

1. *Introduction: Sketches and Drafts*

Gustav Mahler's Fourth Symphony (1899–1900)¹ is one of the composer's most accessible compositions, and while it is difficult to find a single work that unequivocally embodies his style, this Symphony contains elements that may be seen to emerge throughout his oeuvre. For some the Fourth Symphony is Mahler's response to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony,² while others assign other meanings to it. To probe the Fourth Symphony thoroughly, however, it is important to understand Mahler's approach to its composition, and this is possible through analysis that includes an exploration of the sketches documenting the process that Mahler used to create it.

The Fourth Symphony is also an excellent subject for the study of Mahler's sketches because of the number of different manuscripts that survive. More kinds of sketches and drafts survive for the Fourth than are known to exist for any of his other works. They include sketches from almost every stage of work on the symphony, from the earliest plans to the fair copy, as well as several sets of autograph revisions that extend throughout the last decade of the composer's life.

To date relatively more attention has been drawn to Mahler's sketches for his later works, especially the Ninth and Tenth Symphonies; earlier compositions, like the Fourth, have received less attention. Recent studies deal with specific aspects of various manuscripts,³ including several for the

¹ For the current critical edition of the work see Gustav Mahler, *Symphonie No. 4—G-Dur*, edited by Erwin Ratz (Sämtliche Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, 4; Vienna: Universal, 1963). This edition represents the 'Ausgabe letzter Hand' and essentially includes Mahler's final revisions. The ramifications of this edition are explained by James L. Zychowicz, 'Toward an *Ausgabe letzter Hand*: The Publication and Revision of Mahler's Fourth Symphony', *Journal of Musicology*, 12 (1995), 260–72. See also id., 'Sketches and Drafts of Gustav Mahler 1892–1901: The Sources of the Fourth Symphony' (Ph.D. diss., University of Cincinnati, 1988), 391–405. See also Stephen E. Hefling, "'Variations in *nuce*': A Study of Mahler Sketches and a Comment on Sketch Studies', in *Gustav Mahler Kolloquium 1979*, ed. Rudolf Klein (Österreichische Gesellschaft für Musik, 7; Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1981), 102–26.

For the purpose of this discussion, Mahler's Fourth Symphony in G Major is a four-movement work: (1) *Bedächtig, Nicht eilen* (G major); (2) *In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast* (C minor); (3) *Ruhevoll* (G major); and (4) *Sehr behaglich* (G major—E major). For a conventional analysis of the work, see Rudolph Stephan, *Gustav Mahler: IV. Symphonie G-Dur* (Meisterwerke der Musik, 5; Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1966).

² Mark Evan Bonds, 'Ambivalent Elysium: Mahler's Fourth Symphony', in *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 176.

³ Two concise surveys of sketch studies have been published to date: Stephen Hefling, 'Perspectives on Sketch Study in Mahler Research', in *Das Gustav-Mahler-Fest: Hamburg 1989*, Bericht über den Internationalen Gustav-Mahler-Kongreß, ed. Matthias Theodor Vogt (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1991), 445–58 at 456–8 (bibliography of sketch and manuscript studies); and Edward R. Reilly, 'Mahler's Manuscripts and What They Can Tell Us', *Musik & Wissenschaft*, 5 (1995/96), 363–83.

Second,⁴ Third,⁵ and Fourth Symphonies, but few investigations approach the sketches from a broader perspective. This may be the result of the paucity of materials, since many of the surviving manuscripts are fragmentary at best. Portions of different movements at various stages of composition are extant, but it is almost impossible to locate a complete set of all the materials that preceded the fair copy. The situation is further complicated by the fact that Mahler's manuscripts are scattered around the world, with a number of them still in private collections. In his study of another symphony of Mahler, Peter Andraschke aptly describes the situation with many of the composer's manuscripts: 'For the most part, Mahler destroyed the preparatory work for his compositions. The few sketches, mostly in private hands, cannot yet be centrally registered. The material known hitherto represents only a selection surviving by chance.'⁶

Andraschke's comments point up the difficulties that exist with obtaining manuscript materials, and the shortcomings that occur when entire sets have been dispersed. When he made that remark, however, Andraschke was referring to the Ninth Symphony and may not have known of the extent of sketches for the Fourth that have turned up in various places. In fact, enough different kinds of materials for the Fourth survive to allow for an examination of the compositional process from its perceived beginnings to the final revisions.

