sonata or a solo sonata with piano accompaniment, the utterance

of an inherently communal voice—particularly an archaic church chorale as this one

seems to be—in a work featuring a single-line solo instrument is as striking as it was in

the art songs above.  Moreover, Mendelssohn's Chorale is also incongruent with the

generic expectations of a movement labeled Minuet.  The logic in this, however, would

seem to be that the fast and stormy minuet is actually more a scherzo than a minuet (see

Example 4-17a), from which the calm of an archaic chorale in half notes offers welcome

relief or contrast.



Example 4-17a.  Mendelssohn, Viola Sonata in C Minor/II, mm. 1–10.

Example 4-17b.  Mendelssohn, Viola Sonata in C minor/II, mm. 123–68.

Another duo sonata, Beethoven's Violin Sonata No. 9, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer," 1803), was composed shortly before Op. 53, and shares with that sonata a very similar transition in the first movement to the "chorale" section—which (coincidentally or not) is also in E major, as in Op. 53.  The overall key of Op. 47 is A minor, although Beethoven chooses to open the movement with the solo violin sounding a chordal passage in A major (see Example 4-18a) as a preface to the main key of A minor; the same modal interchange occurs when the placid E major section (see Example 4-18b) turns out not to be the second theme, but the first of a two-part preface to the energetic "real" second theme in E minor at m. 144 (see Example 4-18c), with possible inflections of *style hongrois*.



Example 4-18a.  Beethoven, Violin Sonata No. 9 ("Kreutzer")/I, mm. 1–8.



Example 4-18b.  Beethoven, Violin Sonata No. 9 ("Kreutzer")/I, mm. 91–105.

Example 4-18c.  Beethoven, Violin Sonata No. 9 ("Kreutzer")/I, mm. 138–54.


Janet Schmalfeldt analyzes this movement in a similar way, and labels the use of the major dominant in a minor piece "proto-Schubertian,"[31] referring to the (once again) E major second theme in Schubert's overwhelmingly tragic A minor Piano Sonata, D. 784 (see Example 4-19).  Because of this comparison, the issue of Hatten's designation of Schubert's second theme in that piece as a combination of pastoral and hymn[32] can be addressed here.  Hatten defines hymn as "four-voice chordal texture," i.e. *Chorale*, but the theme in the sonata is not chorale-like in its melody, harmony, or voice leading. ("Lullaby" rather than "Pastoral" could also be a more fitting identification, but that is a different discussion.)  In any case, if any aspect of Chorale or E major transcendence are present here, it would definitely be in the category of the unreal or the ironic, since it

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[31] Janet Schmalfeldt, *In the Process of Becoming*: *Analytical and Philosophical Perspectives on Form in Early Nineteenth-Century Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 99–101.

[32] Hatten, *Interpreting Musical Gestures*, 190–92.

seems meant to comfort or transport, but is utterly unable to do either and dissolves quickly, both topically and harmonically.



Ex. 4-19.  Franz Schubert, Piano Sonata in A Minor, D. 784, first movement, mm. 59-77.

Similarly, Schmalfeldt and Lawrence Kramer (whom she cites) call the E major section in the "Kreutzer" Sonata chorale-like on the basis of its texture and register, but as in Schubert's sonata, it is not very chorale-like in its melody, harmony, and the same constantly droning E.  Still though, both examples present a moment of calm, togetherness, and refuge from turmoil, and they do so through their four-voice chorale texture.

Thanksgiving and Contemplation

Chorale for a prayer of thanksgiving after a struggle or battle and Chorale for a contemplative slow movement both have ample precedents by the time of Beethoven's String Quartet No. 15 (1825), in which the third movement's *Heiliger Dankgesang eines Genesenen an die Gottheit, in der lydischen Tonart*  (Holy Song of Thanks of a

Convalescent to the Godhead, in the Lydian Mode) elevates both types of Chorale usage

to a higher level.  The wide leaps, Lydian modality, and points of imitation of mm. 1–2

(and like measures elsewhere) suggest a style even more archaic than chorale, but these

passages alternate with purely homorhythmic passages in half notes and stepwise motion.

Ratner analyzes this as "*alla breve* in its simplest form, *i.e.* the *chorale*," and identifies

five phrases of chorale melody, each four measures long and each preceded by two

measures of free imitation.[33]  Similarly, Sieghard Brandenburg describes it as individual

lines of chorale with interludes[34] (see Example 4-20).

[33] Leonard Ratner, *The Beethoven String Quartets: Compositional Strategies and Rhetoric* (Stanford: Stanford Bookstore, 1995), 272.

[34] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 188.

Example 4-20.  Beethoven, String Quartet Op. 132/III, mm. 1–34.

