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THE

ORCHESTRAL MUSIC OF SIBELIUS

Vol. I.

(TEXT)

by

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY,

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ABSTRACT

A study of the published orchestral music of Sibelius and its stylistic development. This study suggests the presence of an essentially tonal evolution in the symphonies, largely stated in basically straight-forward musical terms, and frequently cadential in origin. It also suggests that the energy for these tonal evolutions arises from the exploration of certain ambivalent features and procedures; and further, that these tonal evolutions give rise to a considerable number (and variety) of formal innovations even though, as a whole, the symphonies of Sibelius show a frequent reliance on a relatively few characteristic procedures and ingredients.

The results of this survey also show that the orchestral colouring itself directly contributes to the tonal argument of the symphonies and, additionally, that certain of the symphonic movements represent more of a unique achievement than has formerly been recognised.

This study also traces the gradual development and increasingly vital use of 'pace' (that is, of pulse, speed, harmonic rhythm, and changes of tonality) as a constructive factor in the symphonies and tone poems. The distinction and relationship between these two important areas of Sibelius's orchestral music (for the theatre music and other compositions stand somewhat apart in this respect) is examined and leads to the conclusion that, with some notable exceptions, the tone-poems are largely concerned with the vagaries of tonality, and its establishment, though their original conception was in some measure due to a programmatic inspiration.

With regard to the theatre music and other orchestral compositions,

the results of this study suggest that Sibelius was (frequently) creatively inhibited by the fundamental and inherent small-scale characteristic of these works; in contrast, the inclusion of a solo instrument would appear to offset this limitation and indeed to give rise to some small-scale compositions of distinction.

The influence of Finnish folk music (and speech) is also discussed.

THE

ORCHESTRAL

MUSIC

OF

SIBELIUS

CORRIGENDA

P.3, foot-note: for 'of the entire work' read 'of each movement'.

P.19, line 12: for 'With the best bluest stockings.....'
read"With the very bluest stockings.....'

P.84, line 9: for 'largely maintains' read 'clearly suggest'.

P.90, 6th line up: for 'sterilisation' read 'sterility'.

Passim: for 'absorbtion' read 'absorption'.

Passim: for 'propellor' read 'propeller'.

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PREFACE

In an attempt to do justice to the subject of this study I have found it necessary to refer the reader to an unusually large number of musical examples and, in order that these may be more conveniently available, they have (for the most part) been bound separately in Volume 2. Details of the orchestral scores referred to in the text will be found in the catalogue of orchestral works on page 458.

It is at this time my pleasant duty publicly to thank my supervisor, Mr.F.S.Mumby, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Music, University of Leeds, for his patient and unstinting help throughout the duration of this study. His comments, queries, and explanations in our many hours of discussion were always extremely stimulating and enjoyable and presented with unfailing courtesy; in spite of the demands of his own research interests he was never less than helpful and always more than kind. However I hasten to add that the faults and shortcomings of the results of this study remain entirely 'all my own work'.

My thanks are also due to my friends andcolleagues at Bradford, not least to Mr.W.Iles Pulford - who was always ready to listen to my ideas and discuss them with me - and to Mrs.Brenda Hiscock for her patient translations of my own much-amended typescript into such a presentable version.

Finally I must thank Margaret, my wife, for her loving encouragement and support for my undertaking this study from the very beginning.

Stuart Collins
Bradford, March 1973.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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It would not be surprising if future generations were to regard the period 1890 - 1930 as one of the most significant in history - and especially in politics, science, and the arts. In music these turbulent years witnessed the 'official' revolution of Schoenberg, experiments with microtones (notably by Haba), and the use of polytonality (particularly by Milhaud) as well as the development of the techniques associated with Hindemith and Bartok. And these same years also include the (entire) orchestral compositions of Sibelius.

Jean Sibelius was born in 1865 and died in 1957: his first (published) orchestral work, 'Kullervo', was written in 1892 (i.e.the year before Dvorak wrote the 'New World' Symphony and Verdi wrote 'Falstaff', two years before Debussy wrote the 'Prelude') while his last significant orchestral composition, the incidental music to 'The Tempest' was written in 1926 (one year before the composition of Bartoks 3rd String Quartet - and the birth of Boulez).

But Sibelius remained largely untouched by the ideas and techniques mentioned above, and his work gave rise to no 'school' of composers; yet in the years 1930 - 50 there grew up what has been described as a Sibelius 'cult', and during this time the understanding and appreciation of Sibelius's music was encouraged by the appearance of his biography by Ekman [1] and later (in this country) by the critical studies of Gray[2]. and Abraham[3]. Since then the cult has disappeared, though a further (re)assessment of Sibelius's compositions has been undertaken by a 'second generation' of Sibelian scholars while the research of Harold E.Johnson[4].

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1. Karl Ekman: Jean Sibelius, his life and personality; Tudor Publ.Co., Tudor edition 1946.
2. Cecil Gray: Sibelius The Symphonies; 'Musical Pilgrim' series, O.U.P. 1935.
3. Gerald Abraham (Ed.): Sibelius A Symposium; O.U.P. 1952.
4. Harold E.Johnson: Sibelius; Faber and Faber, 1960.

has provided a detailed biographical and factual background against which the compositions of Sibelius may be seen, and which (as with Op.22) directly relates to the music itself.

But even though the reassessment of Sibelius's orchestral compositions has been detailed and careful there is still room for doubt and questioning: thus although Constant Lambert writing of the 6th Symphony (as early as 1934) suggested that "future commentators may find its intimate quality more indicative of the true Sibelius"[1]. the actual analysis and demonstration of its peculiarly Sibelian qualities has not, so far, been very convincing.

The reasons for the 'failure' of this demonstration are important since they question the validity of previous assessments and analyses (- the more so since several writers have drawn particular attention to (i) the strength of Sibelius's large-scale designs, and (ii) his 'formal innovations'); and the point is not merely 'academic' since the symphonic character of the 7th Symphony has been questioned, while 'Tapiola' (a tone poem) has been called 'a symphony in all but name'. Indeed Robert Simpson sums up the situation when he writes (of the 7th Symphony) that "failure to understand what Sibelius had been hitherto consistently developing is the only reason for failure to grasp the design of the Seventh Symphony". Simpson's argument rests on the importance of a tonal evolution, and he points out that "Cecil Gray.....like so many writers.....let himself be side-tracked by the obviousness and immediacy of themes. These may often be the first thing one notices in music, but they should not be the last".[2].

Thus already two very considerable questions concerning (the appraisal of) Sibelius's orchestral compositions arise: first, just what had been 'consistently developing' - i.e.what is the essence of

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1. Constant Lambert: Music Ho! ; Pelican books, 1948, p.236.
2. Robert Simpson: Sibelius and Nielsen. A Centenary Essay; B.B.C. 1965, p.33.

Sibelius's musical thought, and what are the elements that carry it, and secondly, how far is the design and function of the symphonies (and other large-scale works) dependant upon a 'large-scale rhythmic tonality'? Sibelius is a tonal composer; yet few scholars have attempted to show the relevance of this statement to Sibelius's compositions (although there has been a very considerable degree of interest in his thematic evolutions), and this neglect of the (essential) tonal evolutions in Sibelius's compositions is the more surprising since it is frequently claimed (by his admirers) that Sibelius is 'the greatest symphonist since the death of Beethoven'.[1.]

Further since both the Seventh Symphony and Tapiola have been questioned as to their respective identities, what then is the critical musical distinction between the Symphony and the symphonic poem in Sibelius's creative conception?[2.]

It is quite possible that some answers to these questions will emerge if the symphonies and symphonic poems are considered (i) in analytical detail, (ii) in chronological order of composition, and (iii) if the relationship between these two main aread of Sibelius's orchestral music is observed. In previous writings these two main areas have frequently been considered separately, with the result that 'advances' in technique or musical thought itself, have been restricted to that within the symphonies or that within the tone poems. But it is quite possible that their creative imagination is interactive, for certainly there appears to be a prima facie case for the suggestion that the symphonic/tone poems are (each) linked - in either ideas or technique -

areas!

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1. And who to-day would write of the 'Eroica' Symphony without mentioning tonality? - yet it is possible to find (without much difficulty) at least two analyses of, for example, the 6th Symphony, which apart from an introductory mention, fail to take account of the tonal evolutions of the entire work!
2. The question is also intriguing because (generally speaking) the composers of symphonies do not make the best composers of symphonic poems: Strauss excelled in the latter, but wrote no great symphonies, while Liszt's 'Faust' Symphony is an exceptional work; conversely neither Bruckner nor Mahler wrote symphonic poems.

with a particular symphony: 'En Saga', for example, seems to reflect (and explore further) certain ideas from the First Symphony, and the fact that Sibelius chose to revise 'En Saga' - after a break of 11 years - so soon after the composition of the First Symphony prompts the intriguing question "is this fact musically significant?"

But so far only the large-scale works of Sibelius have been mentioned, and there is the (paradoxical) fact that in small-scale works - often using material and procedures similar to those employed in the large scale works - Sibelius frequently appears unable to achieve comparably valuable results; thus although there is clear evidence that Sibelius could compose 'masterpieces in miniature' there is also the fact that the suites of Incidental music (that span his creative career) are unequal in imagination and invention - sometimes within the same suite.

Further to this, Sibelius is himself quoted as describing certain pieces - the 'Humoresques' for Violin and Orchestra - as 'large size': yet none of them takes more than 5 minutes to perform and their most ardent admirers make no claim as to their emotional depths. Why then did Sibelius so describe them? Sibelius's use of other similar titles (e.g. Musette, Gavotte, Serenade) was accurate: does this description, therefore, have an important musical basis - perhaps with regard to tonality?

Conversely while the tonal evolutions of Sibelius's compositions appears to have been overlooked, the orchestral characteristics have been described in some detail. But while there can be no doubt that Sibelius's music is 'grown on the orchestra' - and that his piano music frequently sounds like a piano reduction of an orchestral score - the

particular reasons for the strength of the orchestral music, and the interplay between orchestral colour (and texture) and the functions of design has rarely been shown: and there are several intriguing and important questions to be answered - for example, is Sibelius's frequent use of the Gran cassa 'con bacchette di timpani' (either on its own, or in addition to timpani merely a personal idiosyncrasy or is it musically functional? Is it merely orchestral colour or part of the musical thought itself?

And what of Sibelius and Finnish music (and culture) ? Arthur Hutchings remarked (as recently as 1968) that Sibelius "is not known ever to have used his native folk-song or dance except by direct acknowledgement, and western researchers have still to demonstrate how his own musical ideas are indebted to his native legacy."[1]. It is now possible to suggest that this indebtedness can be seen to more advantage if critical attention is directed to the resemblances of behaviour (rather than contour) between Sibelius's melodic style and that of Finnish folk song and runo melodies: for example, it can be suggested (with some persuasive evidence) that the following theme from the Fourth Symphony :

Ex.1



is not only clearly Sibelian, but has its roots in (and is related to) Finnish folk-music.[2].

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1. Arthur Hutchings: The Pelican History of Music, Vol.3 (Edited: Robertson and Stevens) Penguin Books 1968, p.198.

2. Although a separate chapter explores this relationship, it is only a 'basis' and the continuing development of the suggestions contained therein is left to the reader to pursue for himself through the subsequent music quotations.

Thus, even so far, it is clear that there is room and need for a further study of Sibelius's orchestral works; in particular it seems necessary to attempt to discover the essence of Sibelius's musical thought and the elements that carry it, to explore the development of his tonal evolutions and their part in both large and small-scale designs, to study his formal 'innovations', to explore the (interactive) relationship between the two main aread of the orchestral music - the symphonies and symphonic poems (and to take account of certain other works - the Violin Concerto and the 'Humoresques'), to enquire into the musical functions of orchestral colours, and to consider the basis of a significant relationship between Sibelius and Finnish music.

In this thesis the analysis and comment on the orchestral compositions is undertaken in the chronological order of the works themselves, since although there were certain attractions in the possible presentation of separate chapters each dealing with one particular aspect of Sibelius's musical thought, one of the most fascinating features of his musical thinking (and which will emerge with increasing strength) is the number of ideas that seem to be developing simultaneously, and 'in concert'.

In the eventual assessment of Sibelius's orchestral compositions, it becomes clear that Sibelius thought directly and with purposeful creative imagination in large-scale designs, and the first work to be considered, 'Kullervo', is an impressively large work (lasting over an hour in performance) wherein there is a teeming imagination and an almost boundless creative musical energy.

CHAPTER 2

KULLERVO

CHAPTER 2

'Kullervo', Op.7, a tone-poem in five movements, remained in manuscript until 1958 when financial pressures caused Sibelius to allow its publication.[3] It was first performed, with great success, in April 1892, though Sibelius had begun to sketch it in the winter of 1890-1 (in Vienna) about a year after having met Robert Kajanus and heard his 'Aino' Symphony. Ekman relates[1] the impact of this event through the words of Sibelius himself :

> "Acquaintance with this work was of thrilling importance to me. It opened my eyes to the wonderful opportunities the 'Kalevala' offered for musical expression. Earlier attempts to interpret the national epos in music had not encouraged imitation. And the environment in which I had grown up was as far removed from the 'Kalevala' as possible. My mother and my Swedish grandmother had loved poetry of a very different kind and had aroused my liking for it. In my youth the 'Kalevala' was not the educational equipment of every home in Finland as it became later. Nevertheless, I remember that the Kullervo myth occupied my imagination at school. After hearing Kajanus's 'Aino' symphony the thought of creating a work myself with a subject chosen from our national epos began to occupy my fancy more and more."

This quotation is important since it shows that Sibelius was aware of the 'Kalevala' as a youth; moreover in the autumn of 1890 Sibelius became engaged to Aino Järnefelt, and through his future brothers-in-law became a member of what Ekman calls the 'Päivälehti' circle - 'Päivälehti' was a newspaper around which young authors and artists gathered united in a desire for patriotic revival, and taking the inspiration for their art "from the source of Finnish nationalistic enthusiasm"[2].

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1. Ekman, op.cit., pp.88 - 9
2. Ekman, op.cit., p.108
3. In fact Sibelius had parted with the manuscript - to the Kalevala Society - after the First World War; and, according to Layton, both Ringbom and Tavaststjerna speak of having seen it in print.

'Kullervo' is a work which (in spite of Sibelius's reservations[1]) now needs to be considered in any serious appraisal of Sibelius's orchestral works since it is one of his earliest (and unrevised) compositions available in print; it is thus a unique example of his early orchestral music, displaying both his musical inheritance and the genesis (of many) of what were to become his peculiar and unique musical ideas and techniques.

According to the miniature score this work is scored for 2 flutes, 3 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba,

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1. These reservations may be outlined thus :

(i) After the initial success of 'Kullervo' - 4 performances in one year - the score was withdrawn and it was not again performed in its entirety during Sibelius's lifetime.

(ii) When the closing bars (Kullervo's Lament) of the third movement was performed at the 1957 Sibelius Festival, Sibelius "exacted assurances that it would be designated on the official programme as dating from 1892". (Johnson op.cit., p.54)

(iii) Cecil Gray wrote that Sibelius was "not entirely satisfied with the work as it stands, and while admitting that he might conceivably be able to remedy the more outstanding defects by rewriting it here and there, he is nevertheless disinclined to do so, being of the opinion that the faults and imperfections of the work are often so intimately bound up with its very nature, that an attempt to rectify them without impairing it as a whole must almost inevitably fail". (Gray: Sibelius; O.U.P.1934, pp.69-70)

timpani, triangle, cymbals, and strings;[1] it also requires Soprano and Baritone soloists, together with a male voice chorus.

The whole conception of this composition is concerned with the story of Kullervo (a tragic hero whose adventures are related in Runos '31-6 of 'Kalevala') and of the work's five movements three are for orchestra only. But the remaining two movements for soloists, chorus, and orchestra, are not without bearing on Sibelius's purely orchestral music since his setting of the 'Kalevala' words appear to parallel some feature of the runo melodies. These features will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

'Kullervo' is thus both epic and orchestral, and although these two states are not necessarily contradictory, it is perhaps significant that Sibelius has simply entitled the first movement 'Introduction', for there can be no doubt - to us - that this first movement is the finest of the work.

The 'Introduction' is a symphonic first movement in E minor (the key-centre of the complete work) cast in a sonata design of heroic proportions; as an entity the movement combines features of the Romantic symphony with some characteristics found in Finnish folksong and runo melodies, though both are bound together into a unified whole and dominated by a forceful personal and creative orchestral imagination.

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1. The '3 oboes' are in fact 2 oboes and Cor anglais, but the listing of '2 clarinets' is intriguing since the last movement clearly lists 'clarinetti' and 'Bass.clar.': the clarinet part, however, is in unison throughout.

The exposition is a noteworthy achievement, for not only does it present the main ideas of the movement in a clear and enjoyable manner it also clearly anticipates a number of typically 'Sibelian' procedures and characteristics, and it is therefore worth examining in some detail. The main outlines of the exposition may be sketched as follows :

Bar/Page (or Letter)	Theme		Key	Ex.No.
Page 1	A1	in two sentences, finishing at Letter A,	E minor	2
A	A1	repeated with an additional sentence,	E minor	-
B		Transition		
Page 6 Bar 11	B1	Transition theme/second subject	dominant of B minor	3
D	B2	Second subject (mainly B1 in diminution)	B minor	4
F	B2		B major	-
H+9[1]	C1	Codetta		5
K		Development section begins in E-flat minor		-

The first main theme, A1, is a considerable melody of verve and freshness; it is characterised by some modal colouring, D- and C-natural, while its rhythm displays one particular feature that will later be seen to occur frequently in Finnish folk-music and runo melodies. The vitality of this theme carries it forward without a break to complete its first paragraph (some 50 bars) at Letter B; it has a breadth of thought that

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1. It is occasionally more convenient to give bar-references by adopting a simple abbreviation: thus H+9 means the 9th bar <u>after</u> Letter H; similarly H-9 would refer to the 9th bar <u>before</u> that Letter.

is essentially symphonic.

The transition is characterised by certain features that are later shown to be typical :

(i) it is very short - since it takes only 14 bars to reach the dominant of B minor,

(ii) it is effected by essentially 'contrapuntal' material presented in a reduced orchestral texture,

(iii) the cadence is changed into an extended dominant pedal which supports a theme (B1) that is later shown to be (an augmented version of) the second subject, and

(iv) this extended pedal helps to balance the second subject paragraph in relation to the first.

Pedal points are a characteristic of Sibelius's style, and it is interesting to note that they are established so early in his orchestral music; moreover it is important to note that they do not simply 'occur' but are used purposefully - if not always entirely satisfactorily in the early compositions. Here this long dominant pedal supports a horn theme (B1) which is highly romantic and not uncharacteristic. Later the second subject 'proper' presents this theme in diminution and thereby provides the opportunity for some imaginative changes in the recapitulation.

The remainder of the second subject paragraph introduces a number of subsidiary ideas, and (after Letter F) changes to the major mode. The Codetta makes a point of this B major identity, and it begins with a most felicitous idea.

The development section of this first movement falls into three sub-sections (again a feature that is to be observed in the first two symphonies) and it begins by moving directly to E-flat minor where, after an initial reference to A1, it is at first concerned with the second

subject (B2) which twice moves from E-flat minor to G-flat. The following section (Letters L - M) uses just a (similar) mediant progression to support the presentation of the first three notes of A1 in dialogue (in horns), and the mediant undulation is pursued over a firmly established F-sharp pedal.

The third section (from Letter M to S-13, p.47) enlarges the development of the first main theme, and at Letter O, where C major has already been reached, a dominant pedal is established and supports the preparation for the subsequent restatement; indeed this G-natural pedal remains until two bars before the E major chord which heralds the recapitulation (p.47). This is perhaps one of the more successful pedals of the movement since it supports an increasingly vigorous move towards the recapitulation and is, in fact, so firmly effective that the subsequent E major chord needs fourteen sustained bars to establish itself - during which time it is maintained by a simple rhythmic pizzicato.

As a whole the development section has some interesting and exciting moments and it is marked by a considerable energy, but it lacks any significant hint of the peculiarly essential character it was to develop later (especially from the Third Symphony onwards).

The recapitulation opens in E major, and this enables it to complete its second phrase (p.51, bars 2-3) on the dominant (minor) after which it looks as if there is to be a brief presentation of the main theme in D major; this does not take place though it leads to an extension of the D - E note-relationship that was first expressed in bars 10-11, and seen again at Letter A. After this the movement returns to the tonic minor and the recapitulation continues in a largely literal manner until Letter W.

Here the transition is more pointed and effective, and since the horn theme (B1) and the second subject (B2) are essentially the same theme Sibelius takes the opportunity of introducing (the augmented version of) the second subject while maintaining the transition figure as its accompaniment, and then using this theme (over a dominant pedal) to launch an impressive climax.

At Letter X the new theme, D1 (Ex.6) - in cross-rhythm - which marks this climax and is largely supported by a dominant pedal, seems to show the ancestry of the 'big tune' of some subsequent symphonic finales. Here, however, this climactic passage breaks off rather abruptly and, after a bar-line pause (p.74) a slightly altered version (Ex.7) of the second subject is restated - and it too is supported by a dominant pedal; the restatement of this theme is completed (on p.79) with 8 bars of sustained 'tremolo' - 'morendo'.

The coda (which seems to fulfil the expectations aroused by the climactic passage between Letter X and page 74, rather than the restatement of the second subject, pp.74-9) begins with considerable orchestral force, but although it has a dramatic impact following the 'morendo' bars it seems a little contrived; in contrast, the closing bars are quiet and broken with considerable pauses and suggest that, even in this first extended orchestral work, Sibelius was reluctant to use empty rhetoric and bombast simply because it was convenient and makes for 'effect'.

Perhaps the two most interesting features of this first movement are its essential symphonic thinking and need for sonata design, together with its orchestral thinking, both of which are remarkably prophetic for Sibelius's future development and achievement.

The success of this first movement is largely due to the fact that it embodies symphonic ideas of large size which demand the heroic proportions in which they are cast, and one of the impressive features is the maintenance of these proportions - if not always entirely satisfactorily. The pedal points are conspicuous in this concern, and while, at their best, they sustain their function admirably, they are occasionally used alone to fulfil a proportion, as, for example, in the exposition (just before Letter D) where it almost loses the momentum it inherits; the corresponding passage in the recapitulation has already been mentioned as being more successful, and indeed launches a really splendid climax. The pedals appear throughout the movement and only rarely is there any feeling of 'standing still'.

The proportions of the movement are maintained even in the measured pauses of the coda, and throughout the movement they suggest that Sibelius is able to think purposefully in sonata designs, since there is little evidence of a disparity between the size of his ideas and the form they create and demand. In this respect the 'redundant' restatement of the second subject (beginning on p.74) is formalistic rather than necessary: indeed it seems at odds with the imagination of the passage between Letter W and p.74.

Nevertheless the movement as a whole is a splendid achievement and 5 features in particular should be noted:

(i) the extended paragraphs of interesting musical thought presented in the exposition,

(ii) the short effective transition, presented in a reduced orchestral texture,

(iii) the balance provided by the transition/second subject,

(iv) the natural abbreviation (in the recapitulation) that arises from the ambiguous function of the transition/second subject theme, and

(v) the use of pedals to sustain an active thematic development.

The orchestration of this first movement is convincing evidence that Sibelius thinks readily and directly in orchestral terms, and there are passages of beautiful orchestral sound per se - the first four bars of the codetta, for example, or the passage between Letter X and p.74 (which recalls Tchaikovsky and perhaps Borodin). There is also a recognition that orchestral textures are directly inter-related with, and complementary to the themes they carry (and their purpose): the transition passages in both the exposition and the recapitulation are examples of this, as is the eight-bar passage immediately before Letter T where the low (and dark) textures serve to highlight the fact that this statement of A1 is not in a new key but is merely a tonal detour. There is also the simple but effective idea of reserving the orchestral colour of wind and brass without strings to mark the beginning of the coda.

There are however, some occasional moments of orchestral initiative which are not successful: the repeated quavers for oboe, beginning sixteen bars before Letter L and continuing almost to Letter M is one such example, while the long F-sharp pedal for cellos (which begins at Letter L) needs some sort of bowing device or rhythmic pattern to maintain its vitality - even though it is offset, to some extent, by the entry of the triangle at this point.

The second movement in B minor, Grave, is titled 'Kullervo's Youth' and according to Johnson was "undoubtedly inspired by all or parts of runos 31-4", which describe the tragic circumstances of Kullervo's youth, his enslavement and escape, as well as revealing the fact that his sister was lost while gathering raspberries. No quotation from these runos is attached to the score however, and although the movement maintains the proportions of the first movement, it lacks both its intensity and achievement. Formally it is an abridged sonata form (i.e.omitting the development section) - loose and leisurely in construction.

The opening theme, (A1, Ex.8) hovers between major and minor, while its subsiduary theme (A2, Ex.9), reflecting a more obvious programmatic inspiration, is supported by a simple harmonic undulation. At Letter D this subsiduary theme becomes more contrapuntally stated, in a thin orchestral texture that is purposefully functional. It leads first to a statement of A1 in C-sharp major/minor (at Letter E) and it is shortly followed by a repeat of A1 in the original B minor, after which this extended first paragraph is completed with a short codetta that introduces a new theme (A3, Ex.10) at Letter G.

After a brief, simple transition, the second subject (B1, Ex.11) is announced in E-flat (minor) by woodwind (two bars after Letter H). Characteristically this is situated on an extended dominant pedal which resolves first on the tonic (E-flat) minor chord, then moves directly to the dominant of C minor. At Letter I the movement returns to the dominant of E-flat from where it again moves to the tonic minor chord (though still over a B-flat pedal) before completing its paragraph in the major mode.

With the appearance of B1 (at Letter K) and the return of the minor mode it looks as if this second subject section is to be repeated, but the introduction of the rhythm of A1 quickly leads to the recapitulation (which begins at Letter L).

The first part of the recapitulation shows only minor changes and additions; but both the weakness and, in contrast, the positive moments of this movement are seen from Letter R al fine.

Firstly, at Letter R, Sibelius seems intent on avoiding unnecessary repetition by (i) omitting the codetta and, instead, going directly and with increased dramatic impact into B1, and then (ii) (just after Letter S) maintaining B1 while A1 is restated underneath - a clever idea that is effective and justified. Then at Letter W a coda begins - over a dominant pedal; it is worked to a passionate, forceful, climax and the last four bars are quoted in Ex.12, but immediately after these bars the first main theme, A1, is restated in full, and that, in turn, is followed by the 'codetta' theme from the exposition; here the temptation to write an'effective' ending and a suitable climax appears to have been too strong, and the result is a continuation of the movement which is not justified by any creative necessity.

This movement lacks the concentration and continuous purposeful direction that marks the later works; the result of this diffusion of energy is that the movement as a whole suggests pathos but is unable to suggest tragedy or establish a tragic character.

The four bars quoted in Ex.12 are worthy of note: the 'fff' B major chord is twice contradicted by a G minor chord marked by a pause. This is imaginative and typically Sibelian: the idea is refined in later works but exists here in all essentials - even the dark colours of the G minor chords contribute to their function.

The third and central movement of the work, 'Kullervo and his Sister' introduces the male voice chorus as well as the Baritone and Soprano soloists who take the title roles.

The key of this movement is F major which, following immediately on the previous B minor, makes an appropriate tonal setting for the subsequent tragedy; this relationship between keys an augmented fourth apart is consistently maintained in Sibelius's later works that deal with tragic incidents or characters, and from c.1910 onwards it becomes a fascinating tonal argument in its own right.

The story of Kullervo and his Sister is told in runo 35 of the 'Kalevala', and describes how Kullervo, sent on an errand by his parents, meets a "maiden with her hair all flowing" who at first resists the repeated invitations of Kullervo to join him in his sledge; finally she is forcibly abducted by Kullervo and only then do they learn of their respective identities. The sister commits suicide, and Kullervo reflects that "Far more happy were my fortune, Had I ne'er been born or nurtured."

Both the main themes (Exs.13, 14) of the introductory section in 5/4 - Kullervo's ride to pay the taxes - are worth noting for their rhythmic construction, and both are used only in the first half of the movement which relates the events leading up to the abduction. The second half of the movement (beginning at Letter M) is almost entirely dominated by the long Soprano solo in which the Sister's identity is gradually revealed, and then climaxed by the Lament - in F minor - of Kullervo.

In performance the movement is almost twice as long as any of the others, and although there are many fine moments - some of them achieved using only very simple means - the movement as a whole is handicapped by the very form and nature of the words from which it draws its inspiration and which it intends to convey. The epic strain of 'Kalevala' is such that dramatic incidents are related in exactly the same manner - and at the

same pace - as virtually all other incidents, and although Sibelius omitted many unnecessary lines (of the original runo) he is nevertheless forced (in order to remain true to the nature of the runo) to use the altered couplet - with its almost inevitable blunting effect on dramatic incident.

What is remarkable in this movement is the dramatic, not to say operatic vigour and imagination that Sibelius brings to fruition: this is seen in the range and invention of his ideas, and in the detailed differences of such a task as showing a dramatic advance in the recurring appearance of the words :

"Kullervo, Kalervo's offspring
With the best bluest stockings...."

on pages 11, 31 and 56 (of the score of the third movement).

The last of these examples mentioned above (p.56) also serves as a convenient illustration of the impressive effects Sibelius obtained from his treatment of the chorus: the change to harmonic writing for this entry - in contrast to the previously unbroken unison/octave settings - makes it ring out with dramatic emphasis, and so creates a fitting and impressive preparation for the tragic event which is to follow almost immediately. The climax of this section (p.58-60) is truly operatic, with the maiden pleading for release while, simultaneously, the chorus describe her being pulled into Kullervo's sledge. The word setting (for the chorus) is mostly very straightforward, usually syllabic, and severely restricted in range: indeed the very simplicity of the chorus parts seems to add an elemental depth to the runo lines.

After the abduction (p.58-60) the drama moves slowly as the narrative reveals the respective identities of Kullervo and his Sister. This culminates

in an inspired soprano solo[1] (beginning on p.95) that is eloquently sustained, and rises to a beautifully controlled climax of conviction and restrained intensity in the Grave (p.121).

In turn this solo passage for the soprano is followed by the (dramatic) arioso Lament of Kullervo, which returns (with no preparation) to F minor; this completes the movement and has, as Layton remarks, "an unmistakably Slav ring about it."[2]

The orchestration is dramatically effective for most of the movement, although occasionally one (unrelieved) orchestral idea or texture is maintained for too long: the long rhythmic ostinato beginning on p.81 and other similar examples are frequently carried by the soprano solo alone. Equally it must be remarked that some of these ostinato do have a nice orchestral quality about them (as in the passage beginning at Letter P, for example) and one - the Grave beginning p.121 - is deftly illuminated by the simple device of spacing one particular string chord differently (p.126). Finally the tragedy of the events is well reflected in Kullervo's Lament by the accompaniment of 3 trombones, tuba, timpani and contra-basses.

This third movement displays qualities and features which suggest, at first sight, that Sibelius might have been an opera composer of distinction; it is therefore all the more surprising that when Sibelius later attempted an opera it should have been abandoned on the grounds that it was too lyrical.

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1. The effect of this solo passage in performance gives rise to an interesting speculation concerning the genesis of the rather melancholy - though beautiful - clarinet solos in such works as 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island', 'En Saga' and even the opening of the First Symphony: are there not striking similarities here as regards range, register, timbre, and intensity?