Mahler's Sketches

With regard to the kinds of sketches that Mahler used in creating his symphonies, it is useful to differentiate between the stages of compositions. While some would call everything before the fair copy a 'sketch', Mahler's systematic approach to composition is apparent in the style of the manuscripts that he used to proceed from one phase of work to the next. The framework devised by Edward R. Reilly for his proposed catalogue of the composer's manuscripts is useful in separating each compositional stage:

⁴ As to the sketches for the Second Symphony see Edward R. Reilly, 'Die Skizze zu Mahlers zweiter Symphonie', *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift*, 34 (1979), 266–84. The early version of the first movement, the tone poem 'Todtenfeier', is the subject of 'The Making of Mahler's "Todtenfeier": A Documentary and Analytical Study' by Stephen E. Hefling (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1985) and Stephen E. Hefling, 'Mahler's "Todtenfeier" and the Problem of Program Music', *19th Century Music*, 13 (1988), 27–53.

⁵ Several studies exist for the sketches and drafts for the Third Symphony: Susan M. Filler, 'Editorial Problems in Symphonies of Gustav Mahler: A Study of the Sources of the Third and Tenth' (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1976), esp. 20–369; Edward R. Reilly, 'A Re-examination of the Manuscripts of Mahler's Third Symphony', in *Colloque International Gustav Mahler* (Paris: Association Gustav Mahler, 1986), 62–72; Peter Franklin, 'The Gestation of Mahler's Third Symphony', *Music and Letters*, 58 (1977), 439–46; and John Williamson, 'Mahler's Compositional Process: Reflections on an Early Sketch for the Third Symphony's First Movement', *Music and Letters*, 61 (1980), 338–45.

⁶ Quoted by Williamson, 'Mahler's Compositional Process', 338. The passage is found in Peter Andraschke, *Gustav Mahlers IX. Symphonie: Kompositionsprozess und Analyse* (Beihefte zum Archiv für Musikwissenschaft, 14; Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1976), 1.

1. First ideas for a work, sometimes jotted down in pocket notebooks.
2. Preliminary sketches, exploring the possibilities of developing and combining different themes or motifs, and, in some cases, pointing to the sequence in which they will ultimately appear. These were usually written in a reduced score of from two to four staves, and sometimes contain limited indications of plans for scoring.
3. Preliminary drafts, in which the basic sequence of musical thought for a full movement, or a substantial portion of the movement, is laid out, most often in a short or condensed score of four staves, and with fuller indications of scoring. Additional sketches connected with specific passages in the draft may also be found associated with this phase and the two that follow.
4. Draft full scores, in which the instrumentation of one or more movements is worked out in some detail, but not necessarily filled in completely. Modifications of melody, harmony, and other elements are also found.
5. 'Final' autograph full score, in a relatively fair copy, with scoring more or less completely worked out in detail, but still with the possibility of significant modifications. The latter are usually incorporated through the substitution of individual pages with revisions for those originally included.⁷

As to the terminology used in the present study, it is useful to elaborate on the paradigm outlined above. First ideas involve early plans of movements, which include descriptive titles and key designations. It is difficult to ascertain with absolute certainty when these early plans occurred in the composition of a work, since Mahler used them before beginning to compose and also returned to such lists while completing various movements. As to sketchbooks, which also contain first ideas, Mahler was observed using them for this work,⁸ but none with material for the Fourth Symphony is known to survive.

After pursuing early ideas in plans of movements and in his sketchbooks, Mahler would take up the preliminary sketches in which he would work on more extensive passages of the new work. This stage can be difficult to define because of the varying degree of detail that was worked out before the short score. Nevertheless, preliminary sketches usually are found on large-size paper (in contrast to the smaller sketchbook pages), often a single leaf torn from a bifolio sheet, with the number of staves for each system variable and the music relatively discontinuous. When Mahler took these sketches into the next stage of work, he would number them in the order he wanted them to occur in the movement, and so the numbers inscribed on the extant sheets do not necessarily reflect the order in which he composed them.

⁷ Edward R. Reilly, 'An Inventory of Musical Sources', *News about Mahler Research*, 2 (1977), 3.

⁸ Natalie Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen an Gustav Mahler*, ed., and annotated Knud Martner (Hamburg: Karl Dieter Wagner, 1984), 61; English trans., *Recollections of Gustav Mahler*, ed. and annotated Peter Franklin, trans. Dika Newlin (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 64–5. For an overview of Mahler's sketchbooks, see James L. Zychowicz, 'Sketches and Drafts of Gustav Mahler', 183–212.