Brandenburg also fully demonstrates how Beethoven's archaic "Lydian" idea came later; the sketches for this movement show that Beethoven was not working from Renaissance models or theory, either in terms of the mode or the counterpoint. Rather, he was adhering "to the current type of 'modern' church hymn that was in use in the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth in both Protestant and Catholic churches, predominantly in extra-liturgical contexts,"[35] in which the organist was expected to provide interludes in between hymn phrases.[36] Brandenburg also observes that Beethoven's indication of "Molto adagio" conforms to contemporaneous ideas of piety embodied by slow tempo. The title to the third movement (for once actually written by Beethoven himself and not by an editor or publisher) provides the obvious clue to interpreting the movement, but based on the sketches, Brandenburg nevertheless refutes the claim of Joseph Kerman (and others) about a programmatic intent for the quartet as a whole.[37]

All this notwithstanding, the fact remains that Beethoven *did* title the movement, and he *did* add the archaizing elements, and not just in the (pseudo-)Lydian mode of the chorale, but throughout the entire quartet: the feeling of a Renaissance dance in the "Andante" sections of the "Heiliger" movement (beginning in mm. 31–34 of Example 4-20), the minuet (rather than scherzo), the Vivaldi-esque final measures of the first movement. Thus in the third movement the Chorale and the dance contrast with each

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[35] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 164.
[36] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 185.
[37] Brandenburg, "The Historical Background to the 'Heiliger Dankgesang' in Beethoven's A-minor Quartet Op. 132," 164.

other, but in this case, the opposition is what Hatten would call supportive opposition, since although the styles are different, they both represent "a view of the archaic."[38]

With the archaic Lydian mode and the absolute simplicity of style Beethoven intensifies the expression of gratitude and joy; recall from Chapter Two how the "old" and the "simple" were equated with purity and reverence. Ratner points out how unusual it is for Beethoven to include "no sprung scansions, no harmonic tangents, no extensions of periods, no grand cadences, no problematic situations…[but instead] a very slow, steadily measured flow of radiant sound…that only a perfectly balanced string quartet can produce."[39] Then, in the sections that alternate with the dance sections, Beethoven presents variations on the chorale section, keeping the melody always intact, even when he subjects it to fugal process. The "interlude" part ceases to be interlude, but maintains its canonic and contrapuntal comportment. At the same time, though, this learned style becomes increasingly personal—the chorale tune loses its chorale texture and is furthermore gradually subsumed into the contrapuntal texture as the rhythms become increasingly complex, again fulfilling Hatten's idea of ecstatic transcendence through increasing rhythmic diminution. Ratner describes it this way:

> To be sure, the fugue itself is minimal, seven entries in all, and four of these in the opening exposition…Yet the contrast in rhetorical action between the final section and all that preceded it is striking. A very powerful sense of peroration is projected. Paradoxically, Beethoven specifies the most delicate nuances in this fugue, asking the players to perform *Mit innigster Empfindung* (with the most heartfelt feeling). This stance contradicts the traditional attitude toward fugue performance, where the thrust of the discourse would be disturbed by obtrusive local shadings. The most sensitive and moving part of the *Heiliger Dankgesang*

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[38] Ratner, *The Beethoven String Quartets*, 271-72.
[39] Ratner, *The Beethoven String Quartets*, 271-72.

is the one where Beethoven has deployed his most subtle skills of the learned style.[40]

The Chorale of "Heiliger Dankgesang" thus exemplifies various categories of "I" Chorale—thanksgiving, contemplation, transcendence. Additionally, the way Beethoven so clearly refers to the archaic by presenting the chorale tune in plain, slow half notes and maintaining them throughout the variations lends a sense of the monumental—a collectively shared past that Beethoven all the while simultaneously reimagines and blends with the immediately personal. Similarly, the archaism of the Lydian mode is a novel idea for a remote key to express something current and personal. Beethoven has provided examples of so many kinds of Chorale, and in so many genres, from the most public of symphonies to the most private of chamber works. Importantly, Beethoven's ability to blend or synthesize different affects, aspects, and functions of Chorale all in one piece is a thread for the conclusion of this study. And as already seen in the examples from Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, and Mendelssohn, the number of examples of Chorale only multiplies after Beethoven. Now that a groundwork has been laid for categories of interpretation, Chapter Five will address the idea of synthesis in the meaning of Chorale, in particular that of both Schumann and Brahms.

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[40] Ratner, *The Beethoven String Quartets*, 274.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE VOICE OF I and WE and YOU

**"Crossing Paths"**

John Daverio and David Brodbeck have written extensively on the web of connections among the symphonies of Brahms, Schumann, and Schubert (not to mention their works in general), as well as how these symphonies respond to Beethoven's symphonic legacy.[1]  Particularly emphasized are the many references and borrowings in Brahms's First Symphony (1876), composed as it was under the weight (or inspiring influence) not only of Beethoven's legacy, but also of the generation of "post-Beethoven" symphonies—symphonies which all, in their own ways, conversed with each other and with the past.  For instance, Schumann's Second Symphony (1845–46) makes well-known allusions to Haydn's Symphony No. 104 and Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*; Daverio also points out its likely inspiration from Schubert's Ninth Symphony (1825),[2] and Douglass Seaton adds to the list of connections with his identification of further

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[1] John Daverio, *Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); David Lee Brodbeck, *Brahms: Symphony No. 1*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[2] Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 18.  Similarities include the key (both C major) and the martial, triplet-driven fanfares.  Daverio also observes that Schumann heard a performance of Schubert's Ninth immediately prior to beginning work on his Second Symphony.

references to Bach, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schumann himself.[3] Schumann's symphony in turn exerts a strong presence in Brahms's First.