2. Robert Layton: Sibelius: (Master Musicians); Dent, 1965, p.112.

Yet this criticism of Sibelius's attempted opera becomes convincing upon reflection and our successive experience of Sibelius's symphonic creation; for while lyricism is vital to operatic designs it needs to move at a pace and intensity that is basically foreign to Sibelius's creative imagination. The long Soprano solo and the chorus entries in this movement are effective, but largely because of their careful preparation and placing; the dramatic impact tends to remain <u>within</u> each individual section and it does not become culminative: like the second movement, 'Kullervo and his Sister' is full of pathos, but never attains tragedy.

The fourth movement in C major, Alla Marcia, is titled 'Kullervo goes to War". It is a scherzo movement anticipating not only 'Lemminkäinen's Return', but a whole body of movements in 2/4 time with many features in common and peculiar to Sibelius: they are usually in C or E-flat, consistently avoid anacrusis in their themes and rhythms, share some orchestral textures, and are frequently associated with programmes of riding, hunting, journeys, &c. Johnson states[1] that the following extract from runo 36 was included in the original programme:

"Kullervo, Kalervo's offspring,
With the very bluest stockings,
Went with music forth to battle,
Joyfully he sought the conflict,
Playing tunes through plains and marshes,
Shouting over all the heathland,
Crashing onwards through the meadows,
Trampling down the fields of stubble."

This movement, largely based on two main themes, A1 and B1, (Exs.15 and 16), is a large ternary design of which the first section (Bar 1 - p.35) is almost exclusively concerned with A1 and its host of derivative and complementary phrases, the second section (p.35 - Letter M)

1. Johnson, op.cit., p.51.

with B1 (though there are hints of A1), while the third section both balances the first section and increases the tempo to 'vivace' to finish with an effective coda.

The main themes are themselves interesting. A1 shows the modal colouring of flat 6th and 7th which is frequent in early Sibelius, while B1 uses the major 6th (and flat 7th) which occurs more often in later works.[1] Rhythmically the themes are again marked by the avoidance of anacrusis, as well as showing frequent repeated melody notes, and, later in the movement, a trochaic phrase-ending which will be referred to later. Moreover a large part of the continuous forward flow of this movement is achieved by the use of themes which can easily be broken down to - or give rise to - a number of small constituent units which are capable of a multitude of uses, and of joining up with any number of other units; all of these units seem to be closely derived from, or similar to the main theme and in particular its rhythm. One such example of this idea is illustrated in Ex.17 (p.8, 9, 10 oboe entries).

In connection with this, and for reasons which will be apparent later, it is also interesting to note that A2 (Ex.18), a subsidiary theme which is used in both the first and third sections, shows the peculiar use of the falling-fifth that is to be found in nearly all of Sibelius's orchestral music (as well as the songs, choral music and, of course, String Quartet).

The key scheme and tonal progressions of this movement suggest a pattern which finds a happier outcome in 'Lemminkäinen's Return'. After clearly establishing the tonic key of C minor the first section progresses successively through keys a semitone higher until it arrives at E flat,

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1. Indeed this combination of major 6th and flat 7th is later shown to be a source of considerable musical energy.

from where it returns to C minor (p.26). The first section is completed by a C major restatement of A1 after which the movement breaks off abruptly (p.35) and with almost no preparation moves directly to A major where the second main theme, B1, is presented. This theme dominates the second section though there are occasional appearances of A2 and, at the end of the section, A1. This second main theme also passes through a variety of keys until it establishes A-flat at Letter K, and it is in this key that the climax of this middle section takes place.

After Letter L, though still in A-flat, there is the beginning of a move towards the third section and the return of the tonic key and first theme; this is suggested by a sort of rapprochement of the two main themes.

After a bar line pause at Letter M, A1 returns - at first in the tonic minor - to begin the last section. This completes the overall design of the movement by establishing E major as the balance to the E-flat of the first section, and this key of E major is maintained, with some small digressions, until p.72-3 where it begins to move towards C major with the direction 'poco stringendo il tempo'. On p.74 (Vivace) the coda, concerned only with the first main theme, begins over a bare C-natural pedal for the entire string section. The coda makes its most effective climax just before Letter U (on an extended augmented-sixth chord on D-flat) and at this point the phrase lengths seem to have changed from 2- and 4- bar units to those of 3- bars: these 3-bar units are clearly maintained in the final brass flourishes.

The essential and most significant features of this movement are later seen more clearly (and to more effect) when considering Op.22 No.4 'Lemminkäinen's Return'.

The last movement, 'The Death of Kullervo' presents a large ternary design in E minor; it brings the whole symphonic poem to a climax that is dramatic but nowhere as operatic as the third movement: yet the climax does not always appear to have the musical stature it needs. The movement also reworks some themes from the first movement and concludes with a typically romantic restatement of the opening theme of the first movement.

The first section (which lasts until Letter K) opens with a string undulation (tremolando) which anticipates what is to become a typically Sibelian method of beginning large scale works; it is also a simple and effective way of carrying narrative in music. Just before Letter B there is a hint of the transition theme from the first movement and (on p.10) this conveniently introduces the climax theme (D1) from the first movement (Ex.19); this theme, poised over a B-natural pedal in timpani, dominates much of this first section.

At Letter E this theme gives way to a further theme from the first movement (Ex.20) and against this the chorus intone the narrative - here made more effective by the contrast of restricted vocal settings with the richness of the accompanying texture and melodies.

On p.24 at the height of its climactic movement, the section moves abruptly away from E minor towards G minor and the start of the middle and contrasting section. The dark key relationship of G minor is maintained for the whole of this second section and, although it lacks the more obvious emotional excitement of the first, it sustains the overall tension - largely through its (frequent) undulating harmonic movement.

With the resumption of the dominant pedal (on p.33) the third section begins, and the feeling of climactic anticipation is heightened. The climax is built up gradually and effectively: indeed its very harmonic monotony is

impressive while the avoidance of more obvious melody at this point lends strength to the elemental declamation of the chorus and continually points forward to the coming climax.

The movement is interrupted (in the bar before Letter P) by a 3-bar General-Pause; when it resumes it has acquired a new string figure and this is then used in antiphonal dialogue with a repeated wind and brass chord and thereby heightens the climactic effect of the continuous dominant pedal.

The climax is realised at Letter S by the (long-delayed) move to the tonic chord and the reappearance of the D1 climax theme from the first movement. As before this is followed by the (altered) version of the second subject theme from the first movement, and this momentarily pulls the tonality towards G-sharp minor before a reworked version of opening theme of the first movement (A1) appears in E minor - 'Maestoso' (p.60). The initial impact of the direct move from G-sharp minor to E minor is considerable, but after this the climax is apt to disappoint since, in spite of its rather frenetic string figure, it does not appear to have the musical stature it needs to carry its inherited impetus. The whole of the movement prior to this event has consisted of anticipatory rhetoric which has generated an excitement and climactic expectation that this theme cannot now fulfil. The greater part of this movement acts as an extended dominant pedal, designed to excite and create expectation of a concluding dramatic event; in performance the preparation (within this movement) overshadows the climax and the return of the opening theme of the work is momentarily effective but does not convince.

In spite of the many imaginative moments of the last four movements - and it is easy to see why the audience applauded each one at the premiere - none can equal the first movement: in design and character its essence is symphonic. The judgement (of Johnson, for example) that "Kullervo will be

something of a disappointment for those who expect to discover early signs of the mature Sibelian style" (p.54) is less than accurate when applied to the first movement. The most important features of the first movement have already been listed and, as the examination of the First Symphony (first movement) will show, there are several points of direct resemblance between these two works: moreover although these features are progressively refined and used with increasing imaginative subtlety thoughout Sibelius's compositions they exist here in all essentials.

The remaining movements of 'Kullervo' suggest a connection with the later 'symphonic poems'; this is a title which implied for Sibelius - and there are hints of it in 'Kullervo', especially in the fourth movement - a clear-cut and fundamental distinction from the symphonies: difficult to define succinctly but clearly recognisable.

The glory of 'Kullervo' is the sweeping imagination and boundless inventive energy of its first movement; its faults arise from the problem of attempting to balance a powerful lyricism and dramatic sense on one hand, with the demands of rather conventional (and at times unsuitable) designs on the other, and within an acceptable time scale.

The critical reception of 'Kullervo' is recorded by Ringbom[1] and, in more detail by Johnson. Flodin, one of the most eminent Finnish critics wrote that -

> "(Sibelius) wanted his music to be Finnish from beginning to end. In the strange character of the runo song, in the rhythms of the folk-dances, and in the horn calls of the shepherd he found the mood he needed.... In the monotonous whole tone progressions (H.E.J.: he may have meant pentatonic) and in the use of five-four rhythm, he has completely followed the ancient runo songs....".[2]

This suggestion of a specific influence or reflection of the character of the runo melodies is interesting, the more so since "western researchers have still to demonstrate how his (Sibelius's) own ideas are indebted to his native legacy" - and this is a convenient place to examine this relationship.

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1. Nils-Eric Ringbom: Jean Sibelius; University of Oklahoma Press, 1954; pp.35-6.

2. Johnson, op.cit.p.53.

CHAPTER 3

SIBELIUS AND FINNISH MUSIC

CHAPTER 3

Flodin's suggestion that the music of Sibelius was influenced by the "strange character of the runo song" was apparently denied by Sibelius: Ekman quotes him thus:[1]

> "The genuinely Finnish tone of 'Kullervo' could, however, not have been achieved in this way, for the simple reason that at the time the work was composed I was not acquainted with my supposed model. First I composed 'Kullervo'; then I went to Karelia to hear, for the first time in my life, the Kalevala runes from the lips of the people. This may seem strange but it was actually the case".

- and Ekman concluded that this was 'convincing refutation' of the influence of Finnish folk melodies. Rosa Newmarch, however, observed[2] that :

> "in his earliest works where the national tendency is more crudely apparent, the invariable and primitive character of the verse rhythm is not without influence upon his melody, lending it a certain monotony which is far from being devoid of charm."

- and it is interesting to speculate that the verse rhythm of the Kalevala lines (which Sibelius admitted to knowing, and by implication, knowing well) gave rise to a similar musical solution to (the problem of) their setting as already existed in the runo melodies. Indeed Simon Parmet[3] comes to just this very conclusion; he writes:

> "It is true that Sibelius did not know the old Kalevala melodies but he did know their texts.... It can therefore be taken for granted that from childhood Sibelius absorbed the metre and cadence of the runes, but not their melodies."

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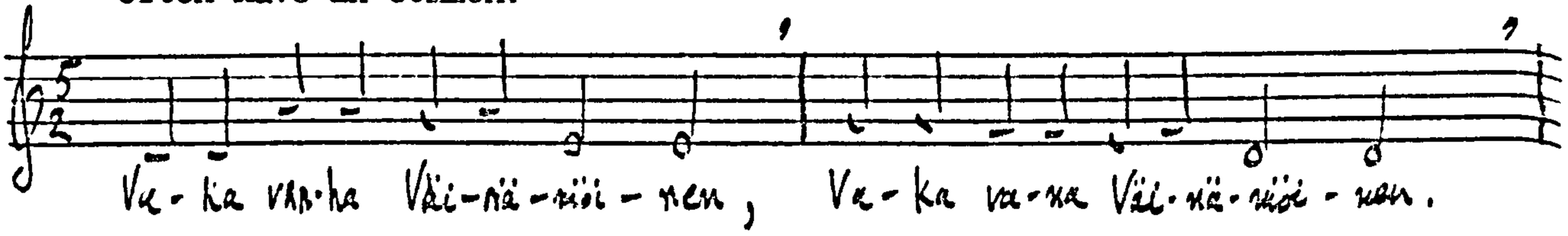
1. Ekman, op.cit., p.116.

2. Rosa Newmarch: Jean Sibelius, a Short History of a Long Friendship, Goodwin and Tabb, 1944, p.11.

3. Simon Parmet: The Symphonies of Sibelius; Cassell, 1959, p.14-15.

Parmet concludes:

> "No melody by Sibelius resembles any Finnish folk song or rune, except with regard to the peculiarities of metre and harmony they often have in common:



> The illusion of resemblance between the melodies of Sibelius and runic song arises from the fact that both were created as musical expressions of the same language: Finnish."

But Parmet does not pursue his argument any further; in particular he does not directly illustrate the results of this 'absorbtion' of runic accents on Sibelius's melodic invention. Yet it is precisely this illustration that is most needed to clarify the extent of Sibelius's indebtedness to it.

Cecil Gray and Gerald Abraham both deny the influence of folk song on Sibelius's thematic material, though Abraham admitted that Sibelius's art is "profoundly national, one of the few striking instances of ESSENTIAL as opposed to superficial nationalism in the whole history of music" and concluded that :

> "Sibelius had captured the spirit but sloughed off the tangible "body" much more completely than any other composer of such intensely national leanings."[1]

This is an interesting conclusion to which Frank Howes appears to have given some support when he wrote:[2]

> "Cecil Gray was misled by looking for resemblances of contour instead of behaviour in Finnish folk-song, of which, maybe, he had not seen Ilmari Krohn's collection."

And by the 'behaviour' of folk-songs Howes stated that he meant:

> "not their melodic contour alone, but their phrase lengths, their rhythmic peculiarities, their characteristic intervals, and so on."

In this same article Howes also wrote:

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1. Gerald Abraham: 100 Years of Music; Duckworth & Co.Ltd., 1964, p.257-8.

2. Frank Howes: Sibelius's Idiom and Environment, 'The Times' October 1957.

> "The characteristics of Finno-Urgic melody, as found in Hungary and Finland which no doubt are connected with the peculiarities in Finno-Urgic language, are the three isolated by Bartok - namely, isometric structure, pentatonic formation, and the rhythmic feature he calls 'tempo giusto', which means.....a succession of equal time values. There are a fourth and a fifth - namely the absence of anacrusis and repeated melody notes. Sibelius will even go so far in avoiding anacrusis as to postpone his first beat and start on the second, weak, beat, giving a kind of ictus to the tune by the gasp the absent note causes."

Kodaly[1] denies the existence of (what he called) a 'significant connection' between Finnish and Hungarian folk music, but repeated melody notes, lack of anacrusis, and 'tempo giusto' are a common characteristic of both Finnish folk music and runo melodies, and the compositions of Sibelius.

A brief look at Krohn's collection[2] of Finnish folk song, from which Ex.21 quotes several examples, will confirm the characteristic presence of these three features, and Howes listed examples in (all) the seven symphonies of Sibelius.

But two further features, not mentioned by Howes (nor, in any detail, by Parmet), are also to be noted. The first of these is the characteristic rhythmic phrase-ending of both runo melodies and folk songs. Ruth M.Hillila,[3] in her thesis "The solo songs of Toivo Kuula and Leevi Madejota and their place in 20th Century Finnish Art songs", clarifies the appearance of this ending in folk-songs and runo melodies thus:

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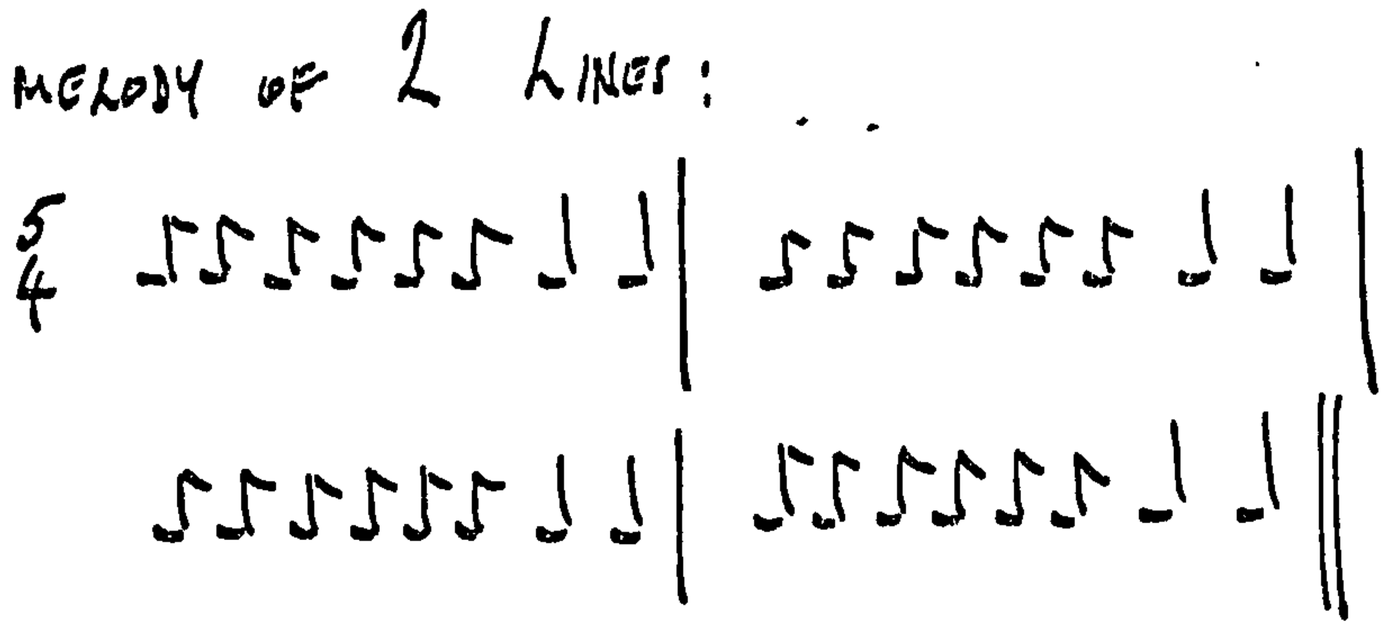
1. Zoltan Kodaly: Folk Music of Hungary, Barrie & Jenkins, London, 1971, (p.23)

2. This collection was later continued under the Editorship of Launis.

3. Ruth M.Hillila: "The solo songs of Toivo Kuula and Leevi Madejota and their place in 20th Century Finnish Art songs": Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D.1964, University of Boston, Graduate School, pp.139, 141-2.

"The place of honour among Finnish folk music is to be given to the runo melodies, old simple melodies, crystallized into fixed forms to which the Kalevala poems were sung...Runo singing has its own poetic metre, which follows strictly certain rules and also its music in which there appears a large number of melodies and their variants. These tunes nevertheless display a few main characteristics in common. The melodies move diatonically and within a narrow range, often within a fifth. In Estonian runo melodies it is common to have four-beat measures, whereas five-beat measures are characteristic in Finland; the extra beat is the result of the lengthening of the last two syllables of each measure....

The characteristically lengthened and repeated final note of each measure of the runo melodies have influenced both the later folk songs and also the Finnish art-song, to the extent that it can be considered as one of the national traits that colour the musical expression of the country. The main difference in the two types of melody lies in the fact that, while the rune melody features lengthened notes at the end of each measure of five beats, the more modern folk-song melodies consist of longer phrases of more measures, with the repeated notes occurring at the end of each line.... the following diagram will show the basic similarity between rune melodies and other Finnish folk-melodies."



In Volume IV (ii), of the collection of Finnish folk-songs, titled 'Karjalan Runosävelmät',[1] the main examples called 'Varsinaiset Runosävelmät' (true runos) show this trochaic ending, together with its accompanying lack of anacrusis, to be common. The basic and most frequent form is shown in Ex.22, though that of Ex.23 is also frequent; the ending shown in Ex.24 is also found.

From these examples it appears that the rhythm is the most consistent and important element of the phrase-ending, while melodically it may indulge in either a slight variation (as in Ex.23) or a simple decoration (Ex.24) which acts as a link to the next phrase.

This particular characteristic feature of Finnish folk music is undoubtedly reflected in Sibelius's works: 'Kullervo' offers many distinct and unmistakable examples - the opening themes of the third movement, in 5/4, show repeated final notes in each bar, while the main theme of another early work, 'Vårsång' Op.16, clearly implies the lengthened and repeated final note in its main melody (Ex.25).

This basic ending becomes somewhat less frequent in the chronological progression of Sibelius's compositions, but it may well be shown not so much to have disappeared as become changed, radically at times, in the course of its absorbtion into Sibelius's style; the amount of change and more importantly, the difference in its use, may well have some bearing on the development of Sibelius's (symphonic) writing and is certainly a reflection of it.

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1. Suomen Kansan Sävelmiä: Runosävelmiä, II Karjalan Runosävelmät; Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 1930.

The most important early change is that while the final repeated note still occurs at the end of the phrase, it need not be (and more frequently is not) at the end of the bar; the characteristic rhythm, in which the accent must fall on the first of the repeated notes (with the second receiving less stress) is seen frequently in the early orchestral works where it still occurs at the end of the phrase. It is used throughout the Op.22 Suite (Ex.26) while one early work, Op.II, displays a sort of syncopated version (Ex.27).

But so far this study of phrase-endings has been limited to their rhythmic aspect, and the second, melodic, aspect is equally important in illustrating a further common characteristic between Sibelius and folk music.

The study of the phrase-endings of both runo melodies and folk-songs (in Volumes IV and II) reveals the following information :

(i) (in Vol.IV) of the 369 runo melodies in 5/4 no less than 178[1] show the simple repeated-note ending in ALL phrases (Ex.28),

(ii) a further 28 show a rising third in all phrase endings (Ex.29),

(iii) the remainder show no similarly extended conformation, though the following occurrence of certain other melodic phrase-endings is, perhaps, of some interest :

(a) melodies with alternate phrase-endings of a rising third and simple repeated melody notes - 12 occurrences,

(b) with falling third and simple repeated melody notes- 13 occurrences,

(c) with rising fourth and simple repeated notes - 8,

(d) with rising fourths in all phrases - 4,

(e) with falling thirds in all phrases - Nil,

(f) with simple anacrusis and repeated notes - 18.

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1. This is only just short of 50%.

The phrase endings of the folk-songs (in Vol.11) show comparable endings, and (most pertinently) in the apparently 'exceptional' cases the Editor consistently explained in footnotes (83 times in 749 quoted songs) the fact that these irregular endings were either 'passing' (durchgangston) or 'changing' (wechselton) notes, while yet others were classed as 'anticipations' (7 occurrences).

These melodic phrase-endings illustrate another further common point with Sibelius; they also suggest the beginnings of a development which more closely approaches the idea of a personal 'behaviour'.

The Op.22 Suite, for example, illustrates one of these many melodic phrase-endings: moreover this ending remains constant even though the theme is modified (Ex.30).

The rising third phrase-ending - the most numerous in the runos apart from simple repeated notes - seems to find an echo in Sibelius, and indeed to have evolved a particular function; but the phrase-ending most commonly found in Sibelius's works is that of a falling-fifth, with the accent falling on the higher note: Op.22 again provides a convenient illustration (Ex.31). This interval of a falling-fifth does not occur in Finnish folk music to any significant degree, but Astra Desmond (writing in the Abraham symposium)[1] made the following observations :

> "Spoken Finnish has rather a level monotonous sound, except for a marked drop in pitch at the end of phrases. Being a very much inflected language the words tend to get very long in some of the cases and the frequency with which long vowels occur in unstressed syllables decreases the effect of the stress. So in the Finnish settings (M.S.C.: she is here referring specifically to Sibelius's songs to Finnish texts) we find that many repeated notes followed by a short falling phrase are a marked feature of the melodic line."

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1. Abraham, op.cit., (Ch.6, The Songs) p.123.

Perhaps the most straightforward and impressive illustration of Miss Desmond's suggestion is to be seen in 'The Origin of Fire', Op.32. Example 32 shows some representative uses, all admirably suited to the elemental declamation of another Kalevala story; similarly it is seen in a large number of songs - again frequently at the end of phrases - and it is difficult to resist the suggestion that this particular feature of Finnish speech (coupled with the rhythmic and melodic phrase-endings above) was carried over by Sibelius into his orchestral music from an early date; certainly the falling-fifth figure occurs in nearly every work.

To summarize so far: it appears possible to isolate several distinct features that are common to both Sibelius and Finnish folk music (and runo melodies) or have some possible derivation from Finnish speech; these features are :

(i) repeated melody notes,

(ii) the characteristic rhythmic phrase-ending,

(iii) the melodic phrase ending - frequently a falling-fifth or rising third,

(iv) lack of anacrusis,

(v) tempo giusto

- but it is not until Howes suggestion of 'behaviour' and, more importantly, the development of these features is studied, that they begin to become significant. The point that is of critical importance is that several of these features were to undergo a considerable and far-reaching development as they became part of Sibelius's musical personality; equally they were a causal factor in that musical development.

Examples of the development of these features are numerous, and the following are representative but far from exhaustive. Firstly, the repeated melody notes may be used for rhythmic 'drive' in which case they are frequently found as some sort of discordant element (Ex.33) or they may be transformed into one of those long holding notes with which Sibelius often begins a phrase (Ex.34); this latter use often generates just as much potential energy as the use of actual repeated notes, and this is frequently released in the brass 'lion-roars'[1] (Ex.35) or a rhythmic 'knot' which then itself unfolds (Ex.36). Further, partly because of this repetition there is a tendency for a certain note or notes to become the pivot of a phrase which centres round it, and this too is seen not only in a straightforward way (Ex.37) but is also the essence of the 'propellor'[1] figure so important to Sibelius. In addition the 'syllabic' word setting of 'Kullervo', almost of necessity using repeated melody notes, points to a direct relationship with the extended tempo giusto of many Sibelian themes; indeed one of the features of some of the less important early works is that they seem to reflect a syllabic rhythm in their orchestral melodies.

But now, if two or more of these developments outlined above are used together, the resulting melodic line immediately begins to approach the behaviour and quality recognised as Sibelian; two quotations from 'The Swan of Tuonela' show several features of these features in combination (Ex.38) as does the Trio theme from the Second Symphony (Ex.39), or that from the second movement of 'Rakastava' (Ex.40); themes from the First and Fourth Symphonies illustrate the rhythmic impetus of the falling phrase-ending suggesting a continuation or answer (Exs.41, 42) while another from the Fifth Symphony also shows the phrase being left 'open' by the rising third - a function it frequently seems to fulfil (Ex.43).

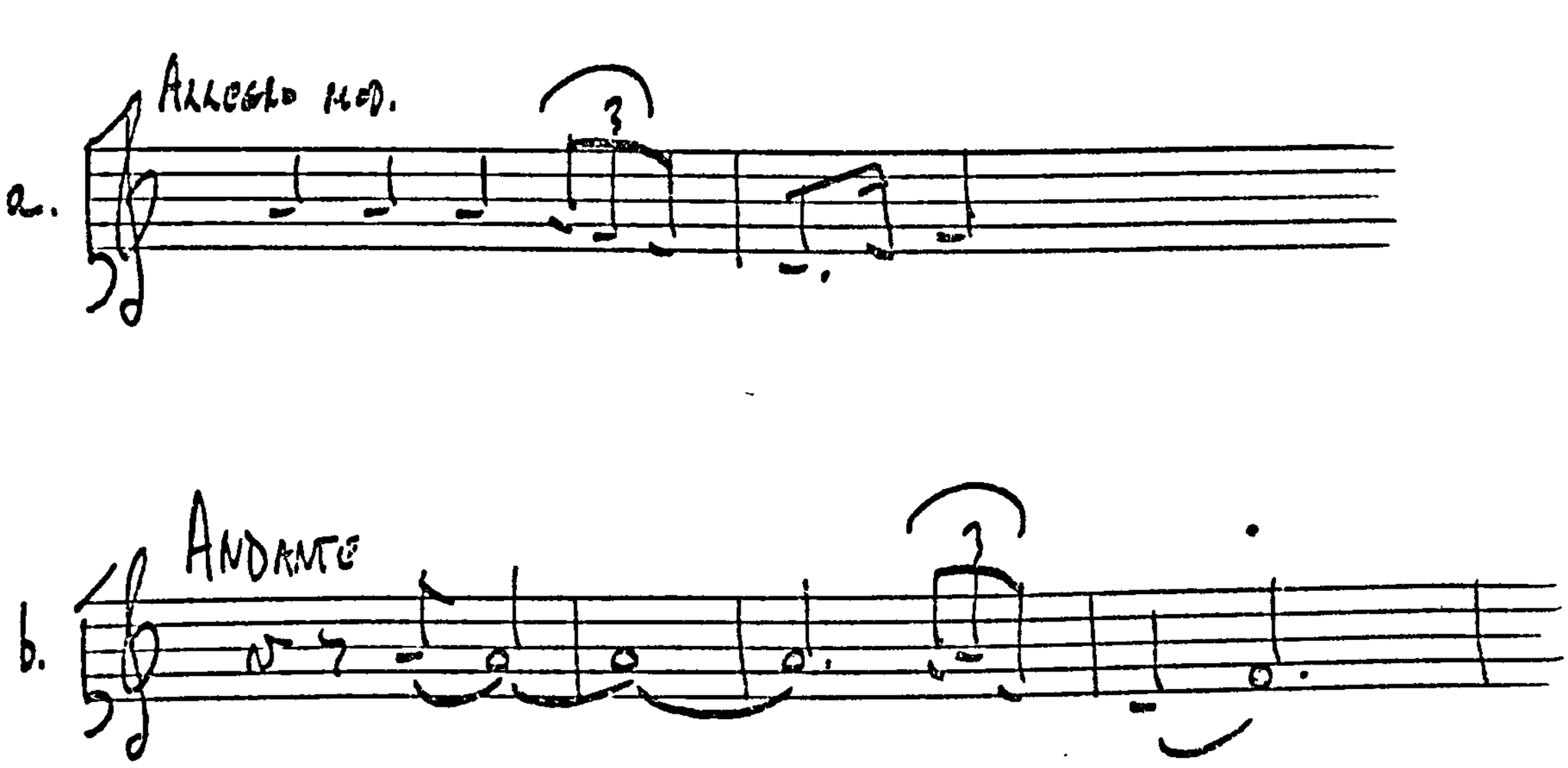
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1. See Chapter 5, p.54.

Two final examples (Exs.44, 45) would appear to show that these characteristic features have evolved into what could be called 'archtypal' Sibelian phrases: that from 'The Bard' shows both the 'missing first beat ictus' mentioned by Howes now extended (by syncopation) through the entire phrase and culminating in a falling-fifth; the example from the Fourth Symphony shows the rising third of the first part of the phrase answered by a falling seventh while the long first note suggests a development from both tempo giusto and repeated melody notes.

As an interesting by-product of this sketch of the development of these features it is interesting to experiment :

Ex.46 :



Ex.46a is a phrase from Op.10 while Ex.46 b shows a possible 'development' as the result of

(i) beginning off the beat,

(ii) replacing the repeated melody notes with a sustained note,

(iii) changing the order of the next three notes, and making them into a rhythmic 'knot', and

(iv) using a typical (and basic) phrase-ending.

While this cannot be submitted as evidence it does - at least - provide one explanation of how Sibelius was able to revise early works so successfully.

The evidence, and development, of national (musical) traits in Sibelius's compositions which has been suggested above is not submitted as conclusive proof; rather it is meant - like Heyerdahl's ocean voyages - to suggest the existence of a possibility. At the same time both the suggested ancestry and the development of these national features in Sibelius's works, which will be seen in the subsequent music examples, becomes more persuasive as it becomes more 'Sibelian' and less obviously 'Finnish'.

CHAPTER 4

KARELIA OVERTURE

KARELIA SUITE

VÅRSÅNG

CHAPTER 4

Chronologically 'En Saga' Op.9 is the next major work after 'Kullervo', but after its first performance in February 1893 the score was withdrawn and the revisions of 1901 have been shown - by Ringbom - to be so extensive as to amount to a virtual reworking. The revised (and published) version will therefore be more correctly examined between the First and Second Symphonies.