Next, Mahler prepared the short score or *Particell*, which he composed on the same kind of paper as he used for preliminary sketches. In general, the short score is a comparatively continuous draft inscribed throughout on three- to four-stave systems. While it was still subject to revision, the short score represents a continuous draft of the entire movement for a symphony rather than the kind of isolated passages found earlier in the preliminary sketches. Unlike the earlier sketches, however, Mahler achieved in the short score the kind of uniformity and continuity that is absent from earlier sketches.

After the short score, Mahler would compose the draft score (*Partitur-entwurf*), the first orchestral score, written on a series of bifolios. The music is completely continuous and fully orchestrated in this phase of composition. He sometimes even substituted pages at this stage, and it is common to find alterations in the form of an intermittent insertion page (often marked 'Einlage' and sometimes followed by the manuscript page to which it refers). At times, he might even revise the form of movements at this phase of composition. After completing the draft score, he would proceed to the fair copy (*Reinschrift*), that is the autograph full score. While Mahler usually inscribed the draft score on oblong (*Querformat*) sheets like those used for the preliminary sketches and the short score, he generally composed the fair copy on upright (*Hochformat*) sheets of higher-quality paper.

In general, Mahler brought the details necessary for performance into the fair copy, and would even revise this manuscript at various points before the publication of the work. Yet the refinement of details did not end with the published score, and extended throughout his life. To identify Mahler's revisions after the completion of the fair copy, the principles suggested by Reilly provide the basis for this survey, continuing the numbering used above:

6. Copyists' manuscripts (frequently identified by the German term *Stichvorlage*), with autograph corrections by Mahler, prepared as a basis for the engraver of the score.

7. Printers' proofs with autograph corrections and modifications.

8. Printed score with revisions marked by Mahler, or by a copyist for him. Such revisions appear to form an intermediate stage before a new edition was actually undertaken.

9. Printed scores with revisions, used or intended as the basis for a new edition of a work.⁹

A distinction exists between copyists' manuscripts and what Reilly calls *Stichvorlage*. The latter are technically printers' proofs but in Mahler's case they can also apply to copyists' manuscripts. In addition, to this list may be

⁹ Reilly, 'An Inventory', 4.

added orchestral parts that Mahler corrected in the performance of his works. In some cases such sets of orchestral parts have not survived, and those that exist do not always contain revisions. While an original orchestral part might contain a number of corrections, not all of them may be Mahler's or even from his time.

The sources after the fair copy differ significantly from the earlier sketches. For the most part, the earlier manuscripts show Mahler writing for himself, where he would be as explicit as he needed. An earlier sketch often served as an aide-mémoire for the composer himself and did not need to contain all the detail that he would add later. On the other hand, Mahler intended his later corrections for others, specifically other conductors and, ultimately, his publisher. These refinements took the work to a more finished form, as he became more precise with the instrumentation and expression of the music in the score.

Sketches for the Fourth Symphony

Except for sketchbooks,¹⁰ manuscripts from every stage of composition exist for the Fourth Symphony, as shown in Table 1.1. While some manuscripts are probably lost, enough materials exist to suggest the evolution of the work from the preliminary sketches, to the short score, draft score, and the fair copy of the symphony. As such, these documents provide a rare glimpse of the composer as he worked through each stage of composition for a work that reportedly had a difficult genesis.

An analysis of the extant sketches for the Fourth Symphony makes it possible to gain a clearer idea of how Mahler approached composition as the work took shape from fragmentary to more continuous ideas, and grew from one- and two-line sketches to full score. In proceeding from one phase of composition to another, he shaped his ideas and gave them continuity. It is often possible to find resemblances with the completed work even in the preliminary sketches, but the differences lie in detail rather than substance.

For Mahler, each stage of composition was a means of giving increasingly clearer shape to a work. In taking his ideas from the preliminary sketches to the short score, he did not change the substance of the music as much as elaborate on it, and this included adding transitions and developing textures that he had not pursued earlier. The differences at this stage of composition include passages that he either chose not to use or those he added later, once he saw the work in its fuller form. Thus the short score contains various insertions found on the bottoms of pages, or as separate leaves and inserted at various points.

¹⁰ For a discussion about the nature of Mahler's sketchbooks, see Zychowicz, "Sketches and Drafts of Gustav Mahler", 183–212.