Of most direct relevance to this study is the way Daverio and Brodbeck both make connections between the Chorale in Brahms's First and its referents in works of Schubert and Schumann; additionally, Matthew Gelbart and Daniel Beller-McKenna offer fresh insights on interpreting Brahms's Chorale.[4]  This study will conclude by synthesizing the analyses of these authors with a specific focus on Chorale, including the propositions laid out in the previous chapters for interpreting different types and different expressive voices of Chorale.  By 1876 when Brahms composed his First Symphony, he had a history of Chorale usage to draw on, manifested in the multiple perspectives and multiple levels of Chorale in the symphony.  As has often been observed about Brahms in general, he synthesizes the retrospective and the progressive, and this is clearly demonstrated by his contribution to the evolution of Chorale.

Daverio discusses at length the concept of "breakthrough" moments in symphonies of Schumann, though he attributes the term to Paul Bekker and Theodor Adorno, and primarily in association with the symphonies of Mahler.  Daverio defines the breakthrough moment as "a messianic gesture" when "the narrative trajectory takes an unexpected turn toward transcendence," and as such often "entails structural reorientation…its effect…most radical when the structure-in-progress is displaced by a contrasting frame of reference."  An example has already been given in Chapter Three:

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[3] Douglass Seaton, "Back from B-A-C-H: Schumann's Symphony No. 2 in C Major," *About Bach*, ed. Gregory G. Butler, George B. Stauffer, and Mary Dalton Greer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 191–206.

[4] Matthew Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony" (*Nineteenth Century Studies* 23, 2009), 57–85; Daniel Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

the moment from Schumann's *Overture, Scherzo und Finale* when the opening fugue subject is presented in a grand orchestral *tutti* near the end of the piece. As Daverio reminds, however, breakthroughs do not have to be loud or grand, and he asserts that Brahms's "models for both incarnations of this strategy—the brassy and the serene—come straight out of works of Schumann."[5]

## Breakthrough Transcendence

Daverio identifies the breakthrough moment in Schumann's Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major (1841) at the closing phrase of the development with a *tutti* reiteration of the brass motto from the slow introduction (see Example 5-1) "at the juncture normally articulated by the recapitulation of the opening theme" (i.e. the opening theme of the Allegro section) (see Example 5-2). Indeed, this extremely loud interruption (marked *fff*) brings all the momentum of the development to a grinding halt with an indication of *ritardando* and the fermatas in mm. 308 and 316.



Example 5-1. Schumann, Symphony No. 1/I, mm. 1–4, reduced score.

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[5] Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 178.

Example 5-2.  Schumann, Symphony No. 1/I. mm. 302–316, reduced score.

After this moment, the recapitulation beginning in m. 317 does undergo a bit of "structural reorientation."  The first theme (which is based on the opening motto) is not quite as it was in the exposition; Schumann moves on to the second theme quickly and summarily, and then presses on again to the coda: an *Animato* section that almost restates the first theme, but is too excited, as if in an exuberant rush to the end.  If *two* breakthroughs are possible, then what happens next should be added to Daverio's analysis: what seems to be a new theme appears suddenly in the middle of this coda (see Example 5-3), though in fact it is yet another recasting of the main motto from the slow introduction (Example 5-1).  The rhythm is the same, but it now has a lyrical contour and tied rhythms, and it is allowed to continue and grow into a fully phrased melody. Furthermore, the instrumentation is suddenly strings only (joined by the winds on the second phrase), the texture becomes suddenly homorhythmic and the rhythmic motion

slows by half, i.e. everything is simplified, slowed down, and *quietly* chorale-like.[6]

Different from the dreamlike, transcendent Chorale of Chapter Four, this one is

affirmative rather than unreal or ironic—it is in the home key and in the context of a

celebratory ending.  Additionally, the rhetorical position (interrupting the *Animato* coda)

of this moment of Chorale is unusual; the surprising location is part of what makes it a

breakthrough.



Example 5-3.  Schumann, Symphony No. 1/I, strings and woodwinds, mm. 437–66.

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[6] Many performances of this symphony also add an un-indicated *meno mosso* in this section.  Whether or not Schumann might have intended this is a question for further investigation.

**Brass Chorale**

If breakthroughs can be, in the words of Daverio, brassy—meaning "loud"—or serene, in the case of Schumann's First Symphony, there is one of each. "Brassiness" of another kind is also present in Schumann's Symphony No. 1: the specific sound of brass instruments as a featured section of the orchestra, rather than merely as a means of doubling a higher instrument's line or amplifying a *tutti* sound. Schumann's choice to use horns and trumpets for the opening motto (Example 5-1) may well be modeled on the opening motto of Schubert's Ninth, scored for horns (see Example 5-4).