In the summer of 1893 Sibelius began working on an opera called 'The Building of the Boat' and, in connection with this, wrote to the poet J.H.Erkko seeking his collaboration. In his letter Sibelius wrote of the conclusion he had reached concerning the role of music :

> "I believe that music alone - that is to say, absolute music - cannot by itself satisfy.... Music can reach its true power only when it is guided by poetic meaning - in other words, when music and poetry are united. Then the obscure atmosphere that the music has aroused becomes clear, and the words, even though magnificent in themselves, take on greater meaning."[1]

Consideration of this letter must wait until discussion of the Op.22 Suite; it is quoted here to show its chronological perspective. The opera project failed and Sibelius began work on a 'Lemminkäinen Suite', but he was interrupted by the invitation to compose music to accompany a series of historical tableaux for the Student Corporation of Viipuri, and the result of this invitation (according to Ekman) was the composition of a suite of eight pieces. In 1896 this suite was reduced to the 'Karelia Overture' Op.10, and the three pieces (Intermezzo, Ballade, Alla Marcia) that constitute the 'Karelia Suite ' Op.11.

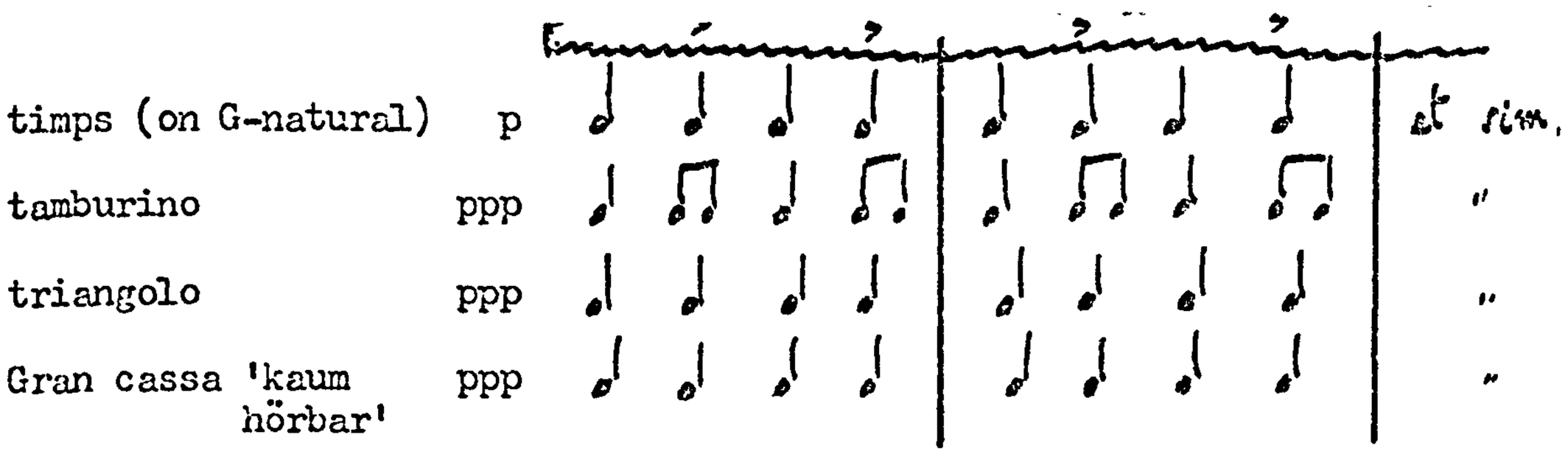
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1. Johnson, op.cit., p.60.

The 'Karelia Overture' (scored for a Full Orchestra including 3 trumpets, tuba, tamburino, triangle, timpani, and Gran cassa) is a simple and straightforward sonata-rondo design (A-B-A - C - A-B-A) in C major.[1] Its main theme is a sprightly melody consisting of two main phrases (Exs.47a,b) and both these and the second subject (Ex.48, which is directed 'un poco lento' at both its appearances) display the typical Finnish characteristics of repeated melody notes and lack of anacrusis.

The middle episode is entirely taken up with (what is later known to be) the main thematic idea (and accompaniment) of the Intermezzo from the Op.11 Suite; here however the idea occurs as a 'quotation' and it lacks the effective presentation it receives in the Suite.

The most original feature of this design is the substitution of the Intermezzo theme for the transition in the restatement though the ideas is maintained for only eight bars and it is accompanied by the timpani and percussion section as follows :



Throughout the Overture there is a feeling of a 'full' scoring which is in some measure due to the constant use of divided cellos; the best orchestral moments are all 'p' passages - the second subject, for example is nicely scored for strings at its first appearance (there seems some reason for the div.celli here) and effectively rescored as an

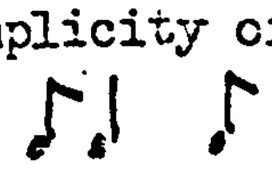
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1. The key-scheme is: C major - E minor - C major; F major; C major - C minor - C major.

oboe solo with supporting wind and string harmonies in the restatement.

The transition (Full score, p.5 bar 3) is both effectively scored and anticipates the type of material and its treatment that is later to be described as 'typical' though, of course, its essential characteristics have already been seen in 'Kullervo'.

The timpani are used conventionally being for the most part restricted to sustained rolls, with accents on the weak beats, and, frankly, employed for their loudness.

The three pieces of the Karelia Suite Op.11 are simple in design and more effective than the Overture, and the series of tableaux, for which these pieces were originally composed, depicted important moments in the history of Karelia. The Intermezzo in E-flat[1] (which according to Johnson was also known as 'March in the old style') accompanied Tableau 3 which showed the Lithuanian Prince Narimont collecting tribute for the Karelian people. It is economically very effective, being almost totally concerned with the brass theme (Ex.49) which is (only gradually) introduced over a string ostinato that virtually remains constant throughout. It shares the exuberance that 2/4 time signatures appear to inspire in Sibelius, and part of this is due to the general avoidance of anacrusis, the simplicity of the rhythms and in particular the 'spring' of the simple  syncopation. There is no actual change of key though there is an occasional leaning towards the mediant; in later works this mediant relationship becomes more obvious and more important.

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1. It is scored for: double woodwind, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, Gran Cassa, tambourine, cymbals, and strings.

The second number, Ballade, is scored for reduced orchestra (2 oboes, Cor anglais, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, and strings) and in the key of A minor. It originally accompanied the fourth tableau in which Karl Knutsson and his courtiers in Viipuri castle listen to a ballad singer: a vocal solo now rescored for Cor anglais (Ex.50). This number is essentially reflective and makes its point with remarkably little material.

The relationship between keys an augmented fourth apart (as here the Intermezzo in E-flat and the Ballade in A minor) has already been noted in 'Kullervo' where it was a fitting choice for the subsequent tragedy. Here the Ballade is melancholy rather than tragic, but its choice of A minor is interesting since several later compositions, for example 'The Swan of Tuonela', 'Tapiola' and the Fourth Symphony, which could be described as sharing the general emotional idea of tragedy/conflict/tension, are all tonally situated in the region of A and B-natural; further, they are frequently in the minor mode and sometimes use the interval of the augmented fourth thematically. Sibelius's choice of these 'dark' tonal areas is as consistent as his choice of E-flat (and to a slightly lesser extent E-natural and C) as 'expansive' and 'open' keys, and the most frequent antithesis of A minor.

The last number, Alla Marcia, uses the same orchestral forces as the Intermezzo, but further requires piccolo while the tambourine is exchanged for triangle. It accompanied tableau 5 showing Pontus de la Gardie, conqueror and burner of Käkiholma (Kexholm) in 1580.

This Alla Marcia, in A major, is a fitting conclusion to the Suite, and again displays many characteristically Sibelian features including pedal points, the (unexpected) change of key to F major, clearly heightened by the changed orchestral colour, and the Finnish qualities reflected in the avoidance of anacrusis and the use of repeated melody notes in the main theme (Ex.51). However some of the accompaniments are routine and in spite of the 2/4 time signature it does not match the verve of the Intermezzo.

As a Suite these three numbers are effective because they each concentrate, almost exclusively, on one main idea which is simply and purposefully maintained. In contrast some later works on a similar scale (for example 'Pan and Echo') sometimes begin with a more promising (and inventive) first section which arouses expectations that are not fulfilled in the subsequent second section, though it is the very 'conventional' quality of the second section that enables the piece to maintain the 'correct' proportions.

The next orchestral work of Sibelius was written for the 1894 June Festival at Vaasa, and was first performed under the title of 'Improvisation for Orchestra' though it is now known as 'Vårsång' Op.16 (or La Tristesse du Printemps - Spring Song). It is scored for full orchestra including tuba, requires both flutes to double piccolo, and has one 8-bar entry for Glockenspeil. The main theme is shown in Ex.52; it is immediately followed by another 16-bar melody.

Several scholars dismiss this work with little enthusiasm, though Ralph Wood[1] wrote :

> "This composition is, in fact, something of a tour-de-force; for Sibelius performs that apparently simple but nevertheless unheard-of feat of piling sentence on sentence of melody in an unbroken, steady-moving stream for more than two hundred bars with the utmost resource, nowhere spectacular, nowhere very far from.... 'Kapellmeister' methods, yet varying his orchestration and introducing his rare brief excursions into foreign keys with great skill and actually, as a result, making the thing tolerable, even rather better than tolerable."

It is difficult not to feel that Wood overstates his case, for, while there is some degree of achievement, the 'unbroken steady-moving stream' completely lacks the inevitable and significant unfolding of an idea which marks the later works, nor is it saved by the grace and artistry that later mark some slighter compositions; moreover the length of the work is not important since the first 32 bars are almost entirely repeated - in a stronger scoring - only 8 bars after their initial statement.

'Kullervo', and in particular its fourth movement (Kullervo goes to War) has already demonstrated the technique that Wood speaks of (the score was not then available however) though it was more vigorous and dramatic in its approach; if there is an advance in this work it lies in the fact that Sibelius can now sustain an idea without letting it become dramatic, or reflecting the influence of Wagner to the extent that marks 'The Swan of Tuonela'[2] : there is also a greater degree of control of the rate at which the idea is allowed to build up to its climax, and that is later to become significant. Here the basic idea lacks poetical animation - even the orchestration is only competent rather than imaginative. The climaxes are marked by a persistent use of the two piccolos, while throughout the work there is a feeling of 'full' scoring (with passages for div.violas and

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1. Ralph Wood: 'The Miscellaneous Orchestral and Theatre Music', (Chapter 3) in Sibelius, Edition Abraham, op.cit., p.70.

2. See Chapter 5.

div.cellos) which is rarely relieved: Vårsång shows little of the orchestral imagination of 'Kullervo' and is certainly far removed from the imagination of the Op.22 'Lemminkäinen Suite' which Sibelius was shortly to complete.

CHAPTER 5

LEMMINKAINEN SUITE

KING CHRISTIAN II

CHAPTER 5

The Op.22 'Lemminkäinen Suite' (also known as 'Four Legends') consists of four numbers, and their dates of composition and revision are listed below :

No.1 Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island	1895	1897	1939
No.2 The Swan of Tuonela	1893	1897	1900
No.3 Lemminkäinen in Tuonela	1895	1897	1939
No.4 Lemminkäinen's Return	1895	1897	1900

While 'The Swan of Tuonela' was written first, originally as the prelude to the projected but unfinished opera 'The Building of the Boat', the remainder of the Suite was started in 1894, completed in 1895 and first performed in 1896; all four numbers were revised in the following year with further revisions for 'The Swan of Tuonela' and 'Lemminkäinen's Return' in 1900, and No.1 and No.3 in 1939. The published miniature scores (Breitkopf and Härtel) are dated under the composers name thus : No.1 - 1895, No.3 - 1895, and No.4 - 1896.

Some confusion exists when referring to the separate pieces by their numbers since the scores of both 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela' and 'The Swan of Tuonela' are described as Op.22 No.3; the reason apparently being that in 1947 Sibelius indicated that, when performed as a Suite, the order of performance could be as listed above - instead of the previous transposition of the inner numbers. To avoid confusion 'The Swan of Tuonela' will be referred to as No.2.

The Lemminkäinen Suite is the first orchestral music by Sibelius to be avowedly programme music, and in view of his later reputation as a master of absolute music these four compositions must be closely examined

with regard to their programmatic 'content' and 'intent' : Johnson in particular finds this a point of some significance.

The problem is to decide how far Sibelius followed his programme in music - for there is considerable evidence showing that a composers stated intentions as expressed in 'literature' may not be reflected in his actual composition. It is equally clear that so-called 'absolute' music may have been inspired by extra-musical considerations to which we are not party: Elgar, for example, toyed with the idea of a symphony with Gordon as its hero, and later the First Symphony appeared - are these two facts reconcilable?

Further, previous studies, in English and English translation, have largely considered the symphonies of Sibelius in isolation from the tone poems yet, as was pointed out in the Introduction, the 'symphonic' identity of the 7th Symphony has been questioned while 'Tapiola' has been called 'a symphony in all but name'.

The history of the programmatic intentions of Op.22 No.1 illustrates the pitfalls and dangers which can befall a piece of programme music. When first published in 1954 the score was titled 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of Saari', but in 1957 Johnson found a programme of the original performance which titled it 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island' and was, moreover, accompanied by a detailed programme of quotations from the Kalevala. Johnson suggests that the reason for the confusion is because of the subtle distinction in Finnish between 'saari' (small s) which means Island, and 'Saari' (capital S) which is a particular island; the difference is critical since the distinction relates to different stories related in different kalevala runos.

The differences may be summed up thus :

(a) 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the ISLAND' - runo 29:
Lemminkäinen visits an unnamed island where he spends three years in amorous dalliance with the women since the men are away at war; when the warriors return Lemminkäinen leaves.

(b) 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of SAARI' - runo 11:
Lemminkäinen visits the island of Saari where he disports himself wantonly with all the women except Kyllikki, haughty and high-born, who ignores him; Lemminkäinen finally abducts her and leaves.

The matter is further complicated the following facts :

(1) in 1954 Sibelius dictated a new programme combining the two adventures;[1]

(2) when Ringbom[2] questioned Sibelius about the abduction episode, he was told that Sibelius wanted to portray the wanton life of the hero in general, not any specific action in detail;

(3) there is a considerable discrepancy between statements attributed to Mrs.Sibelius and the composer's secretary.[3]

It is therefore with some relief to note that at its first performance the programme contained quotations from Runo 29 only.[4]

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1. Johnson, op.cit., pp.72-3.
2. Ringbom: op.cit., p.45.
3. Johnson, op.cit., p.195.
4. The actual lines quoted in the programme were :
Lines 1, 77-8, 223-6, 345, 347-50 (Trans.Kirby; Everyman Edition) and more than half of these are concerned with Lemminkainen's departure.

Formally the work is clear and straightforward, and its tonal organization is similarly easily recognisable, and although this composition falls into three main sections which seem to have some of the functions of sonata form, one of the most important and striking features of this work is the way in which it 'interprets' the programme.

And this is important since although there is an obvious and (necessarily) mutual influence between the symphonies and symphonic poems, Sibelius evolved a clear distinction between them which - consciously or otherwise, and the evidence suggests the former - he maintained from Op.22 to the Seventh Symphony and 'Tapiola'. It is also interesting to note that in this distinction Op.22 seems to suggest several features which were to become part of the established pattern in the symphonic poems.

In spite of Johnson's discovery of a detailed programme there is little musical evidence to show that this is followed slavishly or indeed that it amounts to much more than a general background of the emotional situations and as an inspirational catalyst.

The thematic basis of this work lies in two groups of contrasting themes: the introductory theme (X) with its derivatives the B group, and the A group of the first Allegro moderato section.

The overall key centre of this composition is E-flat and it begins with a short 'Introduction'[1] (Allegro molto moderato) which suggests

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1. The term 'Introduction' is not altogether satisfactory with regard to several compositions by Sibelius: the openings of such works as the Second and Seventh Symphonies are essential and not merely a convenient gambit.

the E-flat tonality and presents three features:

(i) a repeated added-6th chord for horns,

(ii) the introductory theme - with two characteristic phrases - over an undulating accompaniment which hovers around the subdominant chord before coming to rest on the dominant, and

(iii) a rising phrase for horns leading to the opening chord.

These three features are all shown in Ex.53.

After this an increase in tempo to Allegro moderato introduces the first main theme, A1 (Ex.54) which accepts the E-flat tonality suggested in the Introduction and begins what, for convenience, may be called the exposition.

Writers have already disagreed radically as to the exact interpretation of the main themes, and there seems little point in attemtping to settle the dispute once the fact of an obvious contrast has been established. What is more important, even though there is a clear contrast of thematic ideas, Sibelius pursued his programme not in attentive and pictorial detail but by recreating one of its basic facets: the yearning and passion which underlies both the character and escapades of the wanton hero is clearly present, not only in the hovering introduction marked by the questioning added-6th chord and only able once to suggest a dominant (B-flat) but maintained throughout the whole of the subsequent E-flat paragraph where the main theme, though stabilized by a tonic pedal, is accompanied by an undulating tonic - dominant accompaniment: the modal minor of both A2 and A3 (Ex.55, 56) again hovers. The programme is implicit and ever present: it needs little further elaboration.

After this the opening paragraph settles down in a foreign key (G-flat), typically over its dominant pedal, where the reappearance of

the Introductory theme X, reintroduces the hovering passage and leads to a romantic melting to F-sharp minor and the presentation of the second main group of themes (B1, B2, Exs.57, 58). The more important of these, B1, is briefly worked sequentially (poco a poco più allegro) after which it is complemented by the return of the basic theme X and initiates an active transition to B-flat major (bar 181).

This is shown a few bars later (Letter M) to be the dominant of E-flat and is accompanied by two characteristic Sibelian features: brass 'lion-roars' and the use of 'propellor' music. The repeat of the brass figure leads to an enharmonic modulation to E (natural) minor (at Letter N) which is enhanced by the tracery of the A1 motive played by two solo violins.

However this E minor is soon abandoned, and the tonality returns to E-flat at Letter O where the tempo is increased to Vivace and the second main section (development) of the work begins.

This second section (Letter O - Letter X) is largely a 'programmatic' working-out though the details are neither specific nor allowed to detract from the design and musical purpose of the work. The most obvious programmatic idea is seen in the combination of A1 with X, while the paragraph up to Letter S is marked by much sub-dominant harmony. Together these create an increasing tension which is released in a violent interruption (at Letter S) and the dramatic change of key to C minor.

The following paragraph, now marked 'Molto Vivace' uses previous material in the manner of a development though it is situated on the dominant (pedal) of C minor and accompanied by a most typical undulating movement. At Letter V, Vivacissimo, the far point of the design is

reached and the A1 motive, over a B-flat pedal (V7 on C) is worked to a climax which stops abruptly (bar 371). The following bars move to the dominant of C minor and (at Letter W) the reappearance of the introductory theme X (whose Wagnerian qualities are somewhat covered by the flute figure in diminished 5th) indicates the imminence of the return. The design is brought full circle (at Letter X) by the presentation of X, Tempo Primo, and the horn call of the Introduction. This is followed shortly by a momentary move to E-flat after which both the B themes are restated and worked to a passionate and extended climax.

Just before Letter C1 the tonic minor postpones the expected cadence. and initiates a Wagnerian passage which leads to the opening horn call and horn chord - allargando - after which the cadence is quickly completed and the work is closed by a short passage that makes a nicely economic use of the (tonally modified) A3 theme.

The programmatic intentions of Op.22 No.1 are to be seen more clearly in its initial conception and the particular character of its themes than in any pictorial description and narrative within the music itself. The character of the main themes with their hovering harmonies and undulating accompaniments reflect the idea of yearning and passion, and while there are dramatic incidents and interruptions these more often occur at places where a change of key or a sonata event would be expected in the process of a purely musical argument: this is particularly true of the 'development' section where the increasing tension is finally released (at Letter S) in the dramatic change of key complete with a further increase in tempo. The 'programmatic' intentions and significance of these events here lies in their overtly dramatic presentation.

It is for these reasons that although certain works of Sibelius

have a programmatic background they are not only acceptable as 'absolute' music[1] but indeed share and illustrate many typical Sibelian features more commonly found in the symphonies, and in fact enabled Sibelius to evolve and fulfil some of his most characteristic and valuable compositions.

In this respect one of the most striking features of this composition is the extent and frequency of pedal points: pedal points have already been noted as an established feature of 'Kullervo', but here the pedals have a variety of functions that are important and essential to the design of the work, and worthy of comment.

Firstly the pedal points are used to provide tonal stability and may be either tonic or dominant: the presentation of the A group of themes takes place over a tonic pedal which confirms the tonality suggested by the Introduction; similarly a dominant pedal can indicate a particular tonal direction before it is established: it thus acts as a stabilizing agent, as, for example, in the F-natural pedal of bars 177 et seq. In contrast this very stability of a tonic pedal can be used deliberately to generate a tension as the result of its tonality and persistence: the long E-flat pedal of the development is a convenient and important illustration of this.

The dominant pedals of this composition illustrate a variety of important functions - sometimes occurring simultaneously: the extended D-flat pedal of the exposition, for example (i) indicates the tonal direction, (ii) supports the smooth change of tempo, and (iii) balances the major-minor E-flat first subject by establishing G-flat before the introduction of the second subject themes in F-sharp minor (- a similar 'balancing' was seen in the exposition of the first movement of 'Kullervo'; it is to be seen to even more point in the first movement of the First Symphony).

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1. And is this perhaps why Sibelius was reluctant to discuss the 'programmatic' details of Op.22 No.1 with Ringbom?

Other dominant pedals, particularly in the development section of this work are used conventionally but are not without interest. In the C minor episode, for instance (beginning at Letter S), the dominant pedal is obviously used to sustain and generate excitement, but part of this increased feeling of excitement arises because it is largely an inverted, and sometimes internal dominant pedal: a point of some significance since this is in contrast to the immediately preceding E-flat pedal, and there is now a lighter texture due to the release of the bass part. Following this C minor section the tempo is increased to 'Vivacissimo' at Letter V where the dominant-seventh pedal is presented in its last inversion, i.e. a B-flat pedal point (V7 on C): the chord is at its most unstable (inversion) and therefore most exciting.

A summary of the functions of these pedal points shows that they can be used to generate tonal stability or conversely to generate tonal tension: they can indicate a particular tonal direction and provide tonal balance; in addition to this the impact of the cessation of a pedal point is not unimportant. At Letter S, for example, the emotional excitement is heightened by the cessation of the long E-flat pedal, the dramatic change of key and the increase of tempo to 'molto vivace' and (8 bars later) the absence of any kind of pedal.

The three longest pedal points of the development section, E-flat, G, B-flat also serve to illustrate one further fact of considerable importance. The facts may be briefly summarized thus :-

Bar	Pedal point	Key	Tempo
236	E-flat	E-flat	Vivace
302	G (inverted or internal)	C minor	Molto vivace
357	B-flat	F major	Vivacissimo

- and these clearly suggest that there is an inter-relationship between

the choice of the pedal points, their duration, the tonal movement, and, especially, the increases of tempo; there is a progressively shorter period in each key and an interest in the deliberate control of the rate at which the musical ideas develop. Here there is an obvious programmatic background, but it is no less the development and working-out of inherent musical tensions. This idea of deliberately controlled 'pace' is later to become of vital importance to Sibelius.

As a final comment on the pedal points of this composition it is pertinent to note that there are no mediant pedal points; in fact they do not yet occur in Sibelius's compositions.

Two other characteristic features are seen in this work, and for the first time; moreover both have become so familiar in Sibelius's compositions as to have earned themselves convenient labels: viz. 'propellor' music and 'lion-roars'.

Both terms are derived from Ernest Newman (and from the same article)[1] who, although presenting a definition of 'propellor' music, simply described the brass entry at Letter I in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony as :

> "one of those splendid lion-roars in the brass that are so characteristic of Sibelius."

The essence of this, and similar entries elsewhere, is the crescendo with its very forceful culmination: these entries are usually marked "p....cres.molto...ffz" or "fp....cresc.molto...ffz" and the direction is often applied to sustained notes. The brass entry at Letter M (in 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island') is the first example of 'lion-roars'; similar entries occur in many works up to the Fourth Symphony after which they appear less frequently.

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1. "Sibelius No.4: Its English History" (Sunday Times, 29th August 1937): 'From the World of Music'; Calder, 1956; p.130-1.

The 'propellor' music was described by Newman thus :

> "Sibelius is very fond of a procedure which....one might -call cross-hatching - in music, an extensive repetition of rapid figures about one or more fixed points. ....But when we come to ask ourselves the reason for this procedure we have to resort to another image - that of the propellor. Beethoven has a not dissimilar way of working up steam: he will sometimes repeat a little figure until by sheer repetition it has generated the energy to launch his big motive."
>
> (Newman refers his readers to the 'Egmont' Overture: "bars 125 - 134 counting backward from the final Allegro con brio".)

What Newman does not point out is that in Sibelius the 'propellor' is essentially an extension of cadential formulae and is usually, though not always, marked by undulating harmonies - the dynamic element being the distinctive marking of such a procedure with a small phrase which centres around a particular pivot note or notes. Bars 181-89 show such a cadential formula but only in its last two bars - with the appearance of a pivotal string figure - does it become 'propellor' music (Ex.59); the difference between such propellor music and an ordinary, though emphatic, cadence point is seen if the above example be compared with bars 294-302, (though one of the clearest examples of propellor music will be seen in the first movement of the First Symphony).

At Letter M the propellor music is followed by a brass 'lion roar' which hides the essential cadential function to a certain extent and enables the following section to start with considerable impetus - thus the cadence becomes not only a 'conclusion' but an energetic opening at one and the same moment.

The best features of 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island' are those which, in retrospect, are most characteristic of Sibelius: the Introduction in particular has a clarity of point and texture that is rarely matched later in the work; there is also the simultaneous function

of a change of key with an increase in speed (sometimes supported by a different pedal point); equally the various functions of the pedal points are a vital factor in Sibelius's later development.

The proportions of this work are large, but generally well maintained, though the climax is marked by a spreading climactic theme (rather like the second movement of 'Kullervo') which later Sibelius would have controlled more carefully.

In contrast the proportions of 'The Swan of Tuonela', the second number of this 'Lemminkäinen Suite', are perfectly balanced.

'The Swan of Tuonela' is the only one of the four pieces for which no programme was offered on its first performance (and its earlier history as the Prelude to the abandoned opera 'The Building of the Boat' has already been mentioned).

The key of this composition is A minor, and the relationship between this and the E-flat tonality of 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island' adds support to the previous suggestion concerning both this augmented fourth key-relationship and the choice of A minor: certainly A minor is, for Sibelius, a fitting choice for Tuonela (and its Swan) - in Finnish mythology the equivalent of Hades.

'The Swan of Tuonela' is scored for Cor anglais solo, oboe, bass clarinet, 4 horns, 3 trombones, timpani and Grand cassa, harp, and strings. It is undoubtedly the best and most poetic number of the Suite and while it is nowhere as ambitious or extended as No.1 and is frequently described - accurately - as rhapsodic, it is extremely cohesive and logically constructed; indeed its careful control and development, evolving a simple yet purposeful design (wherein the unfolding rhapsody becomes crystallized in the 'cantabile' theme towards the end of the work) could be regarded as an interesting antecedent for the third movement of the Fourth Symphony.

After four bars of introductory A minor chord the opening paragraph establishes both the main theme and tonality with sequential phrases which support a limpid unfolding melody, rises to a short climax, and is completed by the return to A minor (at letter C). A second sentence complements the first and leads to a more melodically active development and enlargement of the Cor anglais solo (starting at Letter D). This is accompanied by tremolando strings, while the melody pivots around F-sharp - E: here, in contrast to the opening, there is a sense of progression and this is subtly emphasized by the gradual rise of the lowest second violin part, which moves in steps to reach the climax on an A flat minor chord. This chord is gradually accepted as a new key, and confirmed after the interruption of a new and fuller texture for lower strings, bassoons and bass clarinet.

With the direction 'meno moderato' (bar 58) this small section appears to settle down in the new key, but it moves quickly to a climax on a C major chord where a diminuendo accompanies the echoing close of the Cor Anglais solo.

The return to A minor brings (the release of) the climax of the work in a broad melody (Ex.60) for unison strings (less contra basses) over a cross-rhythm in brass and timps. The Cor Anglais repeats this melody after which the design is completed by a brief reappearance of the opening bars.

Against the background of this purposeful design the constituent elements of the opening Cor Anglais solo - the long note followed by a triplet turn, the downward drop of a fifth, the rising stepwise movement - are constantly re-shaped, re-organized, and extended, yet remaining clearly recognizable and never moving far from their original statement: the rhapsodic magic is to be seen in the flow of continuous melody to which this gives rise - bars 36-53 are a superb example. This continuous melody is rhythmically fluid and supple, and a complete contrast to 'Vårsång' (1894); no information as to the degree of revision of the Op.22 Suite is

available, but it is interesting to note :-

(i) that Sibelius went to Bayreuth and heard 'Tannhauser' and 'Lohengrin' after writing 'Vårsång',

(ii) that Ekman quotes Sibelius as saying "I worked at the Lemminkäinen cycle that had occupied me since the summer of 1893 and had been brought a good bit nearer completion after my visit to Bayreuth during my stay in Munich",[1] and

(iii) (to note) the Wagnerian influence in Op.22 No.1 as well as the 'continuous melody' of 'Swan of Tuonela'.

The orchestral setting of this work is effective and important: effective since it evokes a translucent darkness, admirably reflecting its programmatic background, and important since it illustrates clearly the conceptual relationship between a particular orchestral colour and the character and purpose of the theme it carries. The mounting excitement and sence of progression in the 'middle' section are rightly supported by the string tremolo, while the sudden change of orchestral colour in bars 54-8 confirms the A-flat minor simply and effectively: thematic function and orchestral setting are used together purposefully.

The third number of the suite, 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela', is sometimes considered to rival, if not surpass, the achievement of No.1. It is scored for double woodwind including Cor Anglais and Bass Clarinet, a normal brass section which omits the tuba, and a percussion section which requires tamburo, triangle, cymbals, and Grand cassa, 'con bacchette di timp': there are no timpani.

'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela' is a work of slightly more modest size than No.1 and shows a clear ternary design. As regards its general proportions it gains much from its abbreviated third section, while its contrasting middle

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1. Ekman, op.cit., p.128.

section, though derived, is more important for its differences than its resemblances.

The tonal organization is more theatrically dramatic than in No.1 and centres on the searching tension and abrupt changes of tonal direction reflecting the programme originally suggested in the Kalevala quotations; note that the title is somewhat misleading since the quoted lines[1] refer almost exclusively to the search for, and recovery of Le..minkäinen by his Mother - though Sibelius seems to have taken the opportunity once again to express the idea of Tuonela - the land of the Dead, hence the inclusion of Cor Anglais and Bass Clarinet.

The first section (which lasts until Molto Lento, p.34) and in particular the opening shows a characteristic Sibelian start with 'ordinary' material gradually developing, by simple repetition and extension, into a theme (Ex.61) of some substance and emotional suggestion as it moves from the dominant of F-sharp minor to the tonic. At Tempo Primo a derived diminution of this first theme now acts as an accompaniment from which a further theme for woodwind gradually emerges. This new theme, A2, (Ex.62) centres closely round the dominant and is almost obsessively worked: increasing in tension and urgency (from bar 60 onwards) with its reiterated notes. At Letter C it breaks off abruptly, leaving the tonality unconfirmed, and reverts to the opening idea which now centres of C minor.

This, however, does not remain as static as at its first appearance and quickly leads to a climax marked by a powerful brass suspension. This resolves, temporarily in F-sharp minor, but the return of the opening idea leads to a repeat of the brass climax, moving this time towards F minor.