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TABLE 1.1. *Sketches for Mahler's Fourth Symphony*

Stage of Composition	Location	Comments
First ideas: verbal plan	US-CIpl, Fine Arts Collection	Plan for a six-movement 'Symphonie Humoreske' (Symphonic Humoresque)
First ideas: sketchbooks (<i>Skizzenbücher</i>)	None extant	Despite Bauer-Lechner's allusions to their existence, any sketchbooks that Mahler used for the Fourth Symphony are no longer extant
Preliminary sketches (<i>Vorentwürfe</i>)	US-STu, MLM 8, 633	Single-page sketch for part of first-movement exposition
	CH-COBodmeriana	Single-page sketch for the first-movement development section
	US-Cn, Case MS Vm 1001 M21 S4	Two pages of sketches for the first-movement development section
	Private source	Two pages of sketches for the first-movement development section
	A-Wigmg	Single-page sketch for the recapitulation
	A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 39.745	Sketches for the second movement (complete set)
Short score (<i>Particell</i>)	US-NYpm	Single-page sketch for the third-movement second theme
	A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 4366	Single-page sketch for the 'Presto' variation (recto)
	Private source	Short score for the third movement (complete manuscript) Short score for the first-movement exposition
Draft score (<i>Partiturentwurf</i>)	A-Wigmg	Bifolios 2, 3, and 5 for the first movement
	A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 30.898	Insertion page ('Einlage') for bifolio 10 of the first movement
	C-Lu	Fair-copy-like draft for the second-movement opening
	A-Wn, Mus. Hs. 4366	Insertion page ('Einlage') for bifolio 5 of the third movement (verso)
	F-Pbmgm	Bifolio 7 of the third movement
Fair copy (<i>Reinschrift</i>)	A-Wgm, MS XIII.35824	

Even at this point Mahler was not yet finished with refining the detail of a work like the Fourth. As he took the short score into the draft score, he realized in the latter his notes on scoring from the various earlier sketches where he delineated the instrumentation. With each part written out as a separate line, the draft score resembles the fair copy, except for its physical appearance in oblong format (*Querformat*). Mahler would revise the draft score when he took it into the fair copy, which is always in upright format (*Hochformat*). Yet

these two kinds of score are closely related, with an almost note-for-note correspondence between the draft score and fair copy, and when they occur, differences are insubstantial. The final measures of the third movement, for example, are slightly shorter in the draft score than in his later revision, as he lengthened the notated passage to allow the movement to conclude appropriately for its segue into the Finale.

Even later in the fair copy, Mahler was not always content to leave the music unmodified. A page of a fair-copy Mahler manuscript may contain a number of revisions in pencil inscribed over the inked layer, and sometimes even these have been superseded by other markings in blue pencil (the *Blau-stift* that he often used to revise manuscripts) to reflect yet another level of work. He would sometimes cross out a stave and substitute another version above or below it. Similarly, he would sometimes divide otherwise evenly rastered bars and insert additional music in the fair copy.

From the earliest sketches to the fair copy Mahler's critical judgement took him from rough outlines to clearer detail, such that the content of the music and its presentation in the orchestration often merged. As early as the preliminary sketches he would indicate a desired instrument or articulation, and retain that detail in the finished work. This kind of association with timbre early in the compositional process is critical to understanding Mahler's often solid conception of his music as he worked out the detail, not the substance of a work, in the various stages of sketches. As he took his ideas into more advanced drafts, he was meticulous about what some have termed secondary parameters,¹¹ which include orchestration, doublings, barring, dynamics, phrase markings, etc. Such concern for detail extends beyond the preparation of the fair copy, to encompass printers' proofs and even later revisions of the published score.

In the latter his changes reflect his rethinking of certain places based on the practical experience of performances, as well as development as a composer. For Mahler this was an ongoing process: on 8 February 1911, several months before his death, when he referred to his latest revision on the Fifth Symphony, he confessed to the conductor Georg Göhler that 'it had to be almost completely reorchestrated. . . I simply can't understand why I still had to make such mistakes, like the merest beginner.'¹² Assuredly, Mahler was not completely finished with revising the Fifth Symphony—or even the Fourth—at that time. Had he lived longer, he probably would have returned to both of them and possibly pursued further modifications. For Mahler, the accumulated knowledge and experience as a composer and a conductor

¹¹ Robert G. Hopkins, *Closure and Mahler's Music: The Role of Secondary Parameters* (Studies in the Criticism and Theory of Music; Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 1–3.

¹² Gustav Mahler, *Briefe*, ed. Herta Blaukopf (Vienna: Zsolnay, 1982), 403–4; *Selected Letters of Gustav Mahler*, ed. Knud Martner, trans. Eithne Wilkins, Ernst Kaiser, and Bill Hopkins (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1979), 372.

allowed him to enhance the presentation of his music in the revisions he made years after completing the fair copy.