Example 5-4. Schubert, Symphony No. 9 ("Great" C Major)/I, mm. 1–8.

Daverio notices as well that Schubert's Ninth and Schumann's First and Second Symphonies are all dominated by brass mottos. By nature of the instrumentation, brass mottos are distinct in character from mottos written for other instrument families, tending to be, again in the words of Daverio (even though he was not intending to make a generalization as he described the opening of Schumann's Second), "poised between military fanfare and chorale."[7] Schumann even re-wrote the pitches for the opening of the First Symphony expressly to accommodate the horns. He preferred the still-developing valved horn, but when he realized that his players for this symphony were natural horn players, Schumann changed his original idea of C-C-C-C-C-A-B-C to E-E-

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[7] Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 177.

E-E-E-C-D-E (written pitches for horns in B-flat—actual pitches sound as in Example 5-1) in order to avoid closed notes (the A and the B) on the natural horn.[8]

Such an orientation toward timbre and toward affording initial statements of thematic material to brass instruments is a distinctly nineteenth-century development, and plays a role in the evolution of Chorale usage as well; quartets of trombones or horns and the mixed brass section as a whole become autonomous entities in the nineteenth century in ways foreign to previous eras. By the mid- to late-nineteenth century, in works of Wagner, Brahms, Bruckner, and Mahler (to name the most famous), "brass" and "chorale" have immediate associations. This was not always the case; observe that the instrumentation of the Chorale examples in this study so far has primarily been strings, orchestral *tutti*, and solo piano, plus a few notable instances of clarinet and bassoon quartet. The possible roots of brass-Chorale association, however, are present in the earlier part of the nineteenth century.

In Chapter Three, we noted that Beethoven's Equali for four trombones (being derived from a local folk tradition) were revealed as the likely source of the trombone chorale in Schubert's "Tenth" (D. 936a). Trombone choir is an especially appropriate choice for instrumental Chorale because of the vocal qualities of trombone timbre, the rich and easy production of all parts in the SATB choral range, and above all the long association of the trombone with the scared and the supernatural. Horns, on the other hand, were historically associated with the secular, whether aristocratic or folksy, and in the first part of the nineteenth century Weber firmly established the characteristic sound of the horn quartet in orchestral setting. *Der Freischütz* (1821) includes the novel feature

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[8] John Q. Ericson, "Crooks and the Nineteenth-century Horn," *The Horn Call: Journal of the International Horn Society*, 30/1(Nov. 1999), 50.

of horn quartets with "close harmony, equivalent in range and 'voicing' to the style of the

*Männerchor*, the men's-chorus idiom that instantly evoked nationalistic singing societies

with the patriotic hymns and 'Rheinlieder.'"[9]  This type of horn quartet is not Chorale (at

least not in *Der Freischütz*), but significantly, it is a quartet of brass instruments standing

in for human voices in instrumentalized choral music.  Finally, trumpets are primarily

associated with the martial, and tend not to be featured in single-instrument-type quartets

(partly for their lack of low range), but they enter the discussion as members of the larger

brass section.

Schubert expanded the topical range of the horn when he assigned it the opening

motto of the Ninth Symphony, which in and of itself belongs to a unique category—that

curious blend of Fanfare and Chorale that Daverio describes.  The brass sound and the

characteristic fanfare rhythms mark it as fanfare, and although it is tempting to say that

the slow-side tempo (here *Andante*) is what makes it Chorale, fanfares can in fact also be

slow.  What fanfares do not do is combine slow tempo and a completely phrased, legato

melody that is at once noble, grand, solemn, joyous, and mystical.[10]  It seems squarely

march-like in its meter and its neatly dotted rhythms, yet is oddly phrased (3+3+2).

Furthermore, with the scoring for two solo unison horns, it seems appropriate to say that

they *intone* the highly lyrical and singable melody.  In the course of the movement

Schubert reveals that his melody is also a perfectly fragmentable "symphonic" theme.

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[9] Taruskin, *Music in the Nineteenth Century*, 202.  This specifically German style of male, close-harmony singing is often called *Singverein*.

[10] Schumann described the introduction as appearing "veiled in secrecy."  Quoted in A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire: Volume II: The First Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002), 631.

Brodbeck compares Schubert's melody to Beethoven's *Freudenthema*[11] and to

Brahms's main theme from the finale of his First Symphony, calling all three of them "a

kind of hymn, whose character is delineated by a diatonic cantabile melodic structure,

flowing rhythm, and clear-cut periodicity," and further noting that they all "undergo

progressively richer scoring with each strophic-like repetition."[12]  The lengthy slow

introduction treats the melody in a theme and variations form, including choral scoring in

unison and in four-part, homorhythmic harmonies (beginning in m. 29).  Even A. Peter

Brown, who tends toward analyses focused on the labeling of formal parts and keys,

notes that the second and third variations "develop the material by dividing the theme

among different *choirs*," [italics added] and he speaks of the iterations as "strophes;" in

other words, this melody has the character of a strophic hymn or chorale.  If Schubert's

harmony lines are sometimes rather more active than in a standard chorale

harmonization, it may because they are the variations on his theme.