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1. Runo 15, Lines 115-6, 179-182, 186-190, 239-242, 273, 275-6, 603-6, 611-615.

The continued avoidance of a settled tonality results in the establishment (bar 121 onwards) of a largely undulating passage which develops the previous suspension; this culminates (at Letter F) in a further diminution of A2, in a thin three-part texture, which highlights the feeling of tension and continued striving, as does the climactic repetitions of the last three bars of p.27. The return of the brass suspension leads to a formidable climax which eventually subsides in F-sharp minor.

The middle section opens imaginatively, and the coolness of its A minor tonality is gently emphasized by the tamburo direction 'kaum hörbar, am Rand des Instrumentes'. The string theme (Ex.63) is obviously derived from the previous clarinet entry though this is less important than the immediate impact of its contrast. The main idea of the section (particularly from Letter K onwards) is sustained in a cool effortless texture that Sibelius was inclined to use later when writing music for the theatre. Here a momentary interruption by horns is taken as the opportunity to move to the warmer tonal centre of C-sharp minor and a richer texture which become reminiscent of Grieg, especially after the move to G-sharp minor. At Letter M the return to C-sharp minor is shortly interrupted by the abrupt return of A1, in A minor, with strings directed to play 'trem., sul pont.'. This theatrical gesture releases the full range of the climax of the first section which, from Largamente assai, is very nearly a literal repeat. The last four bars of p.53 expand the original cadence which is then interrupted by a static D major chord in a startlingly new texture (Ex.64) that provides the complete foil to the emotional heat of the climax and enables the work to close quickly and effectively.

It is not difficult to support the suggestion that 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela' achieves more than the first number of this Suite: the design is more tautly fashioned and purposefully maintained while the movement as a whole is marked by a greater invention - one thematic development is 'sketched' in Ex.65. On the other hand it is difficult, at times, to resist the thought that this third number lacks the passionate involvement of No.1; 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela' is much more of an objective 'picture' than 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island'.

The abbreviated third section of 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela' contributes much to the succinctness of the work, and Sibelius is enabled to make this abbreviation by the simple means of (i) first restating A1 in A minor thus cancelling dramatically (- there was no modulation -) the orchestral warmth of the C-sharp minor passage, and (ii) using a specific string technique to increase the dramatic tension (without taking a considerable amount of time).

The 'restatement' is largely literal until the extension of the brass cadence figure which is itself interrupted by the static D major chord for woodwind: the scoring of these bars is one of Sibelius's most imaginative orchestral moments in all the (orchestral) works up to the First Symphony.

The essentially cadential G-sharp - F-sharp melodic progression (from bar 317 onwards) is presented with a variety of increasingly stable chords (the F-sharp marks the end of the phrase and is presented (a) as part of an augmented 6th on D-natural, (b) as minor subdominant, (c) major subdominant) and in increasing note values. The static quality of the D major chord, enhanced by its texture, provides a necessary balance to the emotional heat of the previous brass scoring and thus enables the cadence to function without becoming extended or using commonplace cadential formulae. The abrupt

ending of 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela' is unconventional but very convincing.[1]

The last number of the Op.22 Suite 'Lemminkäinen's Return', is written for a large orchestra with a percussion department that includes Campanelli, and requires Gran cassa as well as timpani.

The original programme contained the following lines from Runos 29 and 30:

"Then the lively Lemminkäinen,
He the handsome Kaukomieli,
From his care constructed horses,
Coursers black composed from trouble.
(Runo 30, lines 481-4)

and

"Started on his homeward journey,
Saw the land and saw the beaches,
Here the islands, there the channels,
Saw the ancient landing stages,
Saw the former dwelling places.
(Runo 29, 454-8)

and this is significantly different from the lines (exclusively from Runo 30)

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1. Johnson's programmatic interpretation (p.69) of these closing bars is questionable: his comment is unjust.

which now preface the printed miniature score.[1]

Although this final number is apparently nowhere as ambitious as either No.1 or No.3, it rivals 'The Swan' as the most successful of the Suite; indeed it is possible to argue that in many ways 'Lemminkäinen's Return' is more truly Sibelian than any of the other numbers, represents more of a creative achievement, and suggests techniques (even material) and a conception that points forward to some moments in the later symphonies and more immediately to the revised version of 'En Saga' (and through that to 'Pohjola's Daughter'). Its own ancestry in the fourth movement of 'Kullervo' is clear, and the comparison measures the size of Sibelius's achievement.

The basic design is simple and owes much of its strength and imaginative impact to its tonal construction. The opening ten pages - a sort of tone-poem exposition - gradually present the main A1 theme (Ex.66) in a C minor tonality which is consistently marked by B-flat and A-flat, and is in reality an extension of the technique used at the beginning of No.1; the whole of this opening section is situated on a C minor chord (eventually shown to be within the key of E-flat) which is at first accepted as a convenient starting point, but later - p.11 et seq - acquires the characteristics of the key of C minor, before it is finally abandoned and thereby shown to have existed within the framework of E-flat major.

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1. In the miniature score the first four lines are continued thus :

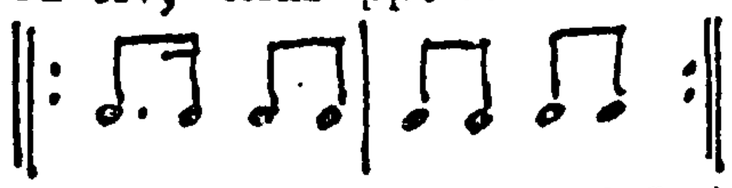
Reins from evil days he fashioned,
Saddles from his secret sorrows,
Then his horses back he mounted,
And he rode upon his journey,
At his side his faithful Tiera,
And along the shores he journeyed,
On the sandy shores proceeded
Till he reached his tender Mother,
Reached the very aged woman.

This C minor 'key' is achieved by the move to a real dominant chord on p.11, but is immediately challenged by the C-sharp entry in woodwind and horns before it is finally confirmed (on p.15 - after a passage stressing the dominant) with an emphatic cadence: there is some <u>musical</u> reason for the cymbal entry here! The modal B- and A-flats which have so consistently marked this opening paragraph are more functional than mere 'colour' notes: they support and contribute to the tonal tension generated by this opening which remains for so long on the threshold of C minor: in fact like many of Sibelius's 'modal' features they serve an essentially <u>tonal</u> purpose.

The immediately following paragraph (pp.15-19) acts as a kind of counter-exposition, leading away from C minor (at letter D) and into the second section of the work.

Here the programmatic inspiration of Lemminkäinen's ride is reflected and recreated by the interplay of :-

(i) the persistent use of semiquavers,

(ii) the measured release of A1, thus pp.21-8 have only  while pp.29-36 have 

(iii) the amount and controlled frequency of modulation; the first move away from A-flat is gradual, after which modulations occur more frequently, usually to mediant keys, but later showing a tendency to move to keys only a tone apart, thereby increasing the idea of movement, and

(iv) the use of short pedal notes to emphasize the new 'keys' - in contrast to the long opening C minor pedal.

With the arrival at E-flat minor (Letter I) the design comes full circle and reaches both its conclusion and climax. The sequence of

events here is as follows :-

(i) A1 is established as a string ostinato,

(ii) there is a persistent use of D-flat and C-flat which parallels the B- and A-flats of the opening section, and creates much the same tonal tension,

(iii) a new theme (Ex.67) appears on p.40 - as additional evidence that E-flat is to be the ultimate key, though here it is still minor, while

(iv) the occasional sudden swerves to the other 'keys'(at L + 2 and M + 2) strengthen the establishment of E-flat and eventually lead (at Letter N) to an extended dominant passage which effects the achievement of E-flat major and is marked by the appearance (at Letter O) of a completely new theme (Ex.68) the structure of which recalls the Karelia Suite);

(v) the whole work is nicely rounded off (using some E-natural interruptions which balance the C-sharp interruptions of the opening) with a short codetta 'quasi presto'.

To assign the essence and vitality of this combination to (little more than) the gradual unfolding of the opening motive is to misjudge the entire work;[1] the tonal design is so much a part of the original creative conception that almost any rhythmic phrase could have served as well as A1, and it is interesting to note that in the final E-flat minor/major section the climax is largely carried by (2) new themes.

The clarity and effectiveness of this design, its tonal movement from C minor (with its 'modal' features) to E-flat, the simplicity and point of its texture, together with the interest (even though programmatically derived) in the increasing 'speed' and 'intensity' of modulation, the function of pedal points and the associated interplay of timpani and

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1. Yet some writers have done just this!

2. - as a result of its extended usage of the chord of C minor in the key of E-flat.

Gran cassa[1] are all typical features of mature Sibelian compositions: above all it is the essential simplicity of conception and materials that seems to point to works beyond the First and Second Symphonies.

It is hardly an exaggeration to suggest that 'Lemminkäinen's Return' leads eventually, for example, to such an original conception as the first movement of the Sixth Symphony - and in particular its opening three pages: certainly 'Lemminkäinen's Return' provides one possible antecedent[2] for the fact that, as it is commonly expressed, a large part of the first movement of the Sixth Symphony in D minor is written in C major.

Leaving aside 'Kullervo', the Op.22 Lemminkäinen Suite is the most important orchestral music by Sibelius prior to the First Symphony, and in spite of its subsequent revisions may be accepted as representative of Sibelius's orchestral music in the 1890's. It also suggests many of the features which were later to be more securely established as characteristic of the tone poems - in contradistinction to the symphonies - while the most significant parts of the Suite are those where Sibelius is concerned with a tonal evolution.

Both the internal evidence of these four compositions, as well as the confusion and later history of their programmatic intentions, leads to the conclusion that while the stories of the runos may have acted as an inspirational catalyst they were not used as 'blue-prints' for musical designs; while Sibelius was perhaps 'moved' by a poetic idea he was concerned only to give the essence of his subject.

Harold Johnson, having uncovered the original programmatic 'intentions' of Op.22, and quoting the letter Sibelius wrote to the poet J.H.Erkko (vide p.38) sees these facts as very significant, but the progressive

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1. This interplay of timpani and Gran cassa is discussed at the end of this chapter.

musical evidence of Sibelius's compositions shows the evolution of a clear distinction between the symphonies and the tone poems. More pertinently here it must be stated that although quotations from private and personal letters can frequently be enlightening, it is as well when considering such quotations as <u>evidence</u> to take the precaution of accepting them 'cum grano salis'. Such advice is particularly relevant when considering Sibelius's letter to Erkko: Sibelius was a young man at the beginning of his career seeking the help of an older and established artist; further he was considering the production of an opera in a country where it was neither indigenous nor a courtly pastime. It is not therefore surprising to find Sibelius writing with enthusiasm and stressing the importance of libretto - he was after all writing to a poet!

Having established his interest in the basic 'poetic idea' Sibelius then realized his conception in compositions that evolved their own design in accordance with their needs.

The essence of much of these works is tonality and in particular the various ways in which it can be made to function. 'Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island' shows a tonal organization and indeed a harmonic structure which reflects its programmatic yearning admirably; equally 'Lemminkainen's Return' illustrates one of Sibelius's simplest and most effective procedures of hovering on the brink of tonality from which the real tonic is only gradually approached, while the impact of the 'modal' alterations is conspicuous for the <u>tonal</u> action it causes. Moreover the technique of beginning away from the tonic key is a feature which itself suggests the 'epic' and indeed becomes a feature of the opening of two of Sibelius's most important tone poems.

The orchestration of the suite as a whole is completely assured. It is obviously written by a composer not only with an intimate knowledge of each instruments capabilities, but, more than this, with a sensibility

to what is particularly necessary for emphasis, clarity, or colour at any specific moment; at times there is evidence of the ability to sustain interest by orchestral textures per se, and even (No.3) to reserve a new texture for a vital contribution to the design of the work.

The woodwind and percussion sections show the most development towards what one would call typically Sibelian usage. Flutes are used skilfully and they double the violins only when necessary: there are occasionally very effective uses of low flute, and they evolve some of their most characteristic phrases in thirds, as well as one particular passage (No.1) in dim 5ths. Apart from 10 bars in No.1, the piccolos are used only in No.4 where they become a distinct feature: besides a more conventional use there are such moments as that (p.60) where they double 'ppp' trombones two octaves higher.

The oboe is undoubtedly Sibelius's favourite woodwind instrument: for as well as tending to lead the woodwind section it has most of the important solo work. Its range is fully utilized with E-flat in alt not uncommon. In contrast the clarinet is treated with conspicuous reserve, while its large degree of unison work with oboes results in a woodwind timbre peculiar to Sibelius. The bassoon is melodically active, and some of its most memorable entries are those marked 'ppp' which anticipate the 'lugubre' direction of later works.

The suite shows the brass section nearing its most characteristic use: horns are melodically articulate, though they also have a very considerable amount of pedal work and frequently use repeated harmonies to supply rhythmic propulsion. The trumpets, apart from obvious 'highlights', are used sparingly - not however without some subtlety, as for instance in

No.1 (bar 270) where they add an edge to plucked strings; they are also given some fairly lengthy pedal notes which could probably be as effective on horns.

The trombones are used as much for their expressive and sustaining capabilities as for their power. Much use is made of them 'p' and not infrequently 'ppp' ('The Swan of Tuonela' even has 'pppp' !). They are not melodically active. How far the omission of the tuba in Nos.1 and 3 is a product of revision is not known: it is used in most works up to (and including) the Second Symphony (- and it may be suggested that most of these works would benefit if most of its 'f' entries were reduced to 'mf').

Perhaps the department which best shows Sibelius at his most sensitive and perceptive is the percussion. This is clearly seen in his approach to the timpani, which, apart from a few obvious places, are not used for their power alone (in Sibelius's hands they never become romantic 'rumblers'). In No.1 for example they are completely abandoned after bar 396 although the most forceful passages are to be found after that bar. Apart from its first entry, 'f', in this work they are subdued, with the most usual dynamic markings between 'pp' and 'mf'; they appear in only 44 bars and are hardly used conventionally at all, although there are many places for their tuning of G to be so used. In fact it appears that most of the work which is usually given to timpani is taken over by the Gran cassa. The Gran cassa is frequently used in extended rolls with a dynamic range of 'pp' - 'ff' and it could possibly be suggested that Sibelius felt that the tuned pitch of timpani could not be satisfactorily maintained for such prolonged entries and he therefore replaced them with the unpitched but percussively exciting Gran cassa.

The opening of No.4 with its long timpani roll would seem to contradict this, but it should be noted that its initial 'p' marking is maintained until only twobars before the 'ff' direction, while the following bar is marked 'dim.molto'. Occasionally timpani are used to 'mark' or 'underline' a rhythm (No.4, pages 19-20) - a necessary function at such places as four bars before Letter K (still inNo.4) - where the timpani semiquaver helps to articulate the cello and viola theme. It may also be suggested that at times Sibelius uses the timpani as a harmonic bass: No.1 bars 131 et seq.for example. This is not uncommon use by Sibelius, for by allowing the timpani to hold the bass it frees the contra basses to make a distinct impact with their 'pizz' entries - one has the effect without the weariness of (constant) 16' tone.

'The Swan of Tuonela' uses both timpani and Gran cassa together, and the entry of the timpani in bar 66 shows it used to mark the climax of the phrase - the gradual crescendo in the 'f' marking of Cor Anglais, then Bass Clarinet, the peak with first horn and timpani, followed by the diminuendo of the following three horn entries.

The Gran cassa is used conventionally at times but by far the greatest part of its work is in very extended rolls usually makred 'p'. Its lack of definite pitch enables Sibelius to use it to supply some sort of bass tone, and thus 'underpin' and support a texture without making it so tonally determined as a timapni entry. The first Gran cassa entry in No.1 reflects the previous B-flat entry of the contra-basses though it avoids the specific pitch: it thus helps to maintain the hovering quality of the introduction; also in No.1 the Gran cassa entry at bar 506 does not dull the attack of basses and bassoons (on their bottom B-flat) at bar 510 as timpani would have done. A similar example may be seen in the closing bars of 'The Swan of Tuonela': a timpani entry here is unthinkable.

The most important distinction between Gran cassa and timpani is their function. From Op.22 onwards Sibelius uses the timpani as a tonal weapon: its pitch and tuned attack are far more important to Sibelius than its loudness. Its most important functions are (i) to give tonal direction (to act as a tonal 'signpost'), (ii) to act as a pivot between two undulating or ambiguously related tonalities (usually as a mediant pedal)[1] (iii) at times even to contradict (by acting as a tonal 'constant' or as a fixed tonal 'memory') certain harmonic movements and suggestions.

The Gran cassa therefore evolves its characteristic use where (i) the tuned attack of the timpani would give too much emphasis to a tonal direction and (ii) it can create and sustain the excitement of percussion without making it tonal: indeed the timapni can then enter later to greater effect.

There is a progressive refinement of the use of timpani and Gran cassa which increasingly reflects their particular and defined functions.

The triangle too, is used not only for its colour, but as an aid to rhythm or articulation. In No.1 (bar 75) it clearly shows that there is meant to be no cross-rhythm at this point (this is later confirmed by the two horn parts at Bar 338) while later entries (bars 527-8, 541) show it used to enhance the articulation of repeated string notes - it crystallizes the articulation (of 'Scheherazade', Rimsky-Korsakov, where the side drum aids the articulation of a rapid figure for trumpets).

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1. It is not unreasonable to suggest that the 'mature' Sibelius would have replaced the opening C natural timpani entry of 'Lëmminkainen's Return' with either a) a roll for Gran cassa, or b) an E-flat timpani roll.

The remaining percussion instruments are all used with imagination. In No.4 the tambourine at times links two entirely different textures while the cymbals, 'con bacchette', add a sheen to the string texture just as the Tamburo in No.3 evokes an eerie coolness.

On the whole there is a tendency to write for the orchestra in separate departments, and this evolves its own distinct character, though there is no evidence of an 'analytical' scoring (i.e.with the departments in combination, though each maintaining a separate function; vide, for example 'Scherehazade' - Rimsky-Korsakov: 3rd movement, Letter G et seq.).

Above all there is no doubt of the vital existence of a creative musical imagination that finds its natural expression in terms of orchestral music.

In 1897 Sibelius failed in his attempt to obtain a teaching post at the University of Helsinki, but his friends successfully petitioned the Senate to grant Sibelius a yearly stipend.[1]

The first orchestral work written after this award was the incidental music to a play, and this initiated a new area in Sibelius's orchestral compositions: an area that was to remain throughout his entire creative life.

Sibelius wrote incidental music for eleven theatrical productions: the first in 1898 just one year before the First Symphony, while the music for 'The Tempest' is the last significant published orchestral music of Sibelius. The music of these compositions ranges from some exquisite miniatures to pieces that are obvious and even trite, and at times the quality is not consistent within the music for one production. Something of the reason for this variation may be seen in the size of the pieces; although some are more than 'miniatures' they are essentially small-scale

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1. Although, as Layton points out, this pension did not free Sibelius from all his financial worries, nevertheless it enabled him to curtail his teaching, and to devote more time to composition.

wor..s, and - as evidence from these compositions and even some of the purely orchestral pieces will show - it appears that this small scale is a contributory feature to their inconsistency.

The first of the productions to which Sibelius wrote incidental music was 'King Christian II' by Adolf Paul. This play, successful in its time, concerned King Christian II of Denmark and his love for Dyveke, a Dutch girl of common birth and her eventual murder. Four pieces - Elegie, Musette, Minuetto, and 'Fool's Song of the Spider' - were originally composed but later in the same year Sibelius added three further pieces: Nocturne, Ballade, Serenade.[1]

The four original pieces (scored for a small ensemble of 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, harp, triangle and strings) are all modest in size and intention, and the two best pieces are the Elegie and Musette.

The Elegie (whose main theme is shown in Ex.69) is scored for strings alone and echoes Grieg (with Wagnerian overtones). It was originally the prelude to the stage production, elegant and restrained, but wistful rather than tragic - it may have set the mood for the play's opening, but it hardly reflects the tragedy. The Musette is simple and unpretentious: Sibelius's oft-quoted remark about the basoon part should not be taken too seriously :-

> "And this is 'Dyveke's Dance' (Musette). It should be for bagpipes and reeds, but I've scored it for two clarinets and two bassoons. Extravagant, isn't it? We have only two bassoon-players in the entire country, and one of them is a consumptive. But my music won't be too hard on him - we'll see to that".[2]

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1. What no authority bothers to make clear is that Breitkopf & Härtel published two full scores:- 1.The Music to King Christian II, and 2. The Suite from the Music for King Christian II.

2. Johnson (op.cit., p.78) is here quoting from Adolf Paul.

The Minuet, weakest of the original pieces, is straightforward and unremarkable, but the one song in this production - the Fool's Song of the Spider (quoted in Ex.70) - has been interestingly described by Ringbom as "The most nationally characteristic piece of all".[1] Apart from this, however, it too is very conventional and little more than a vehicle for the words.

The three additional pieces are all more ambitious in scope, and require larger orchestral forces: normal woodwind, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings and a different percussion instrument for each piece.

The Nocturne which opens the published Suite is pleasant and effective. Its opening phrases (up to Letter D) have a charming freshness and are largely based on mediant harmonic progressions: F-sharp minor - D major, F major - D major, and F minor - D minor. These appear first as a simple undulating progression, but later (7 bars after Letter C) the last-named progression appears over an F-natural (mediant) pedal, and in view of Sibelius's later development of this simple idea this passage (Ex.71) is interesting. Moreover this mediant undulation is clearly present in the 'introduction' (- it also closes the piece) and this too is prophetic of Sibelius's later technique: indeed this piece is the 'missing link' between the tonic/dominant pedal technique of Op.22 and that of the mediant pedals and their associated tonal tensions and ambiguities as seen in the (immediately following) First Symphony and the revised version of 'En Saga'.

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1. Ringbom: op.cit., p.56.

The Serenade is another pleasant piece and as a Prelude to the Third Act it was probably very effective. Its opening bars (up to Letter B) have a 'pleine air' quality about them, largely due to the simple tonic-dominant harmonies and the woodwind and brass orchestration. The 'cantabile' 9/4 melody in E major (Ex.72), which makes up the middle section of this piece, suggests some connection with the 'big tune' in the finale of the First Symphony, but it has none of the sweep of the First Symphony's melody and after its first few bars, it tends to become rather obvious. The opening 'serenade' music returns to close this piece and mark the opening of the curtain.

The last piece, Ballade is one of the weakest numbers of the suite. Its main 'alla Breve' theme is commonplace, but acceptable until it becomes more ambitious (a tempo, after Letter B) where it is sequentially 'developed' and over-extended: several times it comes to a conclusion without reaching the end!

This incidental music was the first orchestral music of Sibelius to be published, and possibly the first to be played outside Finland.

CHAPTER 6

SYMPHONY No. 1

CHAPTER 6

The Symphony No.1 in E minor, Op.39 was completed in 1899 and first performed in April of that year with Sibelius himself conducting. It is scored for Full orchestra, including tuba and harp, and a percussion section which requires cymbals, triangle, and Gran Cassa as well as timpani.

Formally the sonata-form first movement is extremely straightforward, showing clearly and easily recognizable sections, consisting of an introduction and exposition which presents a wealth of thematic ideas, a development in three sections each of which deals with a particular idea or combination of ideas, and a slightly abbreviated recapitulation in which the order of certain of the themes is reversed.

Although this First Symphony, and particularly the first movement have been favourably received, many scholars nevertheless come to the conclusion that it presents no radical breakaway from tradition; but radical innovation is not the only acceptable guide to musical value and recent musical thinking suggests that this first movement is more truly Sibelian and more creatively important than may formerly have been recognised.

The introduction for solo clarinet accompanied only by a B-natural timpano roll is noteworthy not only for its illustration of the most typical use of the clarinet by Sibelius (and incidentally showing the ancestry of the beautiful solo at the end of 'En Saga') but also for the comment it has aroused concerning Sibelius's method of symphonic construction.

Gerald Abraham in particular argues for the 'germinal importance' of this Introduction though his argument appears to overstrain a "subconscious" relationship. Robert Simpson, on the other hand, dismisses such thematic connections and makes the following observation:[1]

> "So strong is the sound of G major at the opening of the Allegro energico, in its continuation to a massive counter-statement, and in its emphatic confirmation at the reprise, that I shall not be surprised if somebody eventually finds out that the slow E minorish theme (on a clarinet over a drum roll on B) which precedes all this is an afterthought, designed to establish E minor in the back of the listener's mind. There is not very much point in looking for subtle thematic connections between this theme and others in the symphony. Its function is tonal and emotional. Its presence at the beginning justifies the first movement's ultimate subsidence into E minor..."[2]

- and bearing this suggestion in mind it could well be argued that the E - F-sharp anacrusis of the 'first subject' is far more important in terms of tonality than it is in terms of thematic unity and later derivation.

Indeed an examination of the 'first subject' in the light of Simpson's suggestion leads to the conclusion that the creative idea of this first movement is the tension which arises from the interplay between E minor and G major, together with its continuing 'ambiguity' and tonal undulation.

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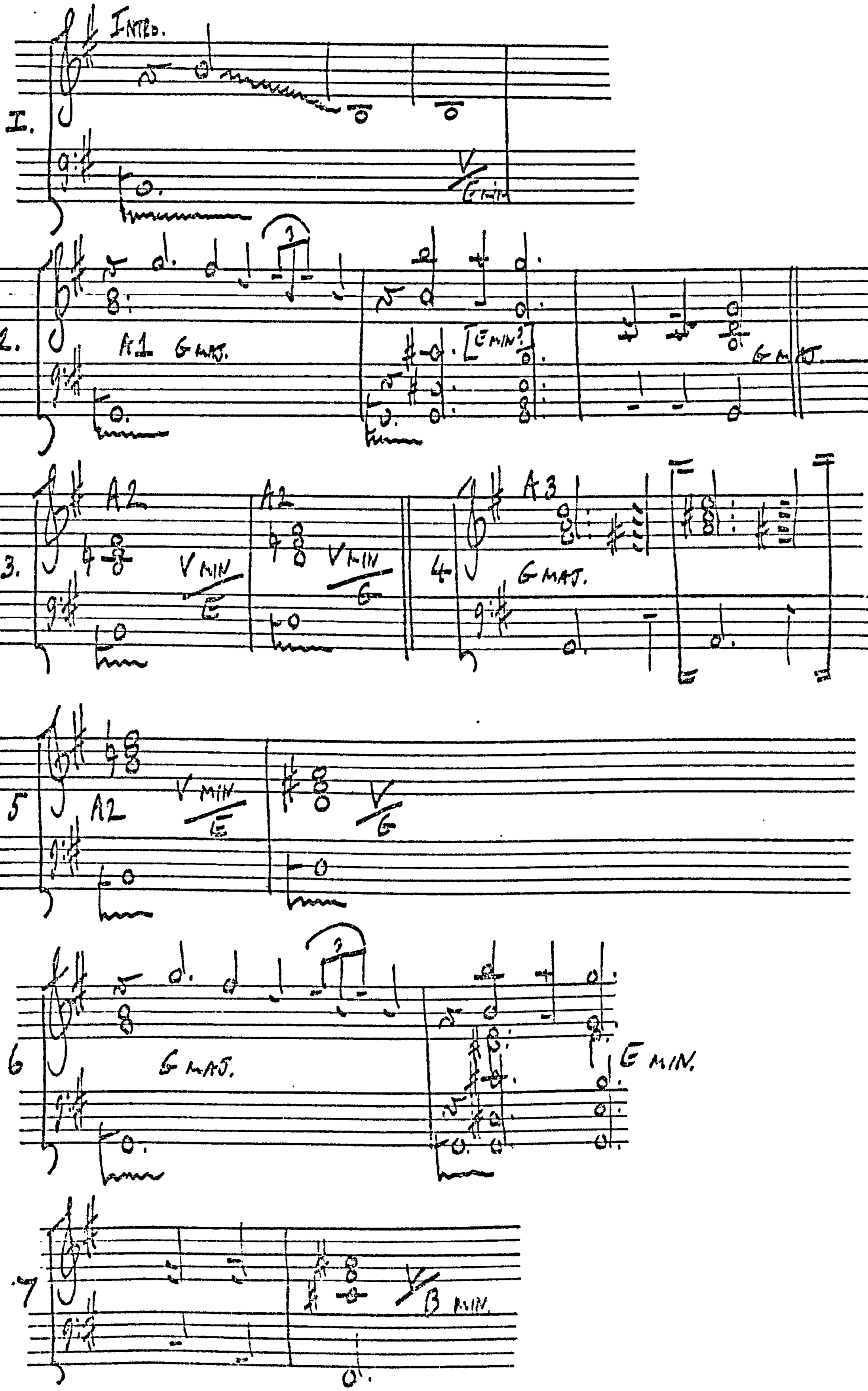
1. Simpson, op.cit., pp.7-8.
2. If it were necessary, then additional evidence in support of Simpson's suggestion concerning the tonal function of the (clarinet) introduction is to be found in the Sixth Symphony; for in that work the absence of such an Introduction serves to increase the tonal ambiguity.

Internal evidence supports this suggestion, provides acceptable explanations for certain recurring procedures, and indeed presents clear directions by which the important details may be related to the overall design.

The basic tonal tension between E minor and G major becomes obvious if a sketch plan of the themes and tonal situations of the first part of the exposition is drawn up thus :

Ex.No.	Theme	Tonal situation	Ref.to Ex.73 (p.79)
74	Introduction	1st phrase suggests dominant of E minor, 2nd phrase becomes fairly clearly G minor;	1
75	First subject A1	G major...(E minor?)...G major	2
76	A2	minor dominant of E, then minor dominant of G;	3
77	A3	G major (then moves up to A major);	4
	A2	minor dominant of E; followed by (real) dominant of G;	5
	Counterstatement of A1:	G major....E minor	6
		- followed by a C major chord (via A minor) to F-sharp major as dominant of B minor (and the second subject).	7

Ex. 73.


I.
INTRO.
V
G MIN.
2.
A1
G MAT.
[E MIN?]
G MAT.
3.
A2
V MIN
E
A2
V MIN
C
4
A3
G MAT.
5
A2
V MIN
E
V
G
6
G MAT.
E MIN.
7
B MIN.

The clarinet/timpano introduction itself contributes to the basic conception of the movement for while its first phrase clearly centres round the dominant of E minor, its second phrase (without timpano) suggests G minor, and finishes with a G-natural: this is taken up by the reiterated G-B's which form the accompaniment for the first main theme (A1) and that too begins with a sustained G natural - only in its immediate repeat does the E - F-sharp anacrusis appear. The tonal tension of this A1 theme is further shown by the ambiguous dominant discord (7 bars before Letter A - which sounds more like an interrupted cadence in G than a cadence in E minor) and indeed this first sentence finishes with a G major chord (just before Letter A).

The A2 theme increases this tonal tension since it oscillates between the (minor) dominants of E minor and G, after which A3 clearly starts in G major: moreover the sequential extension of A3 begins, as it were, on the supertonic of G major. After a repeat of A2 (with its dominant situations) a powerful cadential progression culminates, 'ff' (at Letter C), in an emphatic C major chord and the beginning of a counterstatement where the tonal tension is restated in a much stronger scoring.

The first significant change of harmony in this counterstatement occurs at Letter D, and 8 bars later, following a short, energetic, extremely functional transition, the movement arrives at the threshold of B minor - and the second subject.