The Fourth Symphony among Mahler's Works

In considering his position on revisions late in life, Mahler's comments about the Fifth Symphony may be applied to the Fourth, which exists in a fair copy that he revised, and corrections he made on the first published edition. In addition, he returned to the Fourth at least twice more afterwards. While Mahler is known for the degree to which he revised his works after publication, the scrutiny extended to the Fourth can be attributed to two factors: (i) while the initial reception of the symphony was not completely unfavourable, the public and the critics did not seem to understand the music as Mahler intended it;¹³ and (ii) the work itself contains elements that reflect a change in style from his earlier symphonies, particularly the Second, and he wanted to make certain that the differences came through clearly. Even later in his life Mahler was aware of a style change around the time of the Fourth. In commenting about the Fifth Symphony in the letter to Göhler cited above, he also states that 'it is clear that all the experience I had gained in writing the first four symphonies completely let me down in this one—for a completely new style demanded a new technique'.¹⁴

In some ways, the 'new technique' Mahler applied to the Fifth Symphony has its roots in the Fourth, which already differs in style from the first three symphonies. The Fourth Symphony comes at the end of his 'Wunderhorn' period, the time during which he composed the Second and Third Symphonies, as well as many of his settings from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.¹⁵ With this symphony Mahler moved from the world of his earlier works and began to compose music that did not rely on explicit programmes, such as the detailed ones he wrote for the Second Symphony, or even the Third, for which two of the six movements even have sung texts and the Scherzo has its basis in the song 'Ablösung im Sommer'. Mahler also gave each movement of the Third a title and, in one score, even made programmatic comments above certain places in the music.¹⁶ In contrast to the Third Symphony, the Fourth lacks any kind of explicit and published programme, and the only sung text occurs in the Song-Finale 'Das himmlische Leben'.

The Fourth Symphony also exhibits a different approach to texture that seems to anticipate some aspects of the later symphonies. As Hans Redlich

¹³ Bauer-Lechner, *Erinnerungen*, 210–14; *Recollections*, 182–5.

¹⁴ Mahler, *Briefe*, 404; *Selected Letters*, 372.

¹⁵ Donald Mitchell examines this phase of Mahler's work in *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years—Chronicles and Commentaries* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1976; repr. Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1980).

¹⁶ These annotations occur in the fair copy currently among the holdings of the Pierpont Morgan Library, Lehmann Deposit. Filler discusses this source in 'Editorial Problems', 170–2.

stated in his study of Bruckner and Mahler, ‘despite its affinity with the preceding *Wunderborn* symphonies, it [the Fourth] stands at the crossroads . . . its musical idiom already shows the first-fruits of a remarkably self-critical process of contrapuntal discipline and structural logic’.¹⁷ While this is evident in a comparison of the Fourth with his other, earlier symphonies, it also differs from the previous symphonies in its scoring for a much smaller orchestra. In contrast to the Second and Third Symphonies, the Fourth shows a tendency towards purer tone colours, a characteristic that results from the thinner textures used throughout the work. This also anticipates some of the chamber-music sonorities of the later works, such as *Das Lied von der Erde*.

‘Das himmlische Leben’ and the Fourth Symphony

The song ‘Das himmlische Leben’ (1892), which Mahler had composed almost a decade earlier, is at once the source and goal of the Fourth Symphony. After attempting for years to include the song in a large-scale work, Mahler conceived the Fourth Symphony with ‘Das himmlische Leben’ at its core. Elements of the song pervade the symphony, with motifs from it found in the three movements which precede ‘Das himmlische Leben’. Because of this, any history of the Fourth Symphony must include an examination of the Song-Finale ‘Das himmlische Leben’. As shown in Table 1.2, the inclusion of this song in a study of the Fourth extends the history of the symphony back to 1892, when Mahler set a text from the anthology *Des Knaben Wunderborn*, ‘Der Himmel hängt voll Geigen’ (‘The world through rose-coloured glasses’).