Brown also cannot avoid using the word "chorale" as he describes the "heroic

transformation" at the end of the movement, when the theme is stated in a massive *tutti*

unison (mm. 672), which he says "was to establish a tradition of its own in…Schumann's

Symphony No. 3/5, Brahms's Symphony No. 1/4, and…Bruckner's Finales, with their

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[11] Schubert actually quotes the *Freudenthema* in the finale (see Example 5-5).
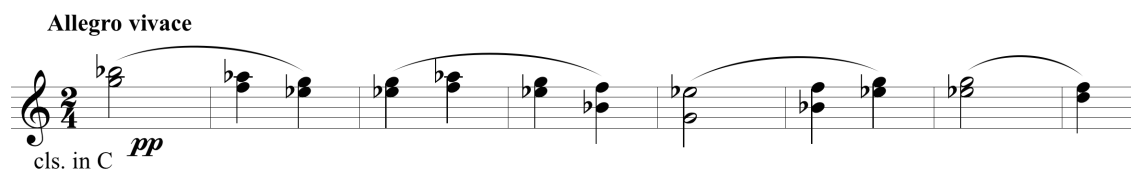


Example 5-5.  Schubert, Symphony No. 9, D. 944/IV, mm. 385–92.

[12] Brodbeck, *Brahms: Symphony No. 1*, 71.

chorale-like endings…"[13]  Of course not all *tutti* unisons have to be chorales—but in this

case the affect and the melodic profile fit the description.[14]

The opening of Schumann's First, viewed now through the lens of

instrumentation, is notable for combining the fanfaric sound of the trumpet with the horn

sound of Schubert's Ninth.[15]  Then, another moment of striking orchestration comes at

the end of the lovely and lyrical second movement in E-flat major: a choir of trombones

and bassoons plays a passage that serves not so much to conclude the second movement

as to introduce the third (see Example 5-7).  The passage is not exactly Chorale, but the

trombone-equale *sound* is exactly the same as the trombone chorales in Schubert's

"Tenth" (D. 936a) and Brahms's First, with the bassoon timbre being subsumed by the

trombones.  All of these passages share with Beethoven's Equale the function of solemn

announcement, whether strictly funereal (Beethoven and Schubert) or not (Schumann);

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[13] Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire: Vol. II*, 636.

[14] If Schubert's introductory motto can indeed be called Chorale (or contain elements of Chorale), then what he uses for contrast cannot escape notice: The second theme of the first movement (see Example 5-6), played first by oboes and bassoons, displays topical traits pointing to *style hongrois*, anticipating the extremely prominent *style hongrois* of the second movement's main theme, which also uses chorale-like moments for contrast (see Chapter Three).  Recall as well the juxtaposition of Chorale and *style hongrois* in *Winterreise*, described in Chapter Two.



Example 5-6.  Schubert, Symphony No. 9, D. 944/I, mm. 134–42, oboes.

[15] Schumann features horns and trombones for solemn effect again in his Symphony No. 3, fourth movement (*Feierlich*); their passage is not exactly Chorale, but the sound is remarkable and noteworthy in considering instrumental timbre associated with topic.

the trombone chorale in Brahms's First need not be read as necessarily funereal but certainly as some kind of solemn announcement.



Example 5-7.  Schumann, Symphony No. 1/II, trombones and bassoons, mm. 113–17.

**I and We and You**

The opening brass motto of Schumann's Symphony No. 2 in C Major (1845–46) is, as Daverio described it, truly somewhere between Fanfare and Chorale.  Schumann makes the reference to the fanfare figure from the slow introduction of Haydn's Symphony No. 104 (1795) unmistakable, but he also imbues it with a new character: in Haydn's symphony it is a unison *tutti* of the whole orchestra, *fortissimo*, in common time, and with perfectly square phrasing; Schumann, on the other hand, uses *pianissimo* and reworks the theme in 6/4 time to elongate it and give it the monumental quality discussed in Chapter Three.  Moreover, the instrumentation and setting are striking: the "Haydn" theme is played by a brass choir—this time trumpets, horns, and trombones all three— with the martial trumpet timbre dominating, but *soft*, and enmeshed with a string choir playing a sort of self-generating stream of quarter notes (see Example 5-8).  The result again is not Chorale per se, but something like a chorale *prelude* after Bach, with a chorale melody in long notes over improvisatory running notes.  Schumann later

combines the two ideas, beginning in m. 15, and continues his references to Bach

throughout the symphony.[16]



Example 5-8.  Schumann, Symphony No. 2/I, mm. 1–7.

