

Mahlerian Quotations, Thematic Dramaturgy, and Sonata Form in the First Movement of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony

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Abstract

Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 4 (1936) is broadly considered to be the most "Mahlerian" of his symphonies. The reasons for this range from its size, instrumentation, and use of folk idioms to Mahler allusions and quotations distributed throughout. The author proposes a reading of Symphony No. 4's first movement that links its Mahler quotations and allusions, thematic dramaturgy, and formal design. She also reconsiders Symphony No. 4's thematic and formal processes in the light of Mahler's First Symphony and Sonata Theory. In light of several correspondences, Shostakovich IV/i seems to quote Mahler I/iv quoting Mahler I/i; both Shostakovich IV/i and Mahler I/iv allude to the same referential movement, Mahler I/i, at similar locations within sonata space. Thematic quotations, *Durchbruch* events (from Mahler I/iv's development), and formal correspondences between Shostakovich IV/i and Mahler I/iv also illuminate larger notions of thwarted thematic expectations within sonata-form frameworks. Linking Shostakovich's thematic processes with Sonata Theory and rotational principles illuminates the thematic and formal consequences of the secondary theme's fragmented origins and provides a way of connecting this to both the form and content of Mahler's First Symphony.