The tonal importance and function of timpani in Sibelius's compositions has already been suggested, and in this movement there is an extended illustration of its employment: indeed most of the stages of the

exposition outlined above are accompanied by a 'tonal' timpani entry, thus :

Bar	Timp entry	Function
Introduction		
1st phrase	(i) B	supports dominant of E minor
2nd phrase	(ii) (silent)	absence of timpano enhances suggestion of G minor;
A-7	G	first entry of Allegro; occurs under ambiguous discord thus strengthening G major orientation;
A	rolls on B, then D	significantly emphasizing the tonal oscillations of A2;
(repeated B-10 et seq)		
C-2	(i) roll on D, then G (ii) G-B simultaneously	emphasises cadential function in G major;
D+5	F-sharp ('fff')	clearly heralds the second subject and the key of B minor.

- the evidence is such that the essential and tonal function of the timpani cannot be denied.

The second subject is situated on an extended F-sharp pedal; its principal theme (B1, Ex.78) is slightly varied to give rise to two subsidiary themes (B2, B3, Exs.79, 80) and the latter of these (suggesting some kind of rhythmic relationship to A1) is shortly transformed (at Letter H) into what may be taken as the 'locus classicus' of Sibelian 'propellor' music.

The use of an extended dominant pedal as the foundation for the second subject was suggested as early as the first movement of 'Kullervo', but at that time it was inclined to remain rather static; here the pedal is active in that it presents a simple hovering between the chords of F-sharp major and C-sharp minor, possibly suggesting some sort of 'modal' F-sharp major, and as a result of this it both parallels and balances the

tonal tension of the 'first subject'. (Note: in 'Kullervo' the pedal/ transition was a balance in dimension only; here it is also a balance of tensions.).

Further its subsequent use of 'propellor' music together with its associated 'stringendo' direction allows this second subject to build up a convincing climax which confirms the key of B minor with a minimum of gesture and without the disproportion seen in 'Kullervo': here the tonal and cadential function of the propellor is so clearly expressed that when it arrives at its B minor conclusion (Tempo Primo) the event is so foreshadowed that it can be simply stated by an octave B-natural - and marked 'mf'; and the briskness of the propellor's cadential function itself parallels the brevity of the 'transition' between the first and second subjects.

The development may be seen in three sections each of which deals largely with one particular idea or combination of ideas, though throughout the section there is a continuous line of thought which is progressive and becomes more urgent as the recapitulation and the return of the original tonal tensions become more imminent, thus the second section (Letters L - P) begins with B3 in G-sharp minor (hovering) over a B-natural pedal on timpani, but just before Letter M this is pulled towards B major with the reappearance of A1 - emphasized by the dynamic markings of the timpani and its triplet B-naturals. This tonal move releases an energetic development of B1, in a thin texture, using short sequential phrases occasionally stabilized by internal pedals, but largely lacking any sustaining harmonic accompaniment, and as a result giving rise to the sensation of increased, and more vigourous movement.

In the third and final section of the development (which is mainly concerned with the initial phrase of A1) the mounting excitement and urgency of the second section is further increased by the quaver movement

for cellos and contra-basses, the imitative woodwind entries of A1 - in chromatic and contrapuntal opposition to the lower strings - and the entry and sustained roll of the Gran cassa.

The end of this third section of the development and the beginning of the recapitulation are subtly dovetailed. Two factors are responsible for this: first, the final section of the development has insisted on the initial phrase of A1 (to the exclusion of everything else) and, secondly, the fact that there was a counterstatement enables Sibelius to omit the first (re-)appearance of A1 and A2 and therefore to begin the recapitulation 'proper' with A3 - in G major: the subsequent appearance of A2, followed by A1 will then swing the tonality to E minor. Sibelius uses these facts to make a natural abbreviation.

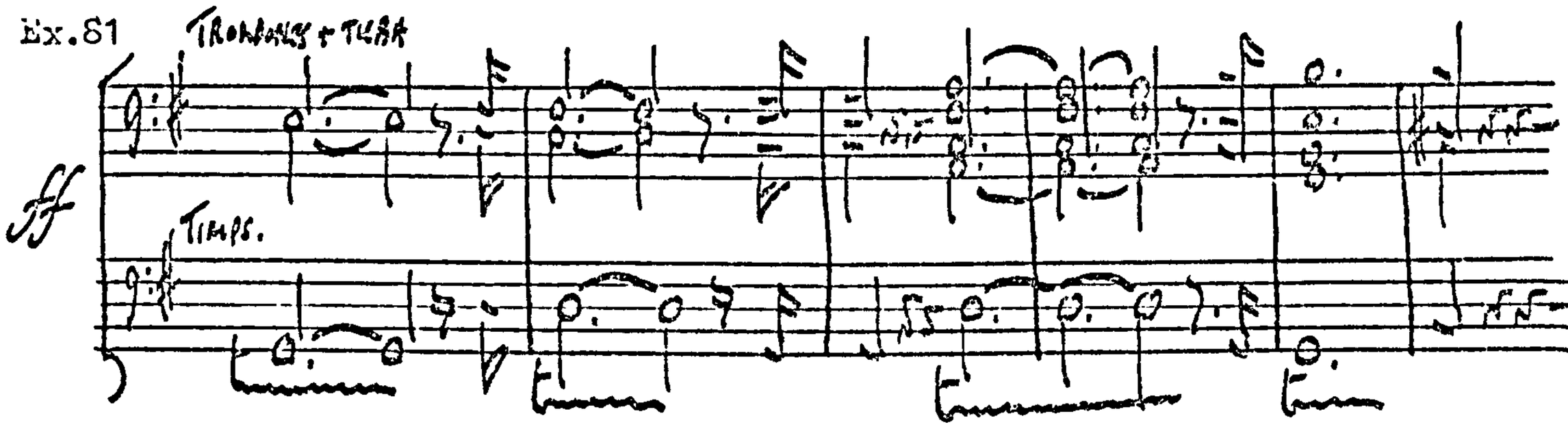
Shortly after Letter W the climax of this first subject is reached with an 'fff' augmented-sixth chord on C natural (though the A-sharp is here written as B-flat); this is the crux of the argument and it could have resolved directly on the dominant and thence to the tonic minor. Instead it is followed by a short passage, replacing the original transition, that presents a pensive summary or microcosm of the main tonal tensions: these few bars move first to G major, but the following sequential phrase is immediately returned to E minor; the idea is continued, making some play of the enharmonic identity of E-flat/D-sharp, before resolving - after a comma and the direction 'tranquillo' - on an A minor chord which is itself shown to be the subdominant of E minor only after the harp has momentarily suggested that it could have been the supertonic of G major.

The design of the movement is completed (at Letter X) by the return of B3, over a dominant, B-natural, pedal point (here emphasized by timpani) and leading directly to the 'poco a poco più stretto e crescendo' propellor

music which makes a further natural abbreviation as well as providing a simple and effective means of finally re-establishing E minor.

The short coda (beginning at Letter Z) both confirms the E minor tonality and at the same time takes the opportunity to continue the tonal conflict: significantly it avoids the actual chord of G major, thus narrowing down the tonal oscillation. The essence of this coda is shown in Ex.81:

Ex.81



where it may be clearly seen that while the brass emphatically move to an E minor cadence, the timpani clearly suggest G major[1] (and incidentally provides further 'proof' of their essential tonal function); the final resolution of the movement (last 7 bars) recalls (in augmentation) the anacrusis of A1, and suggests the tonal evolution (and thesis) of the movement, while the top notes of the final twochords may be read as a motto - and a 'parting shot'.

The tonal ambiguity of this first movement is clearly the basis from which the design is evolved and to which all other details are essentially and functionally subservient. The opening 'Allegro energico' presents what amounts to a tonal thesis which is developed and explored: later Sibelius symphonies were to use more 'commonplace' and functional material for the initial presentation of such a tonal thesis, but the principle is

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1. Compare this Ex.81 with Ex.347 (from the Sixth Symphony, first movement, 4 bars after Letter L).

established in this movement and the work is more important in Sibelius's symphonic development than is usually credited.

The advance of this movement over the 'Introduction' of 'Kullervo' may be briefly listed as :

1. the main A1 idea has an essentially symphonic and inherent tonal tension - the D-natural of 'Kullervo' is a colour note rather than a crucial tonal characteristic;
2. the transition here is even more pointed and effective;
3. the second subject (on an extended dominant pedal) provides a balance to the tonal tension, as well as a balance in dimensions;
4. the development is more concise, and makes an even more effective use of a sense of increasing speed just before the recapitulation;
5. the recapitulation:
   - (i) makes a natural abbreviation of the first subject,
   - (ii) replaces the transition with a new passage marked by tonally ambiguous harmonies, summarizing the situation and prolonging the ambivalence,
   - (iii) uses the dominant pedal to establish E minor, and to make a natural abbreviation of the second subject, and
   - (iv) is followed by a concise, powerful, coda that again makes reference to the tonal conflict: it is not just an emotional climax as it was in 'Kullervo'.

The second, slow, movement is in E-flat major: a choice of tonality which, as Simpson points out, sounds more like the flat sixth of G major than any possible relative of the tonic (E minor);[1] moreover although E-flat is the key where 'big' cantabile melodies sit easily for Sibelius, the character and construction of this movement suggest a further development of the central tonal evolution of the first movement.

The movement falls into three main sections, and the first - somewhat similar to a sonata exposition - begins immediately with the main theme, A1 (Ex.82). This richly romantic melody has four points of particular interest :

(i) although it is clearly in E-flat there is a strong harmonic leaning to C minor, and it makes a particular point of the ambiguous diminished - 7th chord,

(ii) this tonal 'ambiguity' is both caused and reflected by the undulating G - F progression of the melody,

(iii) the dynamic marking of the phrase-ending of the string melody and its clarinet reply are to be noted: the cresc....descesc. of the string melody (pp.48-9) swells out the plagal cadence thus countering the 'disruption' caused by the submediant chord; in turn the rising-third of this phrase-ending evokes the artless clarinet phrase with its 'cool' E-flat cadence,

(iv) the whole of this opening paragraph (right up to Letter C in fact) is firmly based on an E-flat pedal, played by contra-basses and carefully phrased to ensure a continuous sound.

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1. In passing it is interesting to recollect that the second movement of Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony (in E minor) is in D major.

The continuation and repetition of this theme explores further this attraction to the submediant - there is now (pp.48-9) a significant break in the melody immediately after the progression to the C minor chord, and the leaning to C minor is further suggested in the 'deciso' woodwind theme, A2, (Ex.83) which follows at Letter B; characteristically this A2 theme shares the rhythm of the first theme, and thus extends further the characteristic of ambiguity that marks this first paragraph.

At Letter C, 'un poco meno andante' there is a complete break in texture and melody: here a new idea is presented in a thin 2-part texture, suggesting a more active degree of movement and initiating a more obviously 'symphonic' transition - in contrast to the 'melodic' character and basis of the opening E-flat paragraph.

This active transition reaches some heated climaxes through sequences and moves towards C minor where, with the restoration of Tempo primo (p.55) and some fragments of A1, it hovers round the dominant: the scoring of this passage is peculiarly Sibelian and hauntingly beautiful: the only orchestral gesture to challenge this passage occurs in Op.22 No.3.

However this hovering passage appears to take up the G - F melodic undulations (four bars before Letter F) and, having sequentially extended them (E-flat - F) moves suddenly to A-flat major and the presentation of a new theme, B1 (Ex.84) for solo horn. This B1 theme is directed 'molto tranquillo' and accompanied by a string figure derived from the E-flat - F undulation while the melody itself begins with a sustained F natural moving to E-flat. This theme is repeated and followed by a subsidiary theme in A-flat that consists largely of tonic-dominant undulations over an E-flat timpani roll and the continuing string trill (E-flat - F): the cadential character and tonal function of this subsidiary theme is obvious and becomes very marked just before Letter H.

The extension of these cadential phrases, marked 'poco sollecitato' and answered 'poco tenuto' (p.59), shows the tension which is again generated and reflected by the E-flat - F alternations; but the passage is broken with a bar-line pause, and the first main theme (A1) reappears in A-flat minor, Adagio.

After an initial hesitation (a further bar-line pause) A1 is taken up in A-flat minor and presented in full (melodically very much as in the opening paragraph) though it is accompanied by a chromatic figure in woodwind and a repeated pizz. E-flat (triplets) for contra-basses answered by off-beat pizz. chords for violas and (2nd) violins which suggests a 6/4 time signature in contrast to the main theme. The presentation of this main theme therefore is very much as in a development section, and the considerable emphasis on 'E-flat' with which this second section starts helps firstly to relate it to the E-flat (but tonic) pedal of the exposition, while, secondly the triplet presentation by contra-basses allows this E-flat dominant pedal to become unstable and to accomplish the inherent movement (which was resisted in the exposition) to its mediant key - C-flat (itself complete with a tonic pedal and indeed a a progression to its own submediant chord.).

In turn this is followed by a 'development' of the transition figure which again becomes more active (the tempo direction is 'poco a poco meno andante) and moves towards the dominant of C minor before closing its phrase with a G minor chord. It is then worked to some heated climaxes and accompanied by an increase in tempo "al doppio movimento (del Tempo 1)" which launches an extended sequence, eventually reaching a G major chord that is soon shown to be the dominant of C minor (and marked by the entry of the timpani).

At Letter O the third section of the movement is reached: it opens Tempo Primo with A2 hovering on the threshold of C minor (which is now much more explicit than in the 'exposition') and situated over an E-flat pedal; but when the fourth bar of this A2 theme is reached, its common rhythm suggests the A1 theme itself and having reintroduced the G - F alternation - 'fff', three bars before Letter P - both the melody and its accompanying string semiquaver figure stop abruptly, leaving only an ambiguous trombone chord over an E-flat pedal.

The first main theme, A1, is now restated, but the melody now begins with a C-natural, and its phrase is broken with some critically placed commas - questioning the tonal situation and continuing the ambiguity, though E-flat is gradually allowed to gain the ascendancy; note too that this time the clarinet phrases (not heard since the exposition) are also interrupted by commas (at Q-8, and Q) which significantly break the phrases just before the tonic chord itself. However, the movement ends simply with the easy repetition of the last four notes of the string melody and repeated E-flat chords.

Although the three sections of this movement serve some of the functions of a sonata design, this movement is not based on the sonata principle of contrasted keys and themes: instead it explores the tonal (and thematic) tension within one particular key, though it needs the tonal contrast of the A-flat episode. The material of this A-flat episode does not reappear and it is clearly not a second subject; its purpose is perhaps best explained if one describes the movement as a clever fusion of 'melodic' and 'symphonic': moreover it is inclined to increase the obviousness of this fusion by fluid but quite positive and definite alterations of tempi.

The melodic basis of this movement embodies a tonal tension which (particularly from letter C onwards) gradually demands and assumes a more symphonic movement and this in turn suggests an approach to a second - sonata - key, and for which C minor would be a natural choice. This is avoided by the move to A-flat (the sub-dominant of E-flat)and its accompanying episode, which appears to take up the E-flat - F undulation.

The second section of this movement accepts this (minor) key of A-flat, but its complete presentation of the main theme (i.e. a return to the melodic basis of the movement) takes place over a dominant pedal and with a disturbed, chromatic, accompaniment: the inherent tension leads to a symphonic 'development' which again moves towards the dominant of C minor and eventually to a short restatement.

This 'recapitulation' needs only to include the main A1 and A2 themes, and, like the first movement, it presents them in reverse order - thus utilising the inherent tonal leaning of A2 to C minor, though it is situated on an E-flat pedal. The continuation of this tonal evolution is to be observed in the commas which maintain this ambiguity for a large part of this restatement; this is very similar, in principle, to the tonal ambivalence seen in the phrases for trombones and timpani in the coda of the first movement. This similarity of principle, though using different techniques, is a major reason for the fact that many of Sibelius's compositions may be shown to have remarkable similarities, yet to avoid the dangers and sterilisation of empty mannerisms.

One of the most striking features of this movement (and one which illustrates the similarities of principle referred to above) is the use of a mediant/tonic pedal note. In the first movement the most important pedal note was G-natural; in this movement it is E-flat which is the tonic (in E-flat) and the mediant of C minor. Sibelius uses this simple fact to

distinct advantage in the restatement. Similar mediant pedal notes were to appear in subsequent works and they are ideally suited to Sibelius's fondness for tonal ambiguities and his creative penchant for undulating harmonic progressions.

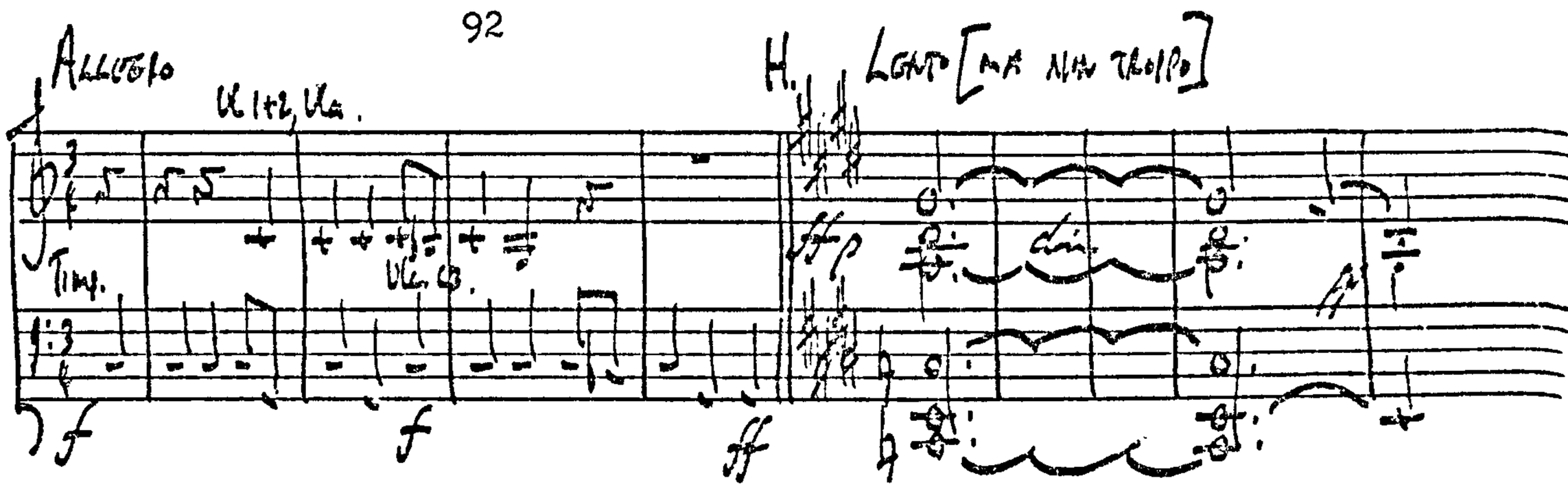
This second movements clever fusion - for that is its essence (it is not a mixture) - of the symphonic and melodic eventually leads to the conception of the middle movement of the Fifth Symphony, and, more immediately, to the revised version of 'En Saga'; indeed as it will later be shown, this movement suggests one reason for the revision of 'En Saga' in 1901 - and not at any previous time.

The third movement, in C major, is a powerfully rhythmic scherzo which, in contrast to the preceding slow movement, is able to complete its large design without undue length. It completes its exposition (main theme, Ex.85, and opening paragraph in the tonic, bridge passage, establishment of second key centre and theme, Ex.86, complete with hints of its submediant, and a short codetta) with little delay, and suggests a development section with a thin tensile counterpoint which, just after Letter G, suggests an imminent reprise. Robert Simpson (having previously stated that "the C-major of the scherzo is decidedly the sub-dominant of G rather than the flat sixth of E (minor or major)" describes the tonal setting and argument of this movement as follows [1] :-

> "The C major leans towards F minor, as if its own subdominant relationship to G makes it want to drop to its own subdominant. As the highly worked scherzo develops towards real sonata form, we arrive at a dramatic hush and the start of a recapitulation; the C major feels even more as if it is going to into F minor than it did at the beginning. Instead Sibelius says, 'So you thought it wasn't the flat sixth of E, did you?' and with a brilliantly abrupt and almost naughtily lurid chord pitches us neck and crop into E major and a slower trio :

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1. Simpson, op.cit., pp.8-9.



> This 'trio' proves the preceding C major passage to be a 'fausse reprisse', and the proper recapitulation follows it some time later when the E major point has been thoroughly rubbed in, and it leads to a short, Beethovenish coda."

However the abrupt transition to E major also illustrates Sibelius's continuing concern with the general thesis of the first movement - and indeed of the entire symphony so far. The 'f' chord (in the 5th bar after Letter G) was previously used to mark the crux of the argument in the first movement: here it has been subtely expanded so that its B-flat/A-sharp (an augmented 6th on C natural, as before, implying E major) has been utilised both as a 'colour' note in the main C major theme itself, and as a tonal characteristic. The 'fausse reprise' is a typical tonal prevarication and prolongment of tonal ambiguity.

The trio makes a considerable point of its E major identity with each gesture towards C-sharp and G-sharp consistently contradicted. The ten bars starting at Letter M illustrate the delightful process of preparing for a return to C-major in which the final B-natural 'pizz' for strings (immediately before the pause p.97) is a last E major gesture that is at once capped by the tuba's C-natural! The continuous tonal evolution of this movement is carefully maintained by the use of Gran cassa and timpani; for example, only the Gran cassa is used in the trio so that any undue tonal suggestion is avoided - the entries on pp.95-6 illustrate this, while the next entry (5 bars after letter M) shows the Gran cassa used in combination with the harp 'glissando' and thereby increasing the feeling of tonal 'uncertainty' - it is after all the 'lurid' chord which opened the trio.

This third movement (is a splendid movement which) has been frequently overlooked in critical writings: it has a direct simplicity and vigorous rhythmic propulsion which, while wholly admirable, has too often been praised for its approximation to hints of a Beethovenian daemon (as expressed in rhythm) rather than examined, and understood, for its Sibelian evolution.

The last movement has the most obvious romantic 'gestures' of the entire work, and even if it is not entirely successful, it is exciting and enjoyable.

Formally the sonata design of this movement is clear though Sibelius entitled it 'Finale (Quasi una fantasia)', probably as a result of the wide changes to tempi associated with its first and second subjects.

The movement begins with a broad restatement of the introduction to the first movement now stated in octave strings over E-minor chords in horns and trombones: the effect is richly romantic. The ensuing sentences - until the Allegro molto - illustrate Sibelius's ability in generating sufficient momentum to move from the opening Andante to the main 2/4 (Allegro molto) of the movement. The principal themes of the Allegro (Exs.87, 88) are short, energetic ideas (making some point of D-sharp/D natural) presented in a thin texture, frequently supported only by an (internal) pedal: they are sequentially worked and rise to a climax where the D-sharp/natural alternation is powerfully extended and consistently answered by an E minor chord.

Here it appears that although the threshold of the dominant key has been reached, there is a reluctance to leave the tonic, and (at Letter F) after a

pause on an unaccompanied D natural (for violins) a semiquaver figure for strings, 'risoluto', finishes with a B-natural. The contra-basses repeat this B natural, pizz, and complete their cadential progression (B - E) though the tonality is swung to C major. The second subject B1 (Ex.89) is now presented: a broad cantabile melody, pinned down over a C natural pedal, and marked - one might almost say 'of course' - by the most mannered of Sibelius's harmonic progressions and leaning towards its own submediant key (A minor).

The effect of this second subject is to recall the slow movement: a recollection and relationship strengthened by the common leaning to the submediant, the same harmonic progression (though it lacks the tension it possessed in the second movement) and its pedal foundation.

But from letter H onwards this theme turns away from its tonic/submediant alternation and the enharmonic (and ambiguous) A-flat/G-sharp is shown to be the mediant of F-minor, and the last complete statement of this theme (B1) takes place in the key of F minor, though the pedal C remains.

The development section begins 'allegro molto come primo' at letter K: it is short, sequential, and highly energetic (- an impression which is enhanced by the fact that the development begins by taking an augmented 6th chord on D-flat enharmonically, and moving off on the dominant of F-sharp minor); it is entirely based on material from the first subject group, and returns to the tonic key and the beginning of the recapitulation at letter O.

Here, in an orchestral setting reminiscent of 'Lemminkäinen's Return', most of the opening first subject material is restated, and it is now extended to include one sentence situated on the dominant (p.135). The transition maintains the dynamic impetus it inherits, (note that after letter Q it avoids using timpani, and uses Gran cassa instead) and reaches its climax with a sustained (dominant 7th) chord on E natural.

The second major change of tempo now takes place, and with a Common time-signature and the direction 'Andante (ma non troppo)' this sustained chord (V^7 on E) is shown to be an augmented sixth in A-flat major, in which key B1 is first restated.

This time the second subject is not (at first) pinned down by a pedal point, but is instead accompanied by a gradually descending bass line, and moves from the key of A-flat to D-flat, after which the tonal progression is sequentially repeated (B-flat to E-flat) from where an enharmonic change (2 bars before letter U) leads to B major. From this point until 'poco tenuto' (3 bars before letter X) the restatement is literal though its re-scoring allows the romantic sweep and richness of this theme to carry everything before it: the simplicity and effectiveness ofthis scoring are worthy of note.

The literal character of this restatement was largely forecast in the original statement of B1 where it moved from C major to F minor: this is now parallelled by the move from B major to E minor.

A short coda (beginning at letter X) momentarily moves to the flat side of the key before an emphatic cadence closes the movement: the last two chords recall the close of the first movement.

In this movement interest has centred on the wide changes of tempi associated with the first and second subjects; the actual technical means to effect this change are straightforward.[1] But while many writers have praised this change simply for its effect, Simpson sees it more as an unresolved problem, pointing out[2] that "the immense slowness of this idea is never really fully integrated with the rest of the movement."

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1. Parmet,(op.cit, pp.6-7) finds it necessary to emphasize the process of changing the tempo, and to warn of conductors who misread these changes: Sibelius has, however, made his intentions perfectly clear, as p.141 of the miniature score unmistakably shows.
2. Simpson, op.cit., p.9

This cannot be denied, though the problems of musical 'pace' it implies are more conveniently examined in the finale of the Third Symphony. Here it may be suggested that Sibelius was aware that his ideas would not easily be accommodated in such a (conventional) finale, hence the sub-title 'quasi una fantasia'.

The similarity and comparison between this theme and the main theme of the second movement is interesting and instructive: in the second movement the tension caused by the leaning to the submediant was first answered by the subdominant chord and then dismissed by the clarinet phrase. In this finale Sibelius answers the submediant tendency by a move to the subdominant key - thus emphasizing the melodic qualities and lyric character of this second subject, but thereby suggesting a time scale and a speed of progression which is not integrated with the rest of the movement. In this movement (in contrast to the second movement) there is no fusion of the melodic and the symphonic - it is a mixture and accompanied, therefore, not by a gradual and logical increase (and decrease) of tempi, but by a dramatic change.

But the effect and importance of this cantabile second subject is not merely negative: the theme is immensely enjoyable and impressively presented; moreover since the first three movements have been shown to have some tonal 'thesis' in common, a lightweight finale would have been incompatible and unacceptable. To counteract this Sibelius uses a 'big tune' which although clearly in the romantic tradition is here used purposefully, and his recognition of the necessity for this is an important step towards some of his greatest movements.

It is obvious that this second subject is something more than just a striking contrast: its large size, the amount of time it is allowed to occupy, and indeed its domination of the recapitulation are indicative

of Sibelius's intentions. This intention is more nearly realised in the Second Symphony, while in the Third a genuine 'summing-up' theme (a term best explained later) occurs for the first time. From the finale of the Third Symphony there is a clear progression to that of the Fifth, and ultimately to the whole conception of the Seventh: the line of development is clear and purposeful.

Viewed as a whole this First Symphony is romantic in outlook, and supported by the use of a rich orchestral pelette. Its large designs are created and filled by necessity, and although the first movement - whose advances on 'Kullervo' have already been listed - is clearly the best, the remaining movements are far more interesting and important than some writers have suggested.

The First Symphony remains largely within traditional forms, but it presents a number of features and tendencies which were to be consistently developed and exploited: the essential tonal evolution of the first movement (evoking some further consideration and reflection in subsequent movements) largely establishes the mode of procedure for the subsequent 6 symphonies: the ideas are later refined, more poetically and subtely stated, but remain essentially similar to that of this first movement. One of the most important of these features - an internal tonal tension and ambiguity, marked by a mediant pedal - was to be fully explored in the only major orchestral work to be completed before the Second Symphony: viz. the revised version of 'En Saga'.

But before embarking on this revision Sibelius composed music for another series of historical tableaux, and from amongst these pieces came that most (in)famous composition 'Finlandia'.

CHAPTER 7

Scènes historiques 1

Finlandia

EN SAGA

CHAPTER 7

In Finland the political events of 1899 (and particularly the publication of the 'February Manifesto' by which Finland lost her political self-government) culminated in a series of so-called Press Celebrations in November. The principal item of these celebrations was the presentation of a series of six historical tableaux, and Sibelius composed music to accompany them.

Johnson gives the fullest account of their subsequent history,[1] though it was not until 1911 (the year of the Fourth Symphony) that three of these pieces were revised and published as 'Scènes Historiques I', Op.25, viz, (i) All' Overture, (ii) Scena, and (iii) Festivo. 'Scenes Historiques II' was composed in 1912, though the common title and the fact that the pieces of the second set are numbered, 4, 5 and 6 in the full score, would seem to suggest a common origin and possibly a common date of composition - and some writers maintain that there is something of a common style to be seen in all 6 pieces.

The first piece, All' Overture, is scored for full orchestra (double woodwind, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, and strings). In style, scoring and even material, it closely resembles the First Symphony: the premiere of which took place only seven months before the November Press Celebrations.

The opening section of this work is a 'Grave' introduction (in E-flat) which leads to the main Allegro in G major: later the Allegro is briefly interrupted by a subsequent return of the Grave in D-flat major, and both the theme of the Introduction (Ex.90) and of the main Allegro (Ex.91) are marked by the augmented fourth: and Ralph Wood describes this[2] as "one of the most assertive of all of Sibelius's uses of the sharpened fourth in the

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1. Johnson, op.cit., pp.85-9.

major scale (outside the Fourth Symphony)".

But All' Overture accompanied the tableau which depicted Vainamoinen singing to the people of Kalevala (though there is also a reference to Pohjola's Daughter) in which case the augmented fourth may been seen as a touch of dramatic colour, a programmatic reflection of Väinamöinen's 'magic' - (the Finns would of course know this) and, dare one suggest, a sort of Sibelian leit-motif! The retention of this augmented fourth in the main Allegro theme is economically clever, but, rather contrived.

The stylistic links with the First Symphony are not to be denied: (- though Layton goes so far as to say[1] that it "anticipates the Sibelius of the Third Symphony rather than the Second"): the opening bars of the Allegro (v.Ex.2) evoke an immediate memory of the First Symphony with precisely the same string texture following a slow introduction (and clarinet solo) while the main theme not only lacks the chiselled incisiveness on the Third Symphony but, with its semitonal alternations, recalls a subsidiary theme from the First Symphony (first movement).

The second theme of this Allegro (Ex.92) more nearly approaches the flexible rhythm of 'mature' Sibelius and is, after all, written for flutes in 3rds, and has the missing-first-beat ictus, but its accompaniment is mechanical. The string texture a few bars later (Ex.93) seems to be hinting at that peculiarly Sibelian high-placed string texture, yet here (as in the First Symphony) even though it has a high cello part iit is accompanied by fully scored wind and horn chords.

The manner and technique of the transition from Grave to Allegro (Ex.94) recalls the similar procedure in the finale of the First Symphony, while the omission of the tuba - which could be considered unusual for Sibelius at the time (1899) - suggests a subsequent revision: certainly the trombones

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1. Layton, op.cit., p.83.

are handled with more skill and sensitivity than in Op.26 No.7 Finlandia (which also originated at these Press celebrations.)