‘Das himmlische Leben’ was originally part of a set of 5 *Humoresken* for voice and orchestra, one of the earliest settings that he made from *Des Knaben Wunderborn*. Mahler did not include ‘Das himmlische Leben’ among his sets of *Wunderbornlieder*, but considered using the song as the final movement of the Third Symphony. Towards such an end he made thematic connections

TABLE 1.2. *Manuscripts of ‘Das himmlische Leben’*

Manuscript	Location	Comments
6 <i>Wunderbornlieder</i>	D-B	Piano draft of the song, dated 10 Feb. 1892
5 <i>Humoresken</i>	A-Wgm	Orchestral draft of the song, dated 12 Mar. 1892
[‘Das himmlische Leben’]	Private owner, location unknown	‘Intermediary’ copyist’s manuscript with corrections in Mahler’s hand
Symphony No. 4	A-Wgm, MS XIII.35824	Fourth Symphony, movement four (fair copy)

¹⁷ H. F. Redlich, *Bruckner and Mahler* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons. Ltd., 1955; rev. edn., London: Dent, 1963), 193.

between movements of this symphony and the song, as may be seen in the sketches for an instrumental variation of the song in the first movement.¹⁸

Eventually Mahler decided not to use 'Das himmlische Leben' in the Third, and instead planned a six-movement Fourth Symphony subtitled 'Humoreske'; as in some of the plans for the Third, he intended to use this song as the final movement. He did not pursue this *Symphonic Humoresque* according to the plan, but proceeded to compose the Fourth Symphony with 'Das himmlische Leben' as its point of departure in composition and point of arrival in the work itself.

Plan of this Study

The present study of Mahler's creative process in the Fourth Symphony involves an examination of each stage of composition and the relevant manuscripts for it. While not all the materials for the symphony have survived, enough exist to give a clear idea of the systematic process Mahler used when he composed this work. In terms of methodology, I have adopted the framework cited above that Edward R. Reilly proposed for his catalogue in progress of Mahler manuscripts, and which I subsequently employed in my own work. By using such a framework it is possible to appreciate how Mahler approached the composition of symphonic music, which emerged in greater detail at each phase.

As a point of departure, the present study includes an exploration of the structure of the Fourth Symphony, which extends from the essential musical forms to structural processes at the core of the music. In addition, it is important to understand the gestation of the Fourth Symphony from the time when Mahler composed the song 'Das himmlische Leben' and intended to use it in a large-scale work. Those efforts, although unrealized, are essential to understanding the place of that song in the completed Fourth Symphony. The impulse to undertake a work with 'Das himmlische Leben' at its core took root in the Fourth Symphony, which Mahler began at a time when he found it difficult to compose.

In terms of the actual genesis of the Fourth Symphony, each chapter of the present study concerns a discrete phase of work, from early ideas as found in the six-movement plan for the *Symphonic Humoresque*, to the extant preliminary sketches, the short score, the draft score, and the fair copy. While all materials before the completion of the fair copy could be regarded simply as sketches, Mahler's strategy in composition resulted in various kinds of manuscripts. It is as though he composed the music in layers, from fragmentary ideas that suggest the outlines of the longer work to increasingly continuous and detailed sketches. Thus, the short score differs qualitatively from the

¹⁸ Williamson, 'Mahler's Compositional Process', 338–40.

sketches that preceded it, and the draft score reveals yet another level of complexity that took Mahler closer to the fair copy of the Fourth.

By exploring the Fourth Symphony from the inside, so to speak, it is possible to gain a different view of the work than occurs in the analyses of the music that treat the work as a single, almost static conception. Mahler's ideas about the Fourth developed gradually, and he also allowed his later ideas about this symphony to emerge in the revisions he took up at various times after the publication of the work. The idea of a single text for the Fourth blurs in terms of this manuscript study, which involves a survey of the autograph corrections Mahler left for the score. The attempts of various editors to deal with the resulting choices has left the Fourth in a difficult state. From the perspective of compositional process, it may be that the current ideas about editing Mahler's music may have to give way to approaches that take into consideration the origins of the music. Only then will the resulting score reflect more comprehensively the composer's intentions in bringing the work to completion.

Most importantly, Mahler's sketches are particularly rich documents that diverge in detail, rather than substance, from the completed work. Several sketches reveal places where he considered multiple approaches to a passage, and at some point he chose one or another solution or later found some other way to handle a difficult transition. From the perspective of the completed work the choices sometimes seem obvious, yet Mahler had to determine for himself the compositional alternatives as he proceeded through each phase of the creative process.

As much as the extant sketches reveal the richness of the composer's thought at these points, one can only wonder about the content of the sketches that are no longer extant and the ones Mahler himself destroyed en route to completing a masterful work like the Fourth Symphony. As with other creative artists who worked so diligently at bringing their work to completion, it is possible only to wonder at the many possibilities.