Daverio relates Schumann's Second to Brahms's First as "another orchestral work

in C that culminates in a grandiose Amen cadence…[as well as with] the gradual

displacement of a somewhat unsettled combination of ideas by a more stable

configuration."  In the middle of the finale, set off by another of Schumann's quotational

pauses, the woodwinds introduce a new melody (see Example 5-9), which Daverio labels

as a chorale, though one that is "more intimate [and] a touch homelier than its counterpart

at the beginning of the symphony."[17]

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[16] See Seaton's article for more on the many Bach references.
[17] Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 177.

Example 5-9. Schumann, Symphony No. 2/IV, woodwinds, mm. 278–87.

This is the melody that is usually linked to the sixth song in Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* (beginning as almost an exact quotation, including the key of E-flat) but the way Schumann treats it is just as Brodbeck described the melodies above of Beethoven, Schubert, and Brahms—as a kind of hymn, with diatonic cantabile melodic structure, flowing rhythm, clear-cut periodicity, and progressively richer (and chorale-like) scoring with each strophe. This breakthrough chorale eventually breaks through again in the home key of C major (m. 394), in the same way as the breakthrough chorale in Schumann's First Symphony as described above, when in the midst of a momentous build-up, the texture is suddenly reduced to homorhythmic strings only with winds joining later. Beginning in m. 423 Schumann combines the breakthrough chorale—by now the apotheosis chorale—with the solemn, chorale-fanfare from the first movement; according to Daverio, "the underlying symbolism of this gesture could hardly be clearer: in revealing the combinative potential of these two rather different conceits, Schumann

enacts a fusion of the martial-heroic with the lyrical-hymnic, the secular and the sacred."[18]

Thus the Chorale in all these "post-Beethoven's Ninth" symphonies—Schubert's Ninth, Schumann's First and Second—is multi-faceted, multi-functional, and pervasive. It is fused with other topics; it is transcendent breakthrough and *also* apotheosis;[19] it serves as monumental pillar and frame in the way it points to the past, but in an intimately personal and prayerful manner. After the private expressions in the private genres of Chapter Four, the examples now return to the most public of genres, the symphony; the Chorale here freely navigates the spectrum from the heroic to the reflective, the sacred to the secular, the public to the private. Ultimately, all of this should be taken into account in analyzing the content of Brahms's First, in which Chorale plays a famously prominent role in the finale.

Beller-McKenna laments that Brahms scholars have been reluctant to place him in his own time, and instead claim a universality for his music "within one of two closely related paradigms: Brahms as a classicist and composer of absolute music…or Brahms as the historicist, engaging…with the music of the past."[20] Much has been made of the

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[18] Daverio, *Crossing Paths*, 177.

[19] Edward Cone defines apotheosis as "a special kind of recapitulation that reveals unexpected harmonic richness and textural excitement in a theme previously presented with deliberately restricted harmonization and relatively drab accompaniment." For more on this, see Edward T. Cone, *Musical Form and Musical Performance* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1968), 84. Cone's definition of apotheosis thus overlaps with Daverio's definition of breakthrough in the idea of unexpected revelation. To avoid confusion, we will here use apotheosis (first introduced in Chapter Three, in the context of national symphonies) in the sense of a culmination or climax. Understood thus, an apotheosis and a breakthrough can be one and the same, but they can also be separate phenomena, and they are not both necessarily present. Apotheosis does not have to be breakthrough, and breakthrough does not have to be apotheosis.

[20] Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit*, 4–5.

challenge Brahms faced in the third quarter of the century of "saving" the symphony and particularly the German tradition of the symphony; this challenge "had become concentrated and amplified in writing a last movement" that would always be compared with Beethoven's choral ending to his Ninth.[21]  Brahms's solution did not appear from nowhere, and as Gelbart also acknowledges, Daverio's work in connecting the compositional conversations of Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms has been crucial in forming a concept of Brahms's music located in its own time and place.[22]  Their "crossing paths" and musical conversations are the "You" part of the title of this chapter—the composers addressing each other in their symphonies.  In this sense, the chorales of elegy or homage of Haydn to Mozart and of Mozart to J.C. Bach from Chapter One could also be considered "You" chorales.

The finale of Brahms's Symphony No. 1 begins with an intensely gloomy, and then agitated and stormy mood, which Gelbart calls Wagnerian in its densely chromatic musical language.[23]  Out of this emerge three clear themes: first, an alphorn call[24] (introduced by a solo horn, and echoed by an equally pastoral solo flute) in the home key of C major (see Example 5-10a), followed by a solemn trombone chorale that cadences in F major (see Example 5-10b), and finally a string choir in lushly low tessitura playing the C major "main" allegro theme of the movement—a melody similar to Beethoven's

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[21] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 60–61.
[22] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 76.
[23] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 72.
[24] The alphorn theme is curiously similar to Schubert's horn motto from the opening of his Ninth Symphony, having the same key and an identical closing figure.