All' Overture is effective, straightforward, and clearly shows a common chronological ancestry with En Saga and the First Symphony: when Sibelius returned - for purely musical reasons - to the subject of Vainamoinen and the Daughter of Pohjola seven years later (i.e.the year before the completion of the Third Symphony) the result was the Symphonic Poem Op.49 - a worthy companion to the Third Symphony.

The second piece, Scena, accompanied the tableau entitled 'Finland in the 30 Years War' and must rank as one of the most pictorially 'programmatic' pieces Sibelius ever wrote. It is scored for the same orchestra as No.1 although both flutes also change to piccolos, and it further requires triangle, tamburo, Gran cassa, and Piatti.

After a delightful 'tempo di menuetto' introduction in E-flat minor, there comes the first main themes, martial trumpet calls and string propellor passages 'poco stretto'. These are followed (at Letter C) by an extended chromatic passage for strings 'sul pont' (Ex.95) against which come triplet interjections from horns, flute and timpani, and Johnson suggests that this represents the impending military conflict; it is also the most startlingly imaginative idea of the whole of Scenes Historiques I. The tensile thinness of the texture at this point (a refinement of texture in advance of similar textures seen in the First Symphony) suggests a careful revision in 1911. The piece finishes with what could be called 'standard' triumph music.

The third and final number of Scènes Historiques I is the best known: Festivo. It uses the same orchestra as No.1 but also includes, castanets, triangle, tamburo, Gran cassa, and Piatti. It is a most effective piece which introduces its 'spanish' colour with telling reserve. It could hardly be described as typical Sibelius though its main theme (Ex.96) shows a

long starting note, beginning off the main beat, while the very last bars of the piece (unexpectedly quiet) illustrate the technique of how to suggest, with syncopation, a broader sense of rhythm without losing the 'a tempo' impetus - as it would do by calling for a 'rit'.

Finlandia Op.26, No.7,[1] was originally composed as incidental music to the Sixth tableau for the 'Press Celebrations' of November 1899, and it is evident that extra-musical reasons contributed to the success of its first performance. As an 'independant' musical composition it has, however, evoked much hostile criticism: many commentators have conveniently overlooked its original purpose which it undoubtedly served very effectively: few could have remained indifferent to this piece in November 1899 when it accompanied the final tableau entitled 'Finland Awakes' !

Chronologically the composition of 'Scènes Historiques I' (Op.25) and 'Finlandia' followed the First Symphony and pre-dated the revision of 'En Saga' and the writing of the Second Symphony. Internal evidence reflects this chronological position in both scoring and procedures, but 'Finlandia' had neither the creative necessity nor the opportunity to exploit them to the same extent as those more serious works. The overall construction of the works shows that, whatever the intrinsic value of this piece, certain technical procedures, which were to become of increasing importance to Sibelius's creative imagination and its execution, are now accomplished easily and economically.

The tonality of 'Finlandia' clearly illustrates this: the key centre of this work is A-flat, yet of its 210 bars it does not begin to approach that key for its first 80 bars, and does not, in fact, reach A-flat as an established key until bar 95 - after almost half the entire work.

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1. Johnson, op.cit., p.89, proposes an explanation for this surprising Op.No.

These opening 95 bars (complete with some brass scoring which obviously echoes certain moments in the First Symphony) circumscribe the main key in a manner that is used to greater effect in its immediate successor - the revised version of 'En Saga'; further the distinct and different functions of timpani and Gran cassa are clearly and purposefully maintained even in this small composition.

Syncopation was later to prove a very effective part of Sibelius's technique and occasionally in 'Finlandia' it is used to some effect: the last string entry (from Letter O) shows it as a most suitable device for introducing an allargando which feels musically necessary - the syncopation appears to arrest the forward movement of the brass chords (cp.'Festivo').

Although 'En Saga', Symphonic Poem for orchestra Op.9, was originally written in 1892, it was withdrawn after its first performance (1893) and the revised version did not appear until 1901. It is the revised version which is published and performed to-day, and this is scored for double woodwind, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, Gran cassa (but no timpani), cymbals, triangle, and strings.

The accounts of its genesis differ: according to Ekman,[1] Kajanus asked Sibelius for an orchestral work "written for the general public and not making too great demands on their powers of concentration and comprehension" to which Sibelius replied :

> "I was not at all disinclined to write a piece in a more popular style. When I got to work I found that some notes[2] I had made in Vienna were very suitable for adaption. In this way 'En Saga' appeared".

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1. Ekman, op.cit., p.121.
2. The 'notes made in Vienna' refer to an octet for flute, clarinet, and strings on which Sibelius was working in Vienna in 1890-1.

Ringbom's account is significantly different:[1] here Sibelius states that nothing came of Kajanus's request -

> "Instead I completed the orchestral work I had already started and to which I gave the name 'En Saga'. This tone poem (which takes 18 minutes to perform) was by no means the result of Kajanus's request to write a 'popular 'da capo' piece'! I did not comply with his request".

The revised version of 'En Saga' presents a large ternary design in which the first section (pp.1-47) evolves and introduces the main thematic and tonal ideas, the second section (pp.47-64) develops them, while the third section (p.64 - al fine) resolves the thematic and tonal tensions and completes the design; but while this design is analagous to sonata form it is significantly distinct: moreover its indebtedness to the first and second movements of the First Symphony (and particularly the second movement) becomes more obvious, and more persuasive, as the thematic and tonal evolutions of this work are examined.

The first section begins by presenting two (apparently)[2] contrasting ideas: (i) an arpeggiated figure for strings (a 6/4 A minor chord) with horns hovering around the dominant (an E - F alternation) Ex.97, which is followed abruptly by (ii) a phrase for woodwind (Ex.98) which accepts E natural as a starting point, expands outwards, and finishes its phrase with an augmented 6th chord. This woodwind figure suggests a more active movement than the arpeggio string figure and hints at the evolution of a theme.

The main theme (X, Ex.99) of this work is the first feature to emerge (against an accompanying string figure largely based on a diminished supertonic seventh chord) but although it makes a complete melodic statement its suggested tonality of C sharp minor is not confirmed or taken up,

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1. Ringbom, op.cit., p.38.
2. The subsequent analysis and comment will show that these apparently contrasting ideas are in reality 'two sides of the same coin': Sibelius at first presents them successively instead of simultaneously; the reasons for this are suggested later in this chapter.

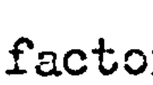
and the subsequent repeat of this theme, on the threshold of C major, shows some evolutionary changes. A third statement (beginning at Letter C) of this basic - though evolving - theme presents it in a sort of diminution while the tempo is gradually increased to reach 'Allegro' (p.18) where what appears to be a new theme (A1, Ex.100) is introduced. This new theme is situated on the dominant of C major, and both this theme (A1) and its answering phrase (A2, Ex.101) are clearly derived from the opening 'basic' theme X.

The repeat of these themes moves (via C minor) towards E-flat major, but (p.22 - 3) the expected cadence is postponed and not until the establishment of an E-flat pedal (p.25), the appearance of a Sibelian 'transition' figure, and the announcement of a further new theme (B1, Ex.102, at Letter F) is this new key established.

This key of E-flat is in fact the tonal centre of the work, and its establishment - after something like 140 bars, beginning at the far pole of A minor[1] - is emphatic, unmistakably clear, and typically Sibelian: the main contributory factors may be conveniently listed thus :

(i) a considerable amount of dominant preparation is finally allowed to move to its tonic - a harmonic fact not observable prior to this;

(ii) the 3 Gran cassa entries (between p.22 and p.26) first adds an emphasis to the dominant of E-flat and then, in the last entry, anticipates the opening rhythmic characteristic of the B1 theme which is to follow; and

(iii) following the above Gran cassa preparation a new theme appears (B1): the characteristic  rhythm presents what could be considered as a basic 'rhythmic' theme for 'En Saga';

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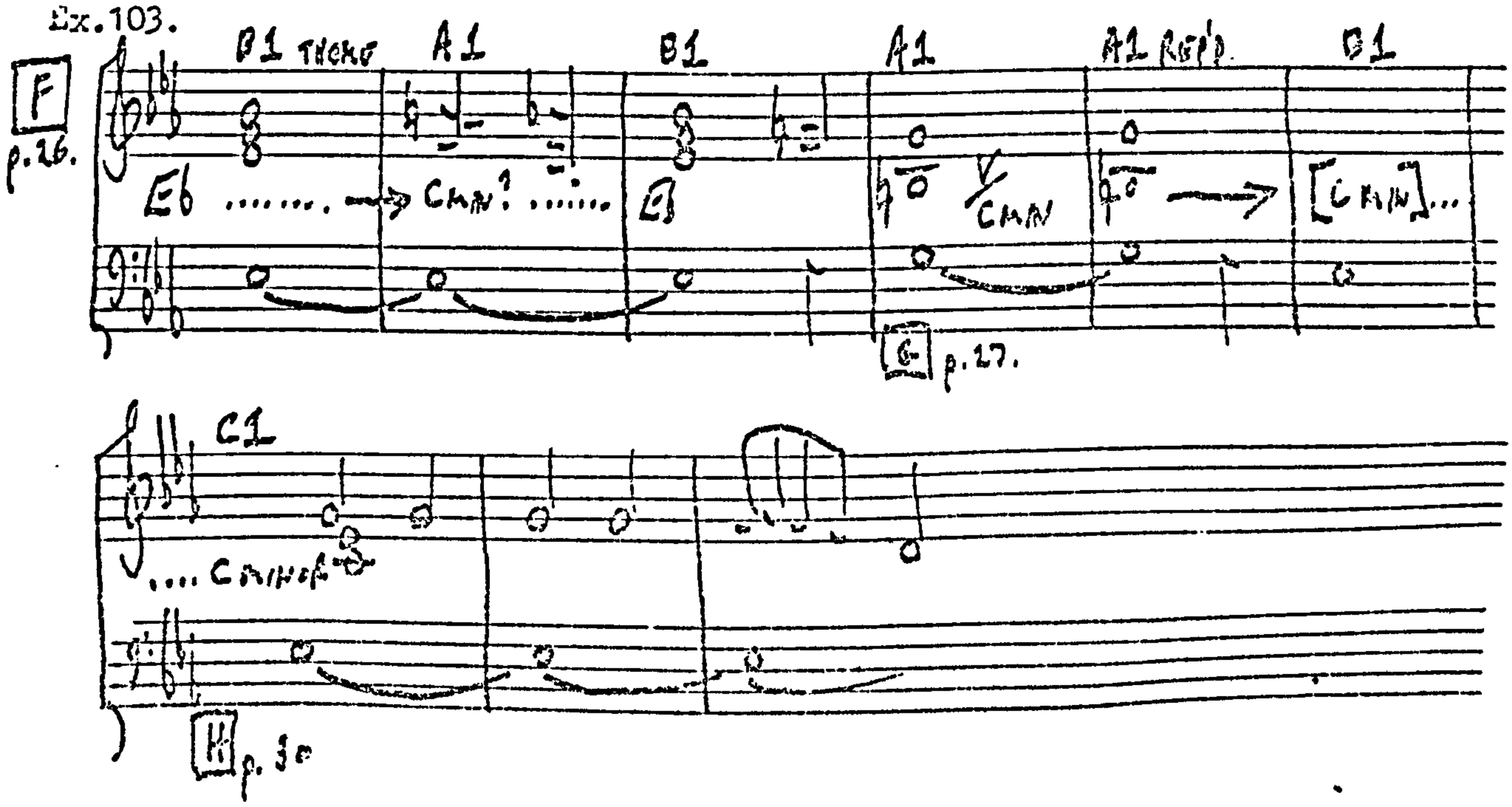
1. A further illustration of Sibelius's consistent use of these particular keys in opposition.

(iv) there is also the intervention of a sort of 'transition' figure seen in the last bar p.24 and the first 4 bars of p.25 (which should be compared with two entries in the First Symphony (a) p.9 first movement and (b) p.53 second movement); and

(v) finally there is the 'crescendo molto' of the last four bars of p.25 (dominant, over a tonic E-flat pedal) resolving on a tonic chord characteristically marked 'p' - again compare the arrival at B minor in the first movement of the First Symphony.

The new B1 theme, clearly in E-flat, is answered by a phrase derived from A1 which leans towards C minor; B1 is restated but is once more answered by A1 moving towards C minor - indeed shortly afterwards (at Letter G) the recently established E-flat pedal is replaced by a G-natural pedal - and this tonal tension between E-flat and C-minor, together with the interplay of their associated themes, is a large part of the basic creative conception of this work: indeed a major portion of the (basis and) subsequent evolution of this composition could be conveniently summarized by the following musical example :

Ex.103.



This movement towards C minor (p.27 et seq.) becomes more insistent, but the G-natural pedal is soon replaced by an E-flat (mediant) pedal point although the appearance of yet another new theme (C1 Ex.104 at Letter H) confirms the C minor tonality; the E-flat pedal is now to remain unbroken for almost 100 bars.

This new C1 theme energetically emphasises its C minor tonality (over the continuing E-flat pedal) and is followed by a more contrapuntal idea C2, (Ex.105) which hovers round the dominant of C minor - it maintains a G-natural pedal as well as the continuing E-flat pedal - and leads to a climactic statement of C1, though the ostinato string accompaniment of C2, is retained.

At the climax of this C1 theme (just before letter I) the E-flat pedal pulls the tonality back to E-flat major, and this tonal reversion is confirmed by the reappearance of B1 (at Letter K). The repeat of this B1 theme (as usual after the C minor hints of A1) leads to E-flat minor and the beginning of the tonal move away from the region of E-flat/C minor and towards the second (development) section of this work.

This passage (pp.42-7) which leads to the 'development' presents a continuing thematic interplay of B1 and A1 in which their respective identities are consistently marked by the restless (disruptive?) quality of A1 effecting modulation and frequently accompanied by an active semi-quaver figuration in violas and cellos, and answered either by B1 or its ♩. ♪ ♩ ♩ 'ur' rhythm which seems to suggest a more settled state.

The sense of movement engendered by this section is thrown into considerable relief by the contra-bass line which, after 11 repeated bars of B-flat (p.42), moves down to G-sharp and then climbs quickly up to G-natural (pp.46-47).

The second section of 'En Saga' begins on the dominant C minor, with strings directed to play "sul' ponticello". This development section is mostly concerned with the C minor themes (C1 and C2) in contrapuntal combination (though from p.50 onwards the rigidity of the string canon - in inversion - tends to become monotonous) and passes quickly through the keys of G-sharp minor, E minor, and arrives at C minor (- E-flat), though the section is stabilized by the internal and inverted dominant pedals of each of these keys. The arrival at C minor (- E-flat) on p.54, is accompanied by both a G-natural pedal (on trumpets) and an E-flat pedal (on tuba), supported, as might be expected, by the Gran cassa; a timp entry here is unthinkable!

This return to C minor, with its almost inevitable swing towards E-flat provokes one of the crisis points of this work resulting in the 'fff' G - D outburst (p.56) which later continues as nothing more than a rhythmically reiterated G-natural for 12 bars. This is eventually taken as the dominant of C minor, and a C-natural pedal is soon introduced. Over this, strands from B1, C1 and A1 are woven together until, at Letter O, the pedal point again becomes E-flat, above which an 'espressivo' statement of C1 (oboe entry, second line, p.61) leads to the end of this second section which dies away on an ambiguous F-natural for horn (p.63.

The closing bars of this section, and particularly those from Letter P onwards, closely resemble the short passage which follows the climax of the first movement of the First Symphony (pp.37-8 min.score);

both passages show -

(i) an ambiguous tonal situation,

(ii) a similarity in melodic outline, i.e.semitonal movement followed by a step of a tone,

(iii) both come to a sustained subdominant chord, after

(iv) a comma in the First Symphony which is directly paralleled by the empty bar in 'En Saga'. Moreover the following bars display a further similarity - though enlarged and developed - in that the subsequent harp entry in the First Symphony momentarily hints at (the dominant of) G major before moving to the 'correct' dominant of E minor, while here, in 'En Saga' the sequential extension of the phrase (first 8 bars of p.64) results in the move towards the sub-dominant side of E-flat being strongly countered by the shift (5 bars after Letter Q) to the dominant of C minor.

The final section of this work presents a simple tonic-dominant undulation in C minor over a dominant pedal, and above this, with an accompaniment derived from C2, the 'ancestral' X theme is restated and vigorously worked until (shortly before Letter S, p.77) the final swing to E-flat takes place. Here the tonal tension is again prolonged by the avoidance of the expected cadence. The climax of the work is reached (at Letter T) where the C-flat/B-flat alternation of the strings, over the basic ♩. ♪ ♩ ♩ rhythm on gran cassa, culminates in the 'fffz' diminished super-tonic chord (over an implied dominant). The one and only clashed entry of the cymbals in this work accompanies this climactic

chord, and provides further evidence of Sibelius's essentially <u>functional</u> use of percussion

The implied cadence of the third section is ultimately resolved in a short coda (at Letter U) in E-flat minor with a haunting statement of the main (X) theme by solo clarinet: the antecedents of this solo have already been mentioned (v.Introduction first movement, First Symphony). The cello entries (Letter W al fine) are a typical closing gesture: they hint at the underlying rhythm of many of the themes of this work, and thus suggest their common origin and the essential tonal/thematic evolution and the creative basis of this composition.

The 1901 revised version of 'En Saga' differs considerably from the original 1892 version. In his comparative study of the two versions Ringbom[1] drew attention to four particular distinctions: the revised version

(i) shows a reduction in the overall length from 952 to 810 bars

(ii) contains fewer modulations

(iii) contains fewer changes of tempi, and

(iv) contains a greater number of pedal and hold notes - and it is this last feature which is most frequently singled out for comment.

Layton,[2] for example writes :

> "The duration of the pedal points is, strangely enough, much longer in the revised than in the original version; Sibelius was now confident that he could risk a greater simplicity of tonal structure than he felt able to ten years earlier".

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1. Nils-Eric Ringbom: De två versionera av Sibelius' Tondikt "En Saga", Åbo.1956.

2. Layton, op.cit., p.64

Similarly Kingbom[1] comments :-

> "And paradoxical as this may sound, the ruthless tonal homegeniety... (as exemplified in the 100 bar pedal point, for instance, and the disinclination to change the key), seems, in its sovereign disdain of any fear of monotony, not only more daring, but more thrilling in effect than the greater modulatory richness of the first version".

But the explanation of this 'paradox' has been seen in earlier Sibelius compositions and the reduction of modulation and the increase in pedals is not just a tonal simplification; rather it is a tonal concentration: a tonal intensification.

The central idea of 'En Saga' is the E-flat/C minor ambivalence, and this idea has its roots in such works as 'Lemminkäinen's Return', the first movement of the First Symphony (indeed its basis!), and particularly the second movement of the First Symphony where the mediant pedal achieves a particular significance in the restatement.

The revised version of 'En Saga' is clearly exploring the same basic idea of a tonal tension caused by an ambiguous area within the key, and in making it more interesting and subtle by the equally ambiguous use of a mediant/tonic pedal (E-flat).

Once this suggestion concerning the creative intention of 'En Saga' is accepted it will come as no surprise that the revised version contains fewer modulations: they would detract from the central tonal issue and thereby weaken it. The tonality of 'En Saga' (like the pedal notes, and particularly the long E-flat, pp.29-36) is stationary (in that there is little movement to other keys apart from the 'development' section) but not stagnant: moreover the central E-flat tonality has a spaciousness

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1. Kingbom, op.cit., p.39.

about it - which can tolerate this stationary quality - since it evolved from its far pole of A minor.

The thematic developments and evolutions support this argument concerning the central tonal issue, for although many of the main themes are derived from the opening 'ancestral' theme, their derivations melodically reflect and complement the tonal ambiguities. Certain of these derived themes appear to be linked with one key area in particular, thus, for example :

(i) B1 is generally used in E-flat, while

(ii) A1 is more suggestive of C minor;

(iii) C1 and C2 are exclusive to C minor but are nearly always 'provoked' into returning to E-flat - by the E-flat pedal note.

The evolution and development of the main themes marks the progress and current situation of the tonal argument.

This central tonal tension and ambiguity is largely expressed, in a condensed form in the previous music example (and, incidentally, invites its immediate comparison with Ex.82 from the second movement, First Symphony). This musical idea - a line of thought interesting in itself, as the First Symphony has shown - is capable of considerable extension: any moment along this line of thought may be drawn out and explored, thus the move to the submediant chord now results in a swing of tonality from E-flat towards C minor. The delicate balance of these two keys hinges on an ambiguous area which allows either side to predominate at any given moment.

Sibelius carries this creative idea a step further: the thematic relationships and derivations themselves parallel the tonal ambiguities, and the close (and ambiguous) resemblance of many of the themes is a

purposefully deliberate and creative feature of this work.[1] This may be seen clearly enough in the comparison of themes A1 and B1, but it exists no less clearly (nor importantly) in the very opening bars of this work. The presentation of two apparently contrasting ideas of (i) a texture, and (ii) a woodwind 'theme', is, in fact, the presentation of two sides of the same musical 'coin'. Nor is this all: just as in regard to the tonality either the E-flat or C minor characteristics may predominate any given moment - resulting in the appearance or reappearance of particular themes - so too for a large part of the opening section of 'En Saga' there is a presentation of <u>either</u> (i) the evolution toward the central E-flat tonality, or (ii) the evolution towards the main theme. The <u>successive</u> introduction of these two opening ideas is a further 'parallel' to the tonal and thematic ambiguities.

'En Saga' explores and develops a creative idea which (although it must have been inherent in the original 1892 version, may well have been 'rediscovered' and revitalised as a result of the musical experiences of the First Symphony) is based on the ambivalent attitude of

(i) the central E-flat tonality with its tendency to move to C minor,

(ii) the accompanying harmonic ambiguity - seen particularly in the enharmonic identity of C-flat/B natural,

(iii) the E-flat mediant/tonic pedal,

(iv) the thematic derivations which evolve in a close functional response to the tonal ambiguities,

(v) the rhythmic development and similarities of certain themes and accompaniments, and

(vi) the 'introduction' with its two contrasted ideas presented successively, and its subsequent evolution of either the theme or tonality.

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1. Our appreciation of Sibelius's creative technique here rests on his ability to derive themes which are so <u>similar</u> - and yet are clearly different!

The result of these simultaneous, complementary, and ambiguous evolutions of themes, rhythms, tonality, harmony, pedal notes, and constructional features, is a work of symphonic integration which nevertheless retains the more leisurely and rhapsodic approach of a tone poem without becoming diffuse.

The 'programmatic' inspiration of 'En Saga' is worthy of some comment, for although - within the exception of 'The Swan of Tuonela' - it is the first symphonic tone poem which does not have an avowed programme it suggests certain features which are to be maintained in future symphonic poems - and in clear distinction from the symphonies.

The opening section of 'En Saga' - the first 18 pages, and particularly the first 5 - suggest the gradual emergence of the pattern of a story and the introduction of a new, and for the moment, unrelated characters: in fact the presentation of the various 'threads' from which the saga is to be woven. The gradual tonal progression towards E-flat reflects this idea and it is also a feature to be seen in some later tone poems but never observed in the symphonies.

The revised version of 'En Saga' is deservedly popular in the concert hall and an important musical experience in Sibelius's development; although it may lack some of the poetry of the Op.22 Suite it has both the vigour and subtelty of a huge simplicity.

(As a final note it is perhaps only necessary to add that the employment of Gran cassa 'con bachette di timpani' is obviously necessary and that the omission of the timpani is equally so.)

.CHAPTER 8

SYMPHONY No. 2

CHAPTER 8

Sibelius's Symphony No.2 in D major, Op.43, was written in 1901-2 (- first performed March 1902) and requires a slightly smaller orchestra than that used in the First Symphony: harp, cymbals, and Gran cassa are now omitted.

The first movement has aroused a very considerable degree of comment, provoked several analyses, and been hailed as revolutionary in its symphonic construction; in fact it continues and refines some of the procedures and techniques illustrated in the opening movement of the First Symphony, though they are now carried by more 'commonplace' musical material.[1] The movement is more compact than its First Symphony counterpart though, paradoxical as it may at first appear, it is enabled to present a wealth of thematic material without becoming diffuse.

The first movement is remarkably organic and coherent but it is more of a 'normal' sonata design than some authorities admit, and its organic quality owes less to the development of thematic 'germ-motives' than it does to its essential tonal evolution.

The 'first subject' and basic tonal thesis of the movement, is not demonstrable by theme alone; it is composed of three features:

(i) the opening chordal progression, A1 (Ex.106)

(ii) the woodwind melody, A2 (Ex.107) and,

(iii) the subsequent horn phrase, and in particular its cadence on the supertonic chord, A3, (Ex.107)

These three features combine to suggest that, while D major is clearly established, there is an internal tonal tension - a tonal fluidity. This tonal fluidity is seen first in the opening chordal progression which gently stresses the subdominant chord: Ex.108 shows the opening figure re-written to illustrate where a first-beat accent

1. i.e.material more frequently used either to define the key or at cadences.

is apparently heard. The possible argument that this rhythmic equivalent of a mis-writing is accidental cannot be justified: later appearances in the exposition show, deliberate, and important, changes. (Moreover the subsequent woodwind melody also <u>sounds</u> as though it starts at the beginning of a bar).

Next, the woodwind melody, which is introduced over this opening chordal progression, presents a calm and pastoral quality and conveniently and conventionally finishes its phrase on the dominant with a normal half-close: but the horn phrase comments upon, and indeed seems to question this 'conclusion' by finishing on a supertonic chord. The interplay of these three features creates a tension which only gradually becomes apparent.

The immediate repetition of this woodwind melody, now beginning on supertonic harmony, again finishes its phrase on the dominant, but this too is questioned by the horns. A third statement of this woodwind melody again begins on the supertonic (rather than on the more normal tonic harmony) though it now finishes its phrase on the dominant: its last bar is twice echoed and then extended by a pause as if to emphasize its dominant function.

But even here the expected cadence is interrupted (first on clarinets, then on flutes) so that the first paragraph of this movement, although clearly in D major, is unable to cadence 'correctly' in the tonic, and the three main features are seen in an interplay which creates an essentially symphonic but as yet dramatically subdued tension between the three chords of the section - tonic, dominant, supertonic.

The second paragraph (lasting until Letter C) begins with a '<u>fanfare</u>' for bassoons (Ex.109) whose dominant-ninth climax is a further stabilizing feature in this D major tonality: but having confirmed the key of D major

it is taken as the opportunity to move away from the tonic key, and begins the transition to A major.

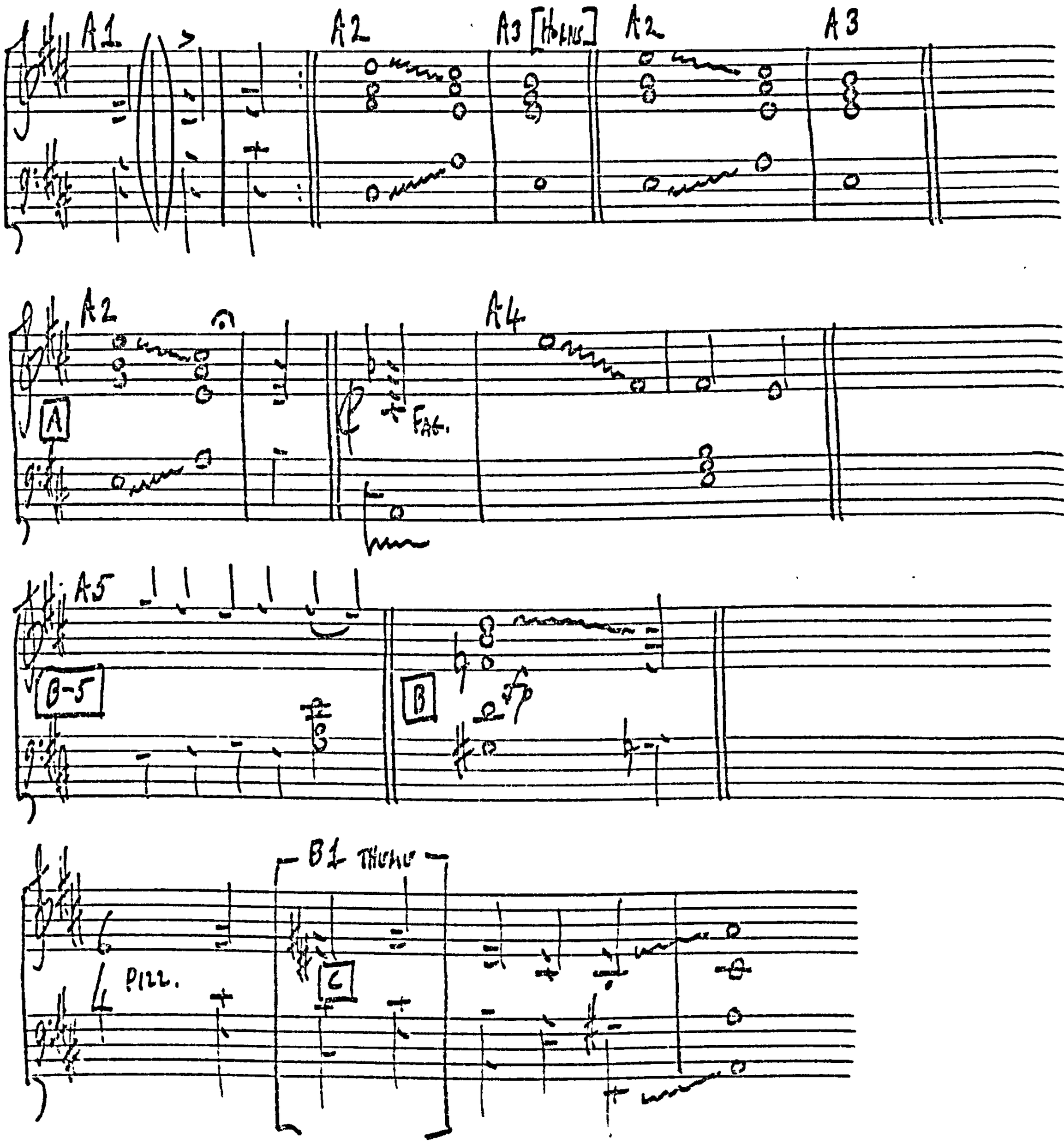
The transition begins with a new melodic phrase A4 (Ex.110) for unaccompanied violins, and somewhat recitative-like in character and inflection; but the end of the phrase is pushed back towards D major - and in particular its supertonic chord. The insistent intrusion of this chord is heightened by the fact that it expands into a short phrase A5 (Ex.111) which is melodically articulate. The following diminished 7th 'fp' chord (one bar before Letter B) points more clearly towards A major and although the passage to which this gives rise clearly illustrates the gradual acceptance of A major, it too is turned back towards D major.

Eventually the move away from D major (to A major) is effected by the 'pizz' passage which introduces a new theme (B1, Ex.112) and culminates in a cadence (C + 6): whether this cadence is imperfect or the first half of a perfect cadence, it is clearly in A major. For the moment the cadence is interrupted, and the opportunity is taken to widen and reinforce the A major tonality by making this interruption into a 'key' - the submediant, of course! It is accompanied by the opening chordal figure whose rhythmic peculiarity has now been 'corrected' and this correction remains during the subsequent repeat.