*Freudenthema*, set in the same chorale-like way and in the same rhetorical position (after a dark and stormy introduction) (see Example 5-10c).



Example 5-10a.  Brahms, Symphony No. 1/IV, horn in C, mm. 30–38.



Example 5-10b.  Brahms, Symphony No. 1/IV, bassoons and trombones, mm. 47–50.



Example 5-10c.  Brahms, Symphony No. 1/IV, strings, mm. 61–78.

Gelbart takes issue with a conventional interpretation of these three symbolic themes, in which the horn call stands for "nature," the chorale for "religion," and the Beethoven theme for "Beethoven" or the lost optimism of Enlightenment ideals, which in the course of the movement eventually are trumped by "nature" and "religion." Gelbart views this as simplistic, and prefers to interpret the themes as symbols of three different German "folk-art tributaries" to Brahms's musical world, with the symphony as a whole being a cultural-nationalist statement. In this scheme, the alphorn call represents Swiss *Volkslied* from the idyllic southwest of Germany,[25] the chorale represents North German *Volkslied*, and the Beethoven theme represents Viennese *Volkslied* from the south of Germany, with maybe even a touch of Biedermeier aesthetic in its absolute accessibility.[26]

How Brahms brings back each of these themes through the course of such a familiar movement hardly needs to be described, but the most significant part for this discussion is that the expectation for the "main" Beethoven theme to serve as the Chorale apotheosis (as in Beethoven's Ninth) is *not* fulfilled. It returns "too early" at what some call a false recapitulation and other call the development (m. 186), and it *tries* several times to return for a recapitulation, but never materializes beyond fragments of the theme, and minor-key fragments at that (m. 375). Instead, after many thwarted expectations and much build-up, the key is firmly back in C major and a hearty coda begins (m. 391) which once more seems to be preparing for a final grand statement. This time it is finally delivered, in an extraordinary brass and string *tutti* (m. 407), and it turns out to be a

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[25] Brahms famously sent Clara Schumann this theme written on a postcard from the Alps.

[26] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 63–68.

breakthrough moment: rather than the Beethoven theme, it is the trombone chorale,

which has not been heard since its brief appearance in the slow introduction.

Finding a meaning for this astounding gesture begins with examining the

trombone chorale itself, and the ways in which its traits as well as its usage are

remarkable.  First, it is a mere four-measure fragment, far from a complete melody, and

yet Brahms manages to use it for the moment of both apotheosis and breakthrough.  This

is partially owing to the fact that the fragment is specifically a *cadential* rather than

beginning or middle fragment, landing squarely on F major.  This fragment has the sound

and effect of transcendent Chorale because of the shock of its opening chord and the

quasi-modal progression that follows: coming out of C major, the first chord of the

chorale jumps to a bright A major chord and proceeds d–B♭–E♭–B♭–C$^{4\text{-}3}$–F, all in root

position.  Schumann's breakthroughs achieve their transcendence from the shock of their

rhetorical placement and their thematic material, but they tend to be in the home key.

Here, Brahms also uses the tool of an abrupt remote chord; the chorale begins like it will

be in a remote key, but quickly shifts course to the closely related key of F.  After just

four measures, the C major alphorn call returns almost as abruptly.  Even though the

moment of transcendence is so brief, it feels entirely affirmative because it is cadential,

quite unlike some of the transcendent Chorale of the previous chapter, which seemed

dreamlike or ironic because of the harmonic dissolution and inability to cadence.

Moreover, the tonality of the chorale *also* turns out not to be particularly remote.  The F

tonality functions as the crucial element in a large-scale I-IV-I "Amen"—alphorn call

(C)-trombone chorale (F)-Beethoven theme (C)—the same cadence that Brahms uses in

the actual closing measures of the movement.

Furthermore, in addition to being transcendent Chorale, breakthrough Chorale, and apotheosis Chorale, this fragment is also a monumental, announcing Chorale, by its rhetorical placement and its instrumentation. Brahms waxes fully archaic with the quasi-modality and also with the trombone choir, which solemnly announces the "main" theme—which is yet another type of Chorale, the popular and rousing "hymn" type. In the end, that popular, even Biedermeier, aspect of the hymn makes it not quite grand enough for Brahms in his summing up of the Austro-Germanic symphonic heritage, and he opts instead for the monumental—the studied and archaic chorale. Brahms's idea to feature the archaic trombone sound in a modern symphony may be borrowed from Schumann and the trombone choir in his First Symphony; or from Schubert and the novel prominence of trombone in his Ninth Symphony;[27] or from Beethoven and his trombone equali (especially with the modal sound of their flat sevenths). In any case, and in all cases, the original connotations of the trombone remain in effect—religious, solemn, and old.