Two bars before Letter D a further diminished 7th, expanded into a most typical propellor figure, moves towards the dominant of A major and this is shortly balanced by a move to the 'flat-side' of the key (C - natural chord, 'ff') so that the key of A major is established with considerable conviction. The falling-fifths figure (Ex.113), which emphatically marks the phrase-ending of the 'second subject' is sequentially enlarged here and acts as a foil to the main theme: this figure is as important for its

harmonic implication and thematic variety as for its germ-motive identity, though obviously since it is an extension of previously known material it contributes to a tauter and less diffuse argument. The harmonic/tonal argument of this exposition could be schematically represented thus :-

Ex.114.



The development is in three parts, each clearly differentiated by the material it uses. The first part presents two separate phrases from the exposition as one complete and unified theme (Ex.115) before developing the falling-fifths figure sequentially against a harmonic progression in thirds. The second section (beginning at Letter H) is more dramatically active: a powerful development of the 'transition' theme is now worked contrapuntally in a thin texture and progresses by a series of diminished 7th chords. This passionate working eventually arrived on the threshold of a return to the tonic key and indeed timpani and tuba[1] anticipate the tonic chord. But this D-natural is taken as the mediant of B-flat, and the new theme - evolved in the first part of this development - is now presented as a climactic 'big tune'. This shortly moves to G-flat which is later taken enharmonically to effect the return (p.24, M + 4) to the tonic key.

However this return to the tonic key needs confirmation if it is to 'contain' or resolve the original tonal tension and fluidity with which the movement opened; the means whereby this confirmation is effected leads to the climax of the movement and bridges the end of the development and the beginning of the recapitulation sections. The climax is crowned by the dramatic rescoring of the bassoon fanfare and subsequent transition theme: the two previous facts (i) that in the exposition the bassoon 'fanfare' was a stabilizing factor in D major - clearly emphasizing its dominant, and (ii) that the following transition theme was (a) unaccompanied, and (b) forced to point back to D major, and in particular its supertonic chord - these are now distinct advantages. Together they dramatically

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1. The 'f' marking of this tuba entry (p.19) must be balanced with the contra-basses; an unrestrained tuba 'f' here sounds vulgar.

restore the 'correct' relationship between the dominant and supertonic chords (and their respective functions): they resolve the original opening tension and rectify the tonal 'fluidity'. Here the climax of this development results in the re-establishment of D major with climactic emphasis and compelling logic.

The recapitulation begins with the restoration of 'Tempo Primo' p.28: note that this follows a bar line pause which separates the supertonic and tonic (second inversion) chords! The woodwind theme is simply restated over a tonic pedal, and the supertonic chord is now consistently and normally contained within the tonic key - it no longer attempts to usurp the role of the dominant - and it leads to a straightforward cadence. The subsidiary theme evolved by this supertonic chord can now be presented simultaneously with the woodwind melody since its cadential function here is clearly established and demonstrated. Further, since the original tension was initially suggested by the opening chordal figure, and the tension has now been resolved, there is no point in reintroducing the opening figure: Sibelius omits it.

The design and balance of this movement is completed by the restatement of the second subject, which follows the first with almost no transition. The reason for this lack of transition is obvious, and Sibelius is again enabled (as in the First Symphony) to make a natural and convincing abbreviation.

The second subject is first approached through the 'key' of B minor,[1] after which a slight extension of the 'propellor' material culminates in a very 'flat' statement (F-natural) of B1 (- note the D-A timp entry,

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1. Exposition: D - F sharp minor to A; Recap: D - B minor to D major.

beginning 4 bars before Letter S) before the small codetta nicely rounds off the movement; the final 8 bars invite their comparison with the opening 8 bars of the movement - the differences are distinct, and vital.

The tonal evolution of this movement, largely carried by 'commonplace' material, much of which was cadential in origin, together with the fact that some of the problems are 'resolved' in the recapitulation lends weight to the suggestion that Sibelius presents a musical 'workshop': the opening material seems to have gone 'wrong' - the rhythm of the opening chords is questionable, there is a persistent E minor chord: these are later resolved. Moreover it is the presentation of this tonal 'problem' and its eventual resolution that accounts for the remarkable organic quality and coherence of this movement.

Additionally, the coherence and organic quality of this movement (which demonstrates its 'advance' over the First Symphony) are enhanced by the facts that :

(i) the tonal tension of the first-subject paragraph is balanced by the F-sharp minor - A tonal 'movement' of the second subject: this is an enlargement of the process observed in the First Symphony (itself descended from 'Kullervo');

(ii) the transition themes (A4, A5) are themselves (directly) involved in the tonal evolution of the exposition (and later in the development);

(iii) the subsequent 'pizz' passage which effectively accompanies the change of key from D to A major, is an extension of the previous 'transition' passages that were characterised by contrapuntal material (in reduced orchestral textures): the essence of this 'pizz' <u>is</u> counterpoint and the texture is mostly 3-part;

(iv) the essential function of the development in that it eventually arrives at a 'resolution' of the tonal fluidity, and thus prepares for

(v) the natural abbreviation of the recapitulation which then balances the design simply.

The second movement in D minor is an abridged sonata form (omitting the development section). It has been described (by Layton[1]) as "more loose-limbed and rhapsodic in feeling than its predecessor", but it marks a considerable advance over the slow movement of the First Symphony and its rhapsody, though ranging widely, is supported by a logical continuation of musical thought which is both interesting and passionate.

Formally the movement falls into two equal sections with the first (exposition) opening in D minor, moving to a foreign key (F-sharp) and its 'second subject', and completed by a short closing section. The second half (recapitulation) begins by restating much of the original opening material in F-sharp minor, works round to the dominant and then presents an enlarged version of the second subject: throughout this half there is a very considerable degree of 'development'.

After one bar of timpano roll on D natural, in common time, the opening idea of this movement is an uninterrupted solo line (pizz.) in 3/8 for contra-basses and, later, cellos. This solo line, A1 (Ex.116) has an active, discernible character - a 'personage' - that cannot be simply dismissed as an interesting but unimportant 'introduction' (Abraham[2] described it as "one of the things that only Sibelius could have written";

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1. Layton, op.cit., p.35.
2. Abraham, op.cit., p.21.

but his description "the seemingly endless tramp of pizzicato bass quavers" is less than just[1]. This solo line is not a stereotyped pattern nor just a simple and sequential idea; it is individual and has a restless quality which is somewhat diminished after the 'a tempo' direction (top line p.39) where it moves to the dominant. Here the phrase is repeated and settles down as the accompaniment for the bassoon solo.

The four phrases of this bassoon melody A2, (Ex.117) - with Sibelius's usual direction 'lugubre' - are marked with the flat 6th and 7th degrees of D minor, though they are accompanied throughout by a timpano roll on D natural. In contrast to the opening bass line, these bassoon phrases, again in common time, are more obviously melodic and move against the continuing triplets in broader phrases (- since the impetus on the first-beat of the 3/8 bars has been removed).

But in spite of the insistence on 'D' (pp.39 and 40) the restless quality of the triplet accompaniment seems to contradict and disturb the bassoon melody: the interplay of these two features (A1 and A2) both creates and reflects a tension within the tonality, and in this sense seems to share a common idea with the first movement - the choice of key, D minor, becomes more immediately understandable with this suggestion.

From Letter B the disturbance becomes more marked, and 9 bars later (Poco Allegro) the appearance of a new chord unleashes a vigorous new figure in strings (Ex.118), evokes a passionate reply from cellos (- notice the dynamic markings), and begins to move away from the tonic key. The violin figure is sequentially treated and climbs through an octave until, at Letter C, it is answered by a further new figure in woodwind which suggests a wider tonal possibility (V^7 on D-flat). This is not immediately

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1. I may be reading more into this remark than Abraham intended; his comment is not, perhaps, an adverse criticism.

accepted though the idea is developed thematically and the passage culminates in a powerful brass entry which appears to move reluctantly from D minor towards F major.

But although the movement arrives at a 'ff' tonic 6/4 in F major this is not accepted tonally and, after a bar-line pause, the second subject is presented in F-sharp major, i.e.it now accepts the (D-flat/C-sharp) implications of the woodwind figure at Letter C.

This new second subject B1 (Ex.119) is richly scored (all strings are divided except contra-basses) and, although it is obviously derived from the energetic exposition string figure (A3), its impact and intention here is that of a new idea in a new key. This second subject is marked by two melodic features: (i) the use of both the augmented and diatonic fourth degree of the key, B-sharp and B-natural, and (ii) the use of D and E-naturals in later oboe and clarinet phrases.[1] It establishes both its tonality and character simply and succinctly: it then moves to its dominant 4 bars after Letter E, after which the one 3/2 bar (p.46) presents a strong cadence which is amplified in the woodwind figure of the two following bars.

But, at Letter F, with the direction 'Andante con moto ed energico', there is a return of the disturbed character which preceded this second subject, and following a pause on a solo A-natural timpano roll, the second half of this movement begins in F-sharp minor.

It starts by restating the opening melodic idea (A2) on solo trumpet echoed by flute. This is accompanied by a triplet figure for violins and violas which is itself answered by a rising 'spiccato' figure (- the spiccato here complements the opening pizzicato). The cello figure gradually

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1. The evidence of this theme (and later that of the first subject of the First Movement of the Violin Concerto) clearly suggests that the augmented fourth is used for its pro-dominant qualities and effectively counteracts the flat-6th and flat-7th of the key.

acquires some of the character of the opening (A1) quaver movement and, as in the exposition, the disturbance becomes more marked with the arrival of the new chord, the vigorous string figure, and its cello reply. This material is now sequentially enlarged and worked passionately; it culminates as before with the powerful brass entry, though the underlying timpani clearly direct the tonal movement towards the dominant of D minor.

After another long bar-line pause, the second subject reappears in D minor, with its first statement punctuated by a reference to the previous brass figure 'ff', and a further brief statement of the theme (delightfully) stresses the flat-side of the key before cadencing with a D major chord.

This second subject is now allowed to expand, and rises to a short but impassioned climax before the return of the closing section which now leads to a short coda.

The coda (beginning four bars before Letter O) hints at previous material before an impressive string passage, 'con forza' mostly in demi-semi-quavers moves to very 'flat' harmonies over a timpano roll on D-natural: the opening three notes of this string passage are perhaps heard as a diminution of the cadence in the 3/2 bar of the second subject. The closing bars of the movement present a simple cadence in D-minor together with a sort of 'motto' reference to the falling-fifths figure.

One of the interesting features of this movement - and indeed one of Sibelius's symphonic strengths - is the speed of the 'progress' of the musical argument. In this second movement Sibelius is interested in the gradual disturbance of the tonality and the energetic and passionate working it releases. But although the progression is leisurely there are no 'delays': indeed, having arrived at the climax of the transition (Letter D et seq) Sibelius moves directly into the 'remote' key of F-sharp major.

Similarly, after Letter O, the coda needs to close the movement without letting its strength evaporate, or allowing it to become diffuse by introducing new material: Sibelius presents two new 'textures' (i) the woodwind trill, and (ii) the 'con forza' string passage, after which 7 bars close the movement by cadencing simply and effectively.

The 'con forza' string passage parallels the function served by the 'pizz' passage (p.7-8 min.score) of the first movement of this symphony, and recalls the 'propellor' passages in the first movement of the First Symphony: all of these devices are clearly functional and are either derived from cadential formulae or stimulate a cadential functioning.

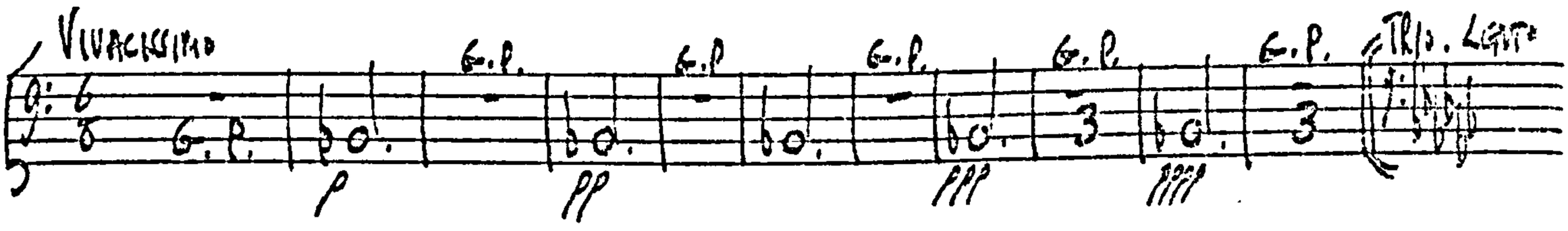
The rhapsodic feeling of this movement, largely the result of its wealth of thematic material and the manner of its introduction in the exposition (particularly up to the introduction of the second subject) is heightened in the recapitulation which develops and expands the previous material in the same order of appearance: but the rhapsodic quality is based on a strong and logical musical argument and this enables a wealth of thematic material to be presented, and passionately worked, without losing its clear sense of progression and design.

This second movement is more broadly conceived than its First Symphony counterpart, touches greater emotional depths, and is more nearly the equal of the first movement.

The third movement in B-flat major is a scherzo with trio. The Scherzo is a sonata design which presents its main thematic ideas with a Beethovian vehemence (particularly in the rhythm of the opening theme A1, (Ex.120) and in its dramatic dynamic contrasts. Thefirst paragraph

concludes with three emphatic octave B-flats (and the fact that there are 3 bars here is significant). At Letter A a diminished 7th introduces a new theme, B1 (Ex.121), which, while maintaining the opening quaver movement as a figure of accompaniment, modulates sequentially before settling down in the dominant key; later (nine bars before Letter C) hinting at its own submediant key before making a cadence in F major.

The development (beginning at Letter C) consists of two sentences of which the second is largely a sequential repeat of the first, and returns immediately to the tonic B-flat. Here a sequential derivative of the opening material is accompanied by a rising scale for bassoons and leads directly to the return of the second subject. The first subject reappears in B-flat major (at Letter D) and is completed by an emphatic and extended cadence that ends abruptly (and with contrasting dynamics); it is followed by a number of G.P.bars broken only by a solitary B-flat on timpano:
Ex.122



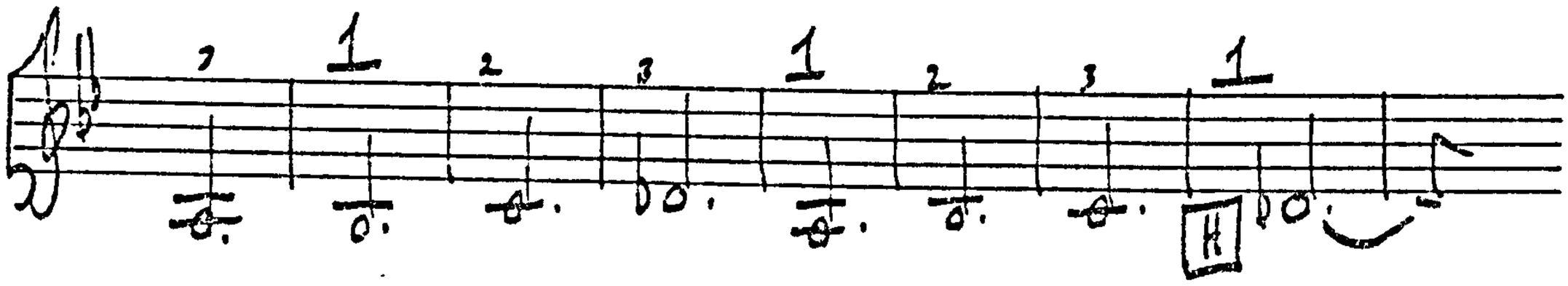
- notice the progressive markings of the dynamics and the last two G.P.bars.

The Trio 'lento e suave' is in G-flat major, 12/4. It has a beautiful, simple, oboe theme (Ex.123) which displays a number of the most typical Sibelian characteristics, as well as taking up the repeated B-flat of the timpani. This theme is repeated on the supertonic by clarinet, while a third statement leads to its climax and the conclusion of the trio.

The scherzo returns with dramatic suddenness and its exposition is quickly restated. But as it cadences, (just before Letter H), a new thematic idea is introduced, and the rhythm of these 7 bars is interesting,

since by introducing the first note of this new idea of the penultimate chord of the cadence Sibelius enables us to hear the rhythmic structures of the phrase as follows :

Ex.124

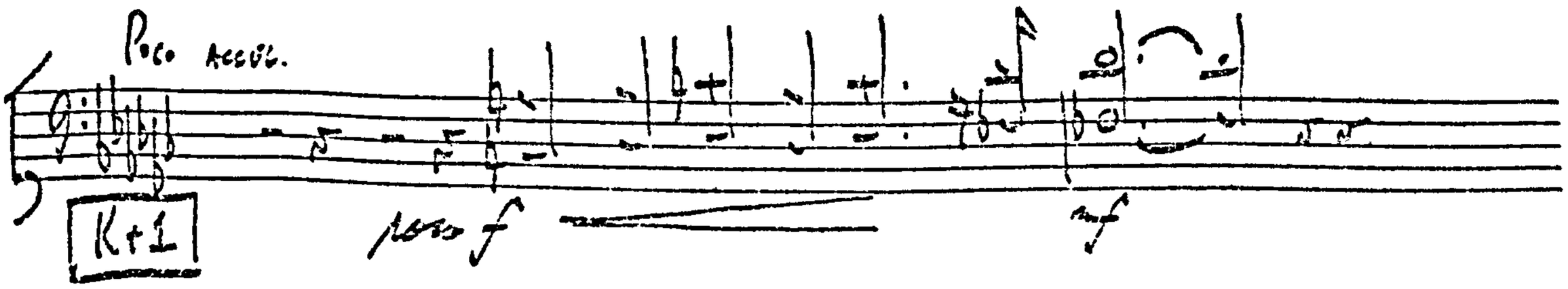


- and the Finale later shows the necessity for both this and the previously mentioned 3 bars of emphatic B-flats. For the moment the purpose of this new idea is not clearly discernible and with only slight changes the rest of the scherzo is repeated, though the conclusion now leads directly into the opening bars of the Trio.

The Trio is mostly a literal repeat with some additional counterpoint for lower strings; this new counterpoint was momentarily heard in the first appearance of the Trio, but here it is allowed to become more active and to propel the movement away from G-flat and towards D major.

This move is accompanied by the reappearance of the horn figure (first introduced just before Letter H - see above example) though it is written in crotchets and slightly altered rhythmically - the phrase now begins on the accented beat :

Ex.125



At Letter L the dominant of D major is reached, and the propellor figure of the strings leads directly, and impressively, into the opening of the Finale.

This transition from the Scherzo to the Finale has been carefully prepared, and 4 distinct events contribute towards it :

(i) the presentation of 3 bars of emphatic B-flats (p.70) is the initial preparation for the eventual 3-beat phrases of the finale, though the scherzo itself is moving in 2-bar units,

(ii) the horn entry (p.84) emphasizes the 3-bar rhythm and begins to suggest a melody (in dotted minims),

(iii) the reintroduction of this horn theme in the Trio (p.95) shows a rhythmic alteration: the phrase now begins on an accented beat, is written in crotchets, and grouped in threes, and

(iv) it is finally transformed into the main theme of the finale where it appears in a 3/2 time signature.

This careful preparation results in an important change in the speed of this gradually evolved idea; its first appearance in the scherzo was marked by a very quick pulse and a considerable sense of speed: as the main theme of the Finale it moves within a broader pulse and with a considerably reduced sense of speed.

The feeling of 'inevitability' which marks the gradual evolution of this theme is emphasized (p.95-8) by the fact that the energetic propellor figure (itself conventional and supported by a dominant pedal) first prepares for the opening of the finale, and is then revealed to be the theme of the finale itself.

Superficially the finale is a sonata movement, but within that framework a new approach is to be observed: and while it may not be altogether successful, it is a most exciting movement and a proving ground for ideas which were to find their happiest and most logical outcome in subsequent symphonies.

After a concise but broadly stated exposition (consisting of a first subject, A1, (Ex.126) which extends up to Letter A, a second theme which hovers round the dominant A2, (Ex.127) a short transition and the gradual introduction of the second subject B1, (Ex.128), and its trombone subsidiary phrase B2, (Ex.129)),the remainder of the movement shows Sibelius's desire to modify the sonata pattern in order to accommodate his expressive necessity.

The development section is exclusively concerned with the opening of the first subject (A1) and the trombone tag (B2) of the second, and the whole impact of this section is very similar to that of a conventional 'dominant pedal' - that is, a device used to generate emotional excitement and create the expectancy of a return to the tonic (usually accompanied by a main theme) - and in fact, from Letter J onwards, the section is supported by a dominant pedal.

This suggestion concerning the character and the purpose of the development section is supported by the choice and treatment of thematic material: the opening six notes of A1 have the marks of an 'emotional' peopellor (and it will be remembered that written as crotchets they fulfilled the function of a propellor passage, and lead from the Trio into the Finale), and the B2 idea is similar in appearance and usefulness to a contrapuntal 'tag' - and it serves to heighten the sense of movement and mounting excitement. This sense of mounting excitement is carefully controlled:

the section begins (at Letter F) with the direction 'meno moderato e poco a poco ravivando il tempo' but, after having initiated this idea with the opening cello passage, it is steadied (shortly after letter G) by the pedal entries of bassoons, contra-basses and trombones. When these pedal entries cease the sensation of increased movement is heightened by the semitonal sequential treatment of the two thematic ideas; the entry of the timpani (p.117) adds a further emphasis - note the entry on the 3rd beat of the bar.

The recapitulation of the first subject group is straightforward, but that of the second is considerably enlarged and several facets of this theme and its recapitulation are worth noting since it is clearly the 'prototype' of similar themes in later finales. Its most noticeable feature is its "perpetuo" like structure, centreing around a pivot note and accompanied by a simple harmonic undulation.

Its tonality is also interesting, since, contrary to what might have been expected (after the experience of the First Symphony, 'En Saga', and the first movement of this symphony) the theme does not return in, for example, B minor or B-flat major to be pulled up to the tonic over a mediant (D natural) pedal; instead it is firmly in the tonic minor, though the passing modulation to B-flat (pp.134-5) 'lifts' the subsequent D minor repetitions. The static quality of these repetitions is further offset by the gradual increase in the weight of the orchestral texture, the use (beginning 8 bars before letter R) of the trombone and tuba figure, and the persistent interplay of the melodic C natural and B-flat against the C-sharp of the accompaniment

The impact of this immobile repetition suggests that this theme has

increased in 'size' though in fact it still moves over a constant harmonic rhythm. However, the dramatic energy thus generated is passed on to the short coda where the reappearance of the first main theme, A1, seems to possess an even broader sense of movement - i.e. more than would naturally result from the 'molto largamente' direction.

The immobile second subject is clearly designed to give strength and depth to the finale, since it is allowed to dominate the greater part of the recapitulation while the development section seems deliberately constructed to create a mounting emotional expectation and excitement - though this is not at once taken up by the first subject, whose virtually complete restatement (necessary and inevitable in this particular design) could be regarded as 'weakening'. But, apart from this, there is an advance (over the finale of the First Symphony) in that the time-scale and rate of progress of the second subject are more nearly balanced by (i) the size and (perpetuo) nature of the first subject, and (ii) by the careful and extensive preparation for the change from the scherzo to the finale so that it is acceptable and convincing.

This finale provides a greater degree of balance to the work as a whole, and has a coherence and strength superior to that of the First Symphony. But it is directly descended from the First Symphony and its 'superiority' lies in that fact that the romantic 'big tune' is more obviously designed for the monumental effect to be created by repetition (hence the perpetuo-type construction) and the changes in the design and purpose of the development section to aid and emphasize this: together these facts point towards the completely original and successful finale presented in the Third Symphony.

The first movement also shows its First Symphony ancestry for it is concerned with a further exploration of an internal tonal tension, though it is an 'advance' in that it is no longer a tonal tension caused by an ambiguous area between two closely related keys (as in the First Symphony, and the symphonically integrated 'En Saga') but is now completely 'internal' in that the tension arises from a certain fluidity within the basic harmonic foundation of the tonic key itself.

The Third Symphony was completed in 1907 and modern writers tend to emphasize the 'dramatic' differences which apparently exist between it and its predecessors: it will be shown that this is not entirely accurate and the Third Symphony is descended as directly from the Second, as the Second was from the First.

CHAPTER 9

Valse Triste

Romance in C

VIOLIN CONCERTO

CHAPTER 9

In 1903 Sibelius composed incidental music for the drama 'Kuolema' (Death) by his brother-in-law Arvid Järnefelt. Johnson[1] lists this incidental music as "Six 'scenes' for string orchestra, bass drum, and church bell", and the music for the opening scene was later rescored for flute, clarinet, 2 horns, 1 timpani, and strings, and published as 'Valse Triste' Op.44.

The stage action[2] of the opening scene of 'Kuolema' is obviously followed and reflected in 'Valse Triste', yet at the same time the essence of this short composition is clearly Sibelian, and is more nearly related to its immediate predecessors (i.e.the First and Second Symphonies, En Saga) than many writers admit.

The musical argument of Valse Triste (which falls into two sections) could be presented as in 8 stages :

First section -

(i) an opening theme (A1, Ex.130) - Lento - in F-sharp minor moves to G major,

(ii) G major introduces (a) a valse rhythm (at Letter C), then

(b) a valse theme (B1, Ex.131), (at Letter E) - note the dominant-eleventh chord with its D-sharp/E-flat,

(iii) the valse theme suggests a move to E minor and the evolution of a more obvious 'dance' melody (- beginning two bars before Letter F),

(iv) but this move to E minor is not completed, and the opening theme returns to close the first half of the work - in F-sharp minor.

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1. Op.cit., p.208.

2. Described by Johnson, op.cit., p.101.

Second section (beginning at Letter G) :

(v) after only four bars the valse theme (B1) is presented in G major,

(vi) the move to E minor is now completed and the subsidiary 'dance' theme (C1, Ex.132) is introduced - 'poco risoluto',

(vii) the climax of this new theme returns to G (minor) where it culminates in

(viii) a 'stretto' presentation of the opening theme in G minor; 8 closing bars 'lento assai' make a brief and effective ending.

The musical argument of Valse Triste not only parallels the stage action, but is obviously derived from the musical arguments of the previous works already mentioned. Of course, it is not maintained with the same passion, conviction, or imagination, but although some of the material in 'Valse Triste' is very obvious (and lacks the tension, subtlety - and pedal points - of those earlier works) it is dramatically effective: perhaps it is also pertinent to remark that the stage action almost demands an 'obvious' (stereotyped) dance melody that will be immediately comprehended as such.

The most interesting feature of 'Valse Triste' is that it presents a further exploration and working out of the tonal evolution and tension that are the creative basis of these more valuable earlier works - but it is here presented on a totally different time-scale, and for an entirely different creative purpose.

Sibelius's next composition - apparently written in 1903 but not performed until March 1904 - also presents a working out of similar tonal tensions, and although it is even shorter it is undoubtedly more successful. This new work was known in 1904 as 'Andante for strings': when it was

published 5 years later it acquired its present title - 'Romance for String Orchestra in C major' Op.42.

This 'Romance' is cast in a simple ternary form, and the most imaginative part of the work is the opening (Ex.133) for it begins with an unaccompanied phrase clearly suggesting E minor which is at once contradicted by a C major chord (- first inversion, thus typically presenting E natural as the bass-note of the chord!); the following two bars suggest a stronger move (with dominant - thirteenth chord) towards an E minor cadence, but this too is answered by a C major chord - in root position.

This unresolved tonal tension is expanded (in the next four bars) by the equally ambiguous undulation between C major and A minor (using, of course, the enharmonic 'confusion' of A-flat/G-sharp) until a passing reference to F major shows these undulations (to E minor on one side, and A minor on the other) to be circumscribing C major. The cadence at the end of this first section is clearly imminent but remains incomplete. It is followed by a bar-line pause after which a short two part canonic passage (Ex.134) modulates to E major: the strength of this canon lies in its lack of harmonic support.

The second section in E major is somewhat disappointing, for although its E major tonality - consistently marked by A-sharp in its main theme, (Ex.135) - and the fullness of its texture (a nice foil to the canon) has a warmth which is justly appropriate, the accompanying harmonic progression is presented as a 'stock' supporting accompaniment: the progression here seems mannered and an 'easy' solution - it fails to match the imagination of the opening.

The third section is largely a strengthened restatement of the first, and it is reached via the canonic passage in inversion. The work ends with an additional 6 bars of sustained chord against which solo cello reiterates

the opening phrase, now situated on the dominant, and finishing with a C major cadence.

The opening bars are the most felicitous of the work, and the melody - complete with falling-fifths - is typically Sibelian in inflection and rhythm. The essence of this section and indeed the whole work, is the tonal ambiguity created by a strong mediant (or submediant) note within the key. This recalls the First Symphony, sometimes in detail - the dominant thirteenth chord, the A-flat/G-sharp enharmonic identity, the 'stock' harmonic progression, and even the E-natural bass note of the first chord which suggests a parallel with the pedal point of the First Symphony but now transmuted to a single note in keeping with its reduced time-scale: moreover the continuous thought of the opening paragraph - its gradual melodic development and tonal evolution - suggests a musical 'size' to which the title 'Romance' is perhaps less than just.

This work remains convincing and homogenous (in spite of its disappointing middle section) because it is founded on such a strong musical argument, but its advance lies in the fact that it is accomplished on such a reduced time-scale, for this marks it as one of the more successful of Sibelius's smaller compositions. The evidence of later small-scale works suggests that Sibelius was creatively inhibited by their smaller size: certainly they show a more variable degree of imagination and treatment than would have been expected.

Between the premieres of 'Valse Triste' and 'Romance' Op.42, the first performance of Sibelius's Violin Concerto was given in Helsinki. It was then withdrawn and the revised version of the Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D minor, Op.47 appeared in 1905; it is scored for double

woodwind, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings and solo violin.

As a young man Sibelius had seriously considered following the career of a violin soloist, and his technical proficiency lead to his appointment as second violinist in the Music Institute's (Helsinki) string quartet. It is not surprising therefore that his only concerto composition should be for violin.

The first movement is remarkably coherent, though leisurely in its progress, while its tonal organization is worthy of note both for its own intrinsic value and for the possible effect it has on subsequent compositions.

For convenience the main outlines of the movement are tabulated below :-

Bar/Fig.	Theme	Orch./Solo	Key	Ex.No.
Exposition				
Bar 1	A1	Solo	D minor	136
Fig.1	A2	"	"	
Solo passage work, over mediant pedal, leading to :				
Fig.2	B1	Orch.	B-flat/D minor	137
Fig.3	B2	Orch.	B-flat	138
Fig.3 + 2	B3	Solo	D-flat	139
Largamente	B2 & 3	Solo & Orch.	D-flat	
Fig.4	C1	Orch.	B-flat minor	140
P.17, Bar 3	C2	"	"	141
Fig.5	C3 (Cadence theme)	"	"	142
Development - solo cadenza				
Recapitulation				
Fig.7	A1	Orch (+ Solo)	G minor	
Fig.8	A2	Solo	D minor	
Fig.9	Development of A1 by Orchestra			
P.39	B2 & B3	Orch.	B major to D major	
P.41			- D minor	
Fig.11	C1	Orch.& Solo	D minor	
P.46, Bar 2	C2	" "	"	
Fig.12	A1	Solo & Orch.	"	

As Tovey[1] stated "its outlines are huge and simple" and while its leisurely design owes little to the great classical concerto form of Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms, yet this work has a strength and impact found only rarely in Violin Concertos.

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1. Donald Tovey: Essays in Musical Analysis, Vol.III, p.211.

The exposition of the first main theme (A1) is accomplished by the solo with a minimum of support from the orchestra. This main theme shows a consistent use of C-natural (and B-natural) and G-sharp, and, as in the (second subject of the) slow movement of the Second Symphony, it appears that Sibelius uses the augmented 4th (G-sharp) not so much as a 'modal' colour note, but as a deliberate tonal counterbalance (to the C natural).[1]

This suggestion is supported by the construction of the 'sul G' phrase of the main A1 melody. Here, (although it is accompanied by a Neapolitan sixth) the melody largely centres round the subdominant, and the employment of the augmented fourth degree of the scale enables Sibelius to make an exact tonal balance: thus

D. . . . . G-sharp - A, is exactly mirrored by

G. . . . . C-sharp - D

This tonal balance is later used to purposeful effect; more immediately it may be remarked that this opening theme is truly Sibelian in inflection, rhythm and behaviour, and few could deny the genuine beauty of the opening solo entry.

The second theme (A2) is quickly stated, worked to a climax, and culminates in semi-cadenza for the solo, after which the first paragraph is closed with a perfect cadence (at Fig.2).

Two features of this exposition so far should be noted: first, that the whole of the first group has been firmly held in D minor, with a large part of the second sentence over a tonic pedal in timpani, and secondly, that the mediant (F natural) pedal which accompanied the short semi-cadenza is at least symptomatic of Sibelius's intention to leave the tonic key very shortly: mediant pedals in Sibelius either suggest tonal ambiguity or lead to tonal movement.

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1. This suggestion is 'confirmed' in subsequent works.

The second subject group begins (at Fig.2) without modulation and is at first tonally balanced between B-flat and D minor; the key of B-flat is gradually accepted while at the same time the second main theme evolves towards its characteristic shape (B2). This is a nice parallel development of tonal and melodic thought - perhaps derived from 'En Saga'; it is very effective in this context since it utilises the essentially melodic character of a violin concerto.

The definitive version of the second subject is first stated by clarinets (at Fig.3) and almost immediately the solo introduces a new counter-theme in cross rhythm (B3). Under the direction 'largamente' these two themes move quickly to D-flat major, where B2 is richly treated by the solo (in 6ths and octaves). The tonality gradually 'returns' (via hints of D-flat minor) to B-flat minor, and at Allegro molto (Fig.4) there begins an extended 'codetta'.

This 'codetta'[1] introduces two 'new' themes (C1 and C2) and serves two purposes. Firstly it is necessary to confirm the tonality of the second subject group since (i) the move to B-flat was gradual, and (ii) accompanied by a parallel thematic evolution which then moved to D-flat. This codetta confirms the B-flat minor tonality simply: the first of its themes is entirely based on the tonic chord, and the second theme stresses the dominant. Further these themes are both marked with the characteristics of Sibelius's propellor music - sudden dynamic changes, off-beat forzando's, and centred on pivot notes - and (like all propellor music) both suggest their derivation from cadential formulae and fulfil a cadential (and tonal) function.

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1. The correct 'labelling' of the sections in Sibelius's composition is not always straigatforward; the reason for the choice of 'codetta' here is discussed shortly.

Some writers refer to both 'the second subject' and 'a third group of themes' but the implication that the two groups (i.e.the B themes and the C themes) are so entirely separated and unrelated is demonstrably untrue. For while it is convenient to label this section with its C themes as 'codetta' it has (i) a distinct thematic relationship with the second group, since themes C1 and B3 are identical in part,(Ex.143)

Ex.143



and (ii) there is a clear tonal relationship as has been described above; the tonal progression of this exposition is essentially :

D minor via B-flat, D-flat (minor) to B-flat minor; later events (p.40 et seq.) clearly support this.

Equally it is clear that these new C themes do function as a codetta and round off the exposition. The climax of this codetta (at Fig.5) presents a further cadence theme, (C3), which is again marked by typical Sibelian features: the brass dynamics of p<ff>p, the mediant (D-flat) timpani roll - which has been much in evidence since p.12 - and the augmented fourth in the strings.

The second of the two functions served by this codetta is simply this: it provides some balance in the distribution of material between solo and orchestra. Up to this point the orchestra has been subdued and subservient; the first group was entirely dominated by the solo, while the material of the second group (although introduced by the orchestra) was later taken over by the solo. Some purely orchestral material is therefore needed to maintain a balance; from this point of view the

previously implied distinction between 'second subject' and the 'codetta' is interesting and it could perhaps be argued that this codetta therefore serves a function similar to that of the 'return of the ritornello without solo' in the classical concerto.[1] Further the importance and structure of this codetta is governed by both the exposition which has preceded it, and the development which is to follow it; for - with the exception of one orchestral comment 'ff' - this development section consists entirely of solo work.

The 'development' is a brilliantly written cadenza which manages to combine display elements with the musical necessities of development: it is brief, to the point, and always more than mere pyrotechnics.

The recapitulation begins with A1 in G minor, at first in the orchestra and later taken up by the solo; the subdominant second phrase of this theme is thus shown to have a pointed functional purpose, for it enables the development and recapitulation sections to overlap, while the 'dark' G minor tonality is an admirable foil to the brilliance of the development section. Further this dark tonal colour - logically and imaginatively complemented by presenting the theme in bassoons! - balances the rather austere beauty of the opening by its warmer and passionate placing here: almost the whole phrase is now 'sul G' and since its final

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1. Apropos this suggestion it is interesting to quote a footnote from Tovey: (Vol.III, p.23) - the underlining is mine however:

> "The recapitulation in the tonic is a recapitulation of the opening tutti as well as of the first solo. It does not omit the features peculiar to the solo but it adds to them those features of the ritornello which the solo had not at first adopted".

The idea of some material from the ritornello being reserved for shared presentation in the recap becomes more interesting in the 'coda' of this movement.

phrase (poco f, p.28) has already been shown to centre round the sub-dominant of D minor, the tonal transition to D minor is subtly accomplished (- a musical sleight-of-hand!).

The second tonic theme (A2) is restated in D minor, but following this the introduction of the second group provides the opportunity for a continued development of the opening phrase of the main theme - by the orchestra alone. This development moves impressively to B major (and its subdominant is markedly emphasized, p.38) and this allows Sibelius to maintain a tonal movement which balances that observed in the exposition while omitting the preliminary evolutions of the second main theme (B2). Thus the key schemes of the exposition and recapitulation are :-

Exposition: D minor....B-flat - D-flat (minor) - B-flat minor,

Recapitulation: D minor (ex.G minor)....B major - D major (minor) - D minor.

The coda restates both the C1 and C 2 themes: the first over a tonic pedal in timpani, and the second in an imaginatively fresh and delicate scoring - and both are accompanied by some brilliant solo display. The original cadence theme (C3) is now replaced with reference to the opening of the first main theme and the movement ends with brilliance and strength.

Critical comment on this movement ranges widely:[1] but the reason for such marked divergences of opinion seems to lie in the 'melodic' character of this work. The first movement is close-knit and continuous, but it is large-scale and designed to be leisurely. The initial solo statement is itself an extended melodic idea, and it makes a point - though melody - of an exact tonal balance between the tonic and the subdominant; moreover,

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1. Compare (and contrast!) Johnson p.104 v. J.Herbage (Pelican 'Concerto' p.278) or Tovey Vol.III p.211 v. R.Wood (Abraham) p.67.

the opening paragraph as a whole - having introduced two thematic characters, A1 and A2 - does not attempt to leave the tonic key.

This large scale design (suggested indeed by the very structure of the main A1 theme) is imaginatively balanced by the continuous and simultaneous evolution of both the tonality and principal theme of the second subject. In turn these thematic and tonal evolutions are confirmed and balanced by the simultaneous function of the C group of themes as both the codetta and the completion of the second subject.

This dual evolution and functioning of the second subject and the codetta is extended in the development-cadenza: the brevity of this development is absolutely right - anything approaching a 'normal' development section here (passing through a wider variety of keys) would make the design unwieldy and diffuse.

The recapitulation is almost a full restatement, and it includes some additional development; but there is a slight shortening of the second subject while the coda is as necessary as it is effective.

The fact that this work is a concerto for violin necessarily leads Sibelius to present his argument through melody (as opposed to the harmonically stated argument of the first movement of the Second Symphony): this almost inevitably means a leisurely progression. The tonal organization is typically Sibelian and extremely logical in this context; it reflects a deliberately leisurely approach and indeed quite clearly parallels it - in a manner reminiscent of 'En Saga'.

The history of one of Sibelius's most important key relationships i.e.the tonic - mediant (or submediant), may be traced from 'Lemminkäinen's Return' through the First Symphony, the revised version of 'En Saga' and the Second Symphony. In the first movement of the First Symphony the

tonality swings between E minor and G minor, while in En Saga the long pedal point depends for its vitality on the fact that it reflects and generates the tension between C minor and E-flat. In the Second Symphony this internal tonal tension results in the second subject (in the dominant key of A major) being reached after a momentary mediant 'key' detour (F-sharp minor).

In the Violin Concerto this detour assumes a more prominent position, but its ancestral development is clear, its purpose here is logical and imaginative, and it could have provided Sibelius with the basis of the idea that was to make a greater impact in the first movement of the Third Symphony.

Whether or not one agrees with the judgement that the second subject is 'so effective and so second rate' the (almost symphonic) coherence of the large-scale design of this first movement is impressive.

The slow movement in B-flat major is a ternary form and not altogether successful. After a short but haunting introduction for woodwind, the initial solo statement (Ex.144), accompanied by the most mannered of Sibelius's harmonic progressions, is gradually unfolded and rises to a restrained climax that is completed by a delicate closing phrase; it justly earns Tovey's description - "a noble paragraph".

The middle section (Figs.1-3) begins with a strong presentation of the opening woodwind theme (rather like a development); it moves towards G minor, and evolves a 'new' thematic idea which also suggests a connection with the initial solo theme.

This new theme makes a point of its own submediant (E-flat) before the return of a strong G minor sequence (p.67) over a B-flat pedal in timpani and contra-basses. This G minor - with its mediant pedal - is

suddenly taken (Fig.3 p.68) as the opportunity to return to B-flat: the opening harmonic progression was clearly designed for this purpose. Equally the fact that this movement also has some marked E naturals (i.e.the augmented fourth of B-flat) is again explicable as a tonal counterbalance; in this movement the E-natural makes its (two) most telling and important appearances (on p.58, bottom line, bar 2 - Violin solo; and p.68, four bars after Fig.3) when it moves to F-natural and thus clearly demonstrates that the preceding G-flat is not an enharmonic F-sharp (and therefore in G minor).

The restatement of the opening material is now carried by the orchestra while the solo adds a simple decoration, only at the climax does it abandon its filigree tracings. The delicate closing phrase is now directed 'sul G', and completed by a 'ppp' octave B-flat for strings against a 'ppp quasi niente' diminished 7th for horns which is gently outlined by the solo before its resolution.

This is perhaps the least satisfactory movement of the concerto: its opening paragraph (a considerable and continuous melody), followed by an energetic move away from the tonic key, suggests a purpose and passion that is not allowed to develop. The return to B-flat is effective though perhaps a little too calculated - for the sake of brevity.

The finale - "a polonaise for polar bears" - must rank as one of the most exhilarating of all violin concertos. Its outlines are simple,

easy to follow and brilliantly effective: they are sketched in the following table -

Fig/Bar	Theme	Key	Orch/Solo	Ex.No.
Exposition				
Bar 1	A1	D Major	Solo	145
Fig.2	B1	G Min (To B-flat)	Orch.	146
Fig.4	C1	B-flat	Solo & Orch.	
Development				
Fig 4 + 11				
Recapitulation				
Fig.6 - 6	A1	D Major	Orch (+ solo)	
Fig.8 + 7	B1	D Min (to F)	"	
Fig.12	Coda	D Min - D Major		

The impetus and verve of this movement comes from two sources: (i) the 'biting' dotted rhythm of the first subject and the 'hemiola' of the second, and (ii) the basically simple harmonic drive: the whole of the second subject (with the exception of only a few bars before Fig.4) is based on a tonic - diminished 7th (on the leading note) undulation, which is itself largely situated on a mediant (B-flat) pedal.[1] This undulation, together with the rhythmic propulsion of the hemiola creates a tremendous sense of excitement, while the fact that it is poised on a mediant pedal creates the expectancy of some tonal change.

This expectation is fulfilled (beginning 7 bars before Fig.4) where the attraction of the B-flat pedal pulls the tonality (from G minor) to the key of B-flat. (The 'En Saga' derivation of this is unmistakable).

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1. There is also an internal D natural pedal on horns.

The subsequent B-flat cadence theme (Fig.4) fulfils its function with some delicate scoring - but note that there are now two harmonies per bar as opposed to the previous one-per-bar of the second subject; the familiar falling-fifth figure also shows its cadential derivation and function here (p.90).

The development is brief and little more than a sequentially decorated harmonic progression leading back to D-major (mostly through diminished 7th over a dominant - A-natural-pedal) and this suggests a purpose similar to that of the development section of the finale of the Second Symphony: both seem deliberately designed as little more than dominant preparation. But the simple adequacy of this development is sufficient to establish the point that this movement is a sonata design and not a rondo.[1]

The recapitulation is mostly literal, though the second subject is now situated on an F-natural pedal (note, however, the A-natural pedal in timpani) and this eventually pulls the tonality to F major. In turn this demands an emphatic dominant passage (for D major, Figs.10-12) and climaxes with a short cadential passage that closes the work effectively.

In its chronological setting, the importance and contribution of the Violin Concerto to Sibelius's symphonic development cannot be dismissed; for some significant changes make their first appearance in the Third Symphony - the work which occupied Sibelius in the years 1904-7 and thus overlapped the revision of the concerto.

The tonal schemes, for example, of the first movement of this concerto and that of the Third Symphony have several features in common. In the expositions of both works the first subject remains securely fixed in the tonic - this is not true of the First and Second Symphonies; both also

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1. And this last movement has sometimes been described as a rondo.

come to a full close in the tonic (again not in either of the symphonies). With the tonal evolution of the second subject there are further similarities: both are approached through the mediant of their eventual key i.e. D-flat (minor) to B-flat minor in the concerto and B minor to G major in the Third Symphony. Both moves are logical though that of the Third Symphony is dramatic (and symphonic) whereas that of the Concerto is leisurely and demands an extended codetta for confirmation.

If the Violin Concerto of Sibelius is not always in 'inspired' work this is a criticism it must share with many others and deserves less! It is however a typical composition in both its material and construction; and the beauty of the opening bars is elegantly characteristic.

CHAPTER 10

Pelléas and Mélisande

Belshazzar's Feast

Pan and Echo

POHJOLA'S DAUGHTER

CHAPTER 10

Following the composition of the original version of the Violin Concerto, and during the writing of the Third Symphony, Sibelius composed a considerable amount of orchestral music - ranging from the valuable to the insignificant: viz. the suites of Incidental music to 'Pelléas and Mélisande' (Maeterlinck) and 'Belshazzar's Feast (Procopé), the Dance Intermezzo 'Pan and Echo' and the symphonic-fantasy 'Pohjola's Daughter'.

The Incidental music to 'Pelléas and Mélisande' was written in 1905, and the original score consisted of 7 preludes, 2 melodramas (to accompany dialogue) and 1 song: in the published score (Concert Suite, Op.46) only one melodrama is omitted.[1]

All the (9) pieces of this suite are short and essentially small-scale, and there is a general evenness of invention, choice of material and its treatment, that combines to make this one of the most pleasant and popular of the suites (of incidental music) that Sibelius ever composed.

The first number (in C major) 'At the Castle Gate' is straightforward and has a simple melodic line. It establishes the character and proportions of the suite, and its simplicity belies its careful construction: the opening melody for example, (Ex.147) lasts for 22 bars without a real break, and this is far beyond the bounds of a conventional melody. Later on the sequential treatment of part of the opening phrase passes quickly through a variety of 'keys' each with its perfect cadence, and together with the long opening melody this tends to give this piece a musical strength not normally

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1. The full score also give an unusually detailed specification of the orchestra, thus :
1 flute (and piccolo), 1 oboe, (and Cor anglais), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, timpani, triangle, Gran cassa, and the following strings: 6 violin I, 4 violin II, 4 violas, 4 celli, 3 contra-bassi.

associated with such a pleasantly straightforward number - i.e.without making it pretentious or allowing it to become disproportionate.

The second number, 'Mélisande', is a waltz in F minor, 'Andantino con moto, crotchet=76'. Its main theme is shown in Ex.148, and the piece has been (accurately) summed up by Layton[1] thus :

> "although it is a trifle facile, the cor anglais melody that dominates it has a grave charm that seems to spring from a more spontaneous creative impulse"(M.S.C.i.e.than No.1)

- and this quality of 'grave charm' is perhaps the emotional keynote of the whole suite: for the pathos and elegiac quality of the best pieces never reaches any great emotional depths, or releases any searching emotional qualities.

The pathos of this piece is partly the result of its choice of key (F minor, following the C major of No.1) and the dark instrumental colour of the cor anglais - one is tempted to add that if this portrait of Melisande was meant to suggest a tragic character then the key would have been in F-sharp minor.

'At the Sea-shore' (No.2a) is a melodrama, and quite clearly designed to evoke the atmosphere of its title. It is constructed of an undulating and unresolved harmonic progression supported by a D-natural pedal point, above which a short melodic idea for woodwind is gradually presented. The 'climax' of this short number is marked with impressionistic harmonics (tremolo) for all strings - including very high contra-basses and cellos. The comparative weakness of this piece as an individual number is perhaps recognised by the fact that a footnote in the score states that it may be omitted in concert performance.

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1. Layton, op.cit., p.95.

The third number, 'Spring in the Park' is another simple and unpretentious piece, and its key of F major provides a nice foil to the F minor of 'Mélisande' (particularly if No.2a is omitted); further, the immediate repeat of the opening theme (Ex.149) in A major heightens its interpretation of its title, and avoids the commonplace.

The closing bars (2 bars before Letter D, al fine, Ex.150) are interesting; in its initial statement the last three notes of the main theme are echoed as a pendant by bassoon, but in these closing bars there is a gradual transformation of the falling-fifth, first to a third, and then (according to one's individual fancy) either disappearing or being transmuted into the flute phrase which is itself completed by the contra-basses pizz, and closes the piece.

'The Three Blind Sisters', No.4, was originally a song. It is very short, and its most characteristic phrases are seen in the opening 12 bars (Ex.151); in particular the sequential falling-fifth phrase ending clearly suggests its original purpose and derivation. The essential simplicity of this number arises from the rather conventional clarinet phrases - with their large number of repeated melody notes - and this is heightened by the minimal (though sufficient) orchestration.

The next piece, 'Pastorale' (in A-flat) is another melodrama but, in contrast to No.2a, it is also one of the most charming pieces of the suite. It is based on two melodic ideas (Exs.152, 153), the second of which invites its comparison with a similar phrase in the 'Nocturne' of the 'King Christian II' Suite - though here its greater degree of refinement is obvious.

The attractive lilt of this piece is enhanced by the simplicity of the scoring (- in particular its spaciousness) and the persistent added-6th - indeed the cor anglais maintains this note even in the final chord. The prominence given to clarinets in this piece (and also Nos.4 and 6) is at first sight somewhat unusual for Sibelius, but they are always used with great reserve: dynamically they never rise above 'mf' and melodically they are restricted to their middle register (cp Symphony No.1, and 'En Saga').

'Mélisande at the Spinning-wheel' (No.6) presents a constant musical reflection of its title in the persistent F-sharp - G quaver trill/pedal for violas (Ex.154). The repeated phrase for oboe which marks this piece, together with the isolated 'cry' for violins (their only participation apart from adding some harmonic support) seems to suggest a more sinister aspect, but this is not developed, and it is difficult not to feel that this piece is too closely connected with the play to be entirely successful as a concert number.

The 'Entr'acte' (No.7) in A major is immensely enjoyable. It has a polished simplicity, is pleasantly scored, nicely balanced, and even the chords (A-E) for timpani seems remarkably appropriate - notice too the fundamental simplicity of the opening bar (Ex.155).

This 'Entr'acte' has a freshness that characterised the best numbers of the earlier 'King Christian II' suite, though its greater refinement is again obvious; subsequently similar small works having this quality of polished simplicity (as, for example, in the 'Scènes Historiques II') are apt to lose in freshness what they gain in refinement.

Although this number makes no demands on the listener it exudes a genial and simple-hearted warmth that cannot be ignored.

The last number (in D minor) is 'The Death of Mélisande', and, in keeping with the character of the suite as a whole, this too is elegiac; it suggests pathos but avoids tragedy, even though its middle section presents the most passionate moments of the entire suite. The opening string paragraph in D minor (Ex.156) has an admirable simplicity, and the first four bars (with their three differently scored string versions of the same D minor chord) are illustrative of the care that contributes so pertinently to this - as do other details such as the viola part in bar 8.

In the middle section the passionate presentation of that most mannered harmonic progression (of Sibelius) supports a melodic phrase (Ex.157) that anticipates something of the style (and intensity) that characterises later works; the comparison of this melody with the Trio theme from the Second Symphony suggests that the enhanced Sibelian quality of this theme (in isolation) is the direct result of its use of a sustained note (with a crescendo) instead of the repeated melody notes, i.e.its Sibelian quality is the result of its reduction - to elemental features.

The general evenness of this Suite surpasses that of the enlarged 'King Christian II' Suite; it is moreover marked with a quality of pathos that is never overstepped, and its recognition of its limitations (of both size and emotion) contributes markedly to its success.

Just over one year after the completion of 'Pelléas and Mélisande' Sibelius accepted the commission to write incidental music to the drama 'Belshazzar's Feast' by Hjalmar Procopé (apparently a friend of Sibelius). Originally there were 8 numbers, scored for a small orchestra consisting of

1 flute, 2 clarinets, 2 horns, strings, and percussion; in 1907 Sibelius published a Suite (Op.51) taken from the incidental music and now consisting of only 4 numbers :

1. Oriental Procession (originally the Alla marcia of Act.1),
2. Solitude (the accompaniment to the Jewish Girl's Song in Act III),
3. Night Music (the prelude to Act II),
4. Khadra's Dance (the original 'Dance of Death' and 'Dance of Life' now made into one number.

- and Johnson states that little revision was needed apart from the addition of a second flute and one oboe.

As incidental music the pieces were apparently effective and well received; as a concert suite the pieces are straightforward and possess a certain degree of individual charm. Modal inflections are obviously used here to suggest an oriental setting, and this is reflected in the scoring where the main centre of melodic interest is in the woodwind; the strings supply ostinato backgrounds for most of the suite, while the horns add harmonic support.

The last two numbers are perhaps the most successful and enjoyable; the opening 'processional' number is straightforward but lacks any real imaginative touches, while the second number (The Jewish Girl's Song) is delicately scored but lacks rhythmic interest - though it might have been successful in the play because of its words.

The 'Night Music' displays much more imagination, and is full of Sibelian features. The opening flute solo (Ex.158) is almost a compendium of Sibelius's favourite melodic devices: the opening long note, followed by a group of semiquavers, the falling-fifth, the rising-third. Rhythmically and harmonically this piece is typical Sibelius and recalls several similar

passages from works like the 'King Christian II' Suite (and even the slow movement of the First Symphony).

In fact many of the most obvious and frequent of Sibelius's procedures are seen in this small piece, in spite of which it possesses a far greater degree of freshness and vitality than the first two numbers.

The final number is also effective and imaginative. The first section contains a delightful 'comment' for oboe which is so happy an orchestral touch that (as Johnson remarks) "one wonders why Sibelius did not think of it at first." This particular phrase is set in the fullest part of the oboe's range (Ex.159) and although it enters the realm of pure speculation it is just the sort of phrase that most composers would have given to the clarinet - in its chalmeau register.

The middle section (presumably the Dance of Death) is not particularly distinguished, though it gains most of its sinister aspect from being accompanied only by an octave B-natural thrummed on strings.

As a whole the Suite is pleasant, but in spite of its oriental colouring and touches of imaginative freshness (in the last two pieces) it also gives the rise to the impression that Sibelius has standardised an approach to the composition of incidental music that was (i) effective and acceptable, but (ii) from which he need not depart for more enterprising music.

'Pan and Echo' (Dance Intermezzo No.3) Op.53a[1] was also composed in 1906 (though it was revised three years later). It is scored for the

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1. The sub-title of this work presents a slight enigma; for while the other Dance Intermezzo by Sibelius (Dance Intermezzo, Op.45 No.2) was composed in 1907, its companion piece 'The Dryad' Op.45 No.1 - and presumably the First Dance Intermezzo - was not written until 1910.

usual Full Orchestra and requires timpani and Gran cassa, piatti and triangle.

Although written in the same year as 'Pohjola's Daughter' this present work has little value and makes little impact. It falls into two sections of which the first suggests the 'Echo' while the second is obviously a dance movement.

The opening three pages of the full score - the first section in fact - are the better and more nearly Sibelian of this work. Ex.160 quotes a large part of this opening and shows the typical undulating movement, pivoting on the enharmonic identity of D-flat/C-sharp, and characteristically hovering between the keys of the tonic F major and its submediant (D minor). Some of the scoring (bars 7-8 in particular) has a real delicacy, but the harmonic and melodic material of this opening section is used for its convenience: here it becomes (for once) a stereotyped mannerism.

The second section of 'Pan and Echo' lacks even the degree of imagination observed in the first. It is composed of several smaller sections, most of which have their own particular melodic material and this is not only commonplace but is handled in an obvious, uninspired manner. The abrupt changes of key, to D-flat and A-flat, have little significance and indeed become (as Ralph Wood says) 'trivial and mechanical'.

The 6/8 finale section (strangely in F minor, in which key the piece closes) is marked "string.e cresc....molto.... string.e cresc. possible" but in spite of some strong brass interjections it carries little conviction of a rousing finale since it has not been prepared and has only the impetus of increasing velocity to support it. The second

section seems to have too much material (of little value) and no clear purpose: the result is a work wherein the glimmer of promise observable in the opening fades into insignificance in the subsequent main section.

In contrast the next orchestral work of Sibelius (- and the last before the completion of the Third Symphony) is a valuable composition, and one which fulfills the promise of its opening pages: viz. 'Pohjola's Daughter' a symphonic-fantasy Op.49.

Although Cecil Gray suggested that 'Pohjola's Daughter' was written between 1903-5, all other authorities are agreed that the date of its composition was 1906, in which year it received its first performance. 'Pohjola's Daughter' must rank as one of the most praised but rarely played of Sibelius's orchestral works: critical writings (in English and English translation) all remark upon the merits of the work and are generous in their assessment, yet not one offers a single musical quotation - not even Wood[1] whose comment :

> "It is a complex, colourful, very varied composition, first-rate music, and contains one of Sibelius's most ravishing motives."

- virtually amounts to the most critical appraisal available.

The examination of the 'symphonic-fantasy' reveals not only a valuable piece of orchestral music 'per se', but an interesting and enlightening work which may illuminate some of the similarities and distinctions between the symphonies and symphonic/tone-poems - a point that becomes of some concern at a later date: for the moment it is perhaps pertinent to point out that 'Pohjola's Daughter' is in some ways one of the most 'symphonic' of Sibelius's symphonic poems.

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1. Wood, op.cit.,(Abraham) p.66.

The original title page (according to Johnson) described the work as a "Symphonic fantasy freely based on the famous Kalevala epos".[1] Like 'En Saga', 'Pohjola's Daughter' falls into three sections but, although it is programmatically conceived it is closer to sonata form than 'En Saga' and indeed presents what amounts to an exposition, development and recapitulation.

The exposition, (pages 1-18, full score) presents the main themes and tonalities of the work, but it presents them in such a way as to suggest a clear distinction between the two areas of symphony and symphonic-poem in Sibelius's creative approach.

The overall tonality of the work is B-flat, but the cello solo, A1 (Ex.161), which begins the work - recitative-like in character and inflection, and suggesting a programmatic 'introduction' rather similar to that of 'En Saga' - is firmly fixed on a G minor chord, and a large part of the opening centres round it. This attraction to the submediant chord is gradually overcome with the arrival of what could be called the first main theme, A2 (Ex.162) at Letter B, and at the climax of this 'first subject' paragraph the B-flat tonality is confirmed by trombones, and then reinforced by the full brass section.[2]

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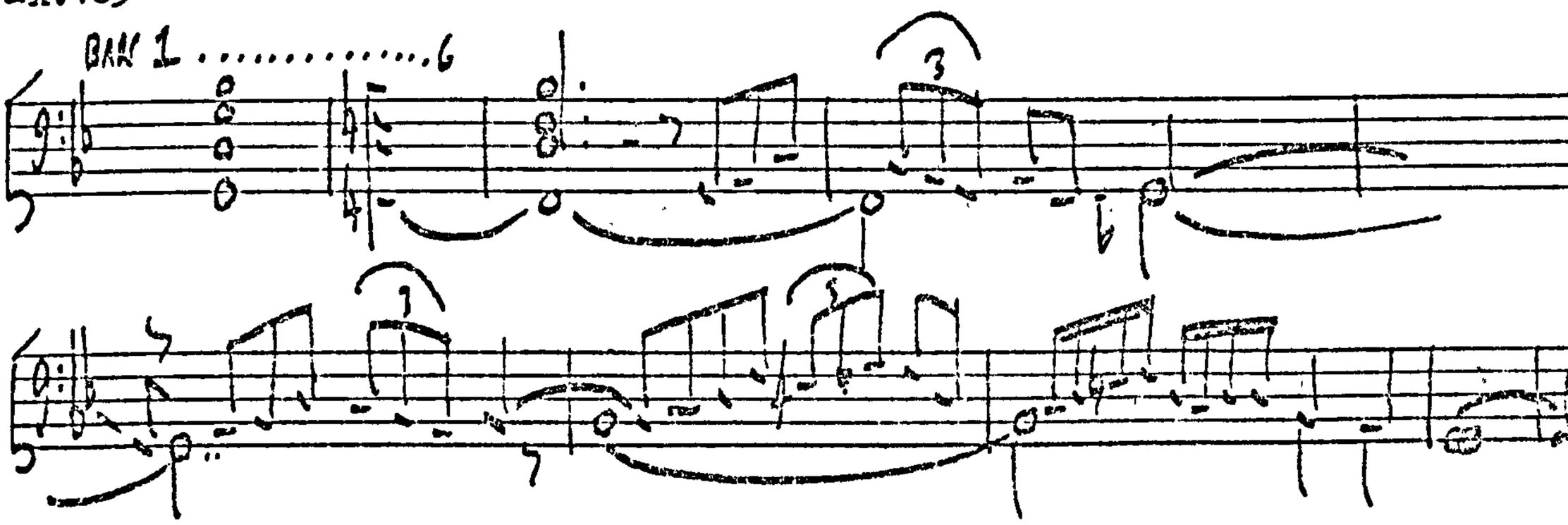
1. Johnson writes: "When the full score was published during 1906, it contained a paraphrase of canto VIII, in which it is told how the aged hero Vainamoinen attempts to woo the Maid of Pohjola as she sits on a rainbow, weaving a fabric of gold. She craftily agrees to yield on the condition that he performs a series of difficult tasks to prove the power of his magic. The final one is to construct a boat from the splinters on her spindle and launch it without touching it. The old man's magic fails him at the crucial moment. He wounds himself with his axe and gives up in despair to seek a magic cure that will staunch the flow of blood." (Johnson, op.cit., p.114)

2. It is worth commenting that the emphatic confirmation is achieved not only by a new tone colour, but also by a particular shade of that colour - i.e.the brass 'lion roars'.

The characteristic features of this tonic paragraph could be listed thus :