Gelbart's take on the triumph of the archaic chorale is that it "neutralizes" both the Beethovenian and Wagnerian: "By giving the loudest voice at the end to the past… Brahms seems to leave the widest possible opening for alternate paths into the present and future."[28] For Brahms, chorale and archaism in general were not just symbols of the past or of timeless purity, but a compositional tool and a style to integrate into his own. In addition to serving as the musical conversation between composers, Brahms's chorales here are "You" chorales also in the sense of Brahms addressing the past and addressing

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[27] The trombone chorale in the sketches for Schubert's "Tenth" of course also feature the archaic trombone sound, but Brahms may not have known these sketches.

[28] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 24.

his heritage not as an "It" but as a personalized "You." As Gelbart explains, if Brahms felt himself to be under pressure to "save" the symphony and define his place in music history, then the effect of using archaism as a solution to the Beethoven problem was to "construct a lineage" with a backwards chronology (beginning with Wagnerian chromaticism and ending with archaic chorale). At the same time, "Schumann's model of thematic morphing and displacement…allows Brahms to bring together his extremely varied and potentially extraneous symbolic-thematic material into a historical narrative." Brahms acknowledges Beethoven but "encircles him on both sides historically."[29]

The music of Bruckner is beyond the scope of this study, but it is worth noting here the comparison Gelbart makes between the Chorale of Brahms and Bruckner. He observes how striking it is that Bruckner (a Catholic) and Brahms (a Lutheran) "produced such similar-sounding homophonic brass settings at the climaxes of their 1876 symphony finales…[but] the connotations of purity signaled by the hymn tunes were different." Gelbart concurs with the analysis of Laurenz Lütteken[30] that Bruckner saw Chorale as mystical purification and redemptive, timeless religion as counterweight to Beethovenian "thematic work" or antidote to decayed modern music, and likens it the old church music in Wagner's *Tannhäuser* (1845) and *Parsifal* (1882). Gelbart departs from Lütteken's idea, though, that Chorale had the same meaning for Brahms; the layers of meaning for him included "German organic nature rather than…religion per se" as well as "older

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[29] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 71–76. Jonathan Bellman has also hypothesized a song by Schumann as the source for a chorale-like moment of "absolute triumph" in the first movement of this symphony. See Jonathan Bellman, "*Aus alten Märchen*: The Chivalric Style of Schumann and Brahms," *The Journal of Musicology* 13/1 (Winter 1995), 131.

[30] Laurenz Lütteken, "Die Apotheose des Chorals. Zum Kontext eines kompositionsgeschichtlichen Problems bei Brahms und Bruckner," in *Colloquia Academica* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1996), 7–38.

musical techniques…a part of the concrete, technical unfolding of music history."[31] Gelbart acknowledges Beller-McKenna's point that Brahms's Lutheran faith strongly informed his musical identity,[32] but at the same cautions that Lutheranism also be viewed "as much a cultural as a spiritual force."[33]

In other words, Brahms's approach to Chorale in this work—considering both the trombone chorale and the Beethoven theme—is integrative, and its connotations are at once personal (Brahms in conversation with his identity, and his immediate and distant predecessors), national (German identity and history), communal (both archaic and popular), religious (Brahms as Lutheran drawing on the work of Schumann the Lutheran), cultural (simultaneously retrospective and progressive approach to music history), transcendental, grounding, brassy, serene, archaic, and modern. So, as is appropriate for the summative point we have reached in this study, the pronominal perspectives here are multiple—"I" *and* "We" *and* "You."

## Continuation

A continuation of this study would examine mid- and late-century Chorale— including the many examples from Brahms other than the one symphony discussed here, as well as the Chorale of Dvořák, Wagner, Bruckner, Verdi, and Mahler—and follow the topic into the twentieth century. One thread that merits particular attention is that of distorted or ironic Chorale, as in the examples in Chapter Four from Schubert, Schumann,

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[31] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 69, 82 (notes 64 and 65).

[32] Beller-McKenna, *Brahms and the German Spirit*, 3–4.

[33] Gelbart, "Nation, Folk, and Music History in the Finale of Brahms's First Symphony," 64.

and Chopin.  The concluding examples in Chapter Five from Schumann and Brahms were chosen for the fact they function in almost every category of Chorale expression, but it would be too much of a stretch to find irony in them as well.  Nevertheless, the increasing role of distortion and irony in music and in general from the end of the nineteenth century and into the next would seem to provide fertile context for both ironic and affirmative Chorale, and with new layers of meaning.

The goal of this study has been to provide a perspective on the heritage of Chorale that informs its later usage, and the wide range of meanings and affects it can have.  The extremely common but all too casual and inconsistent use of the term "chorale" is testament to the need for accuracy and specificity in defining and interpreting Chorale, especially for such an apparently common topic that it is.  By its increasing presence and increasingly complex topical use from the end of the eighteenth century into the nineteenth, Chorale has clearly been an important and compelling code for composers and audiences alike, from the most public to the most private of settings.  The genre of chorale, moreover, has remained current and relevant (to the present day), and so Chorale remains also relevant as a significant compositional choice and a subject for dedicated study, whether in works new or old.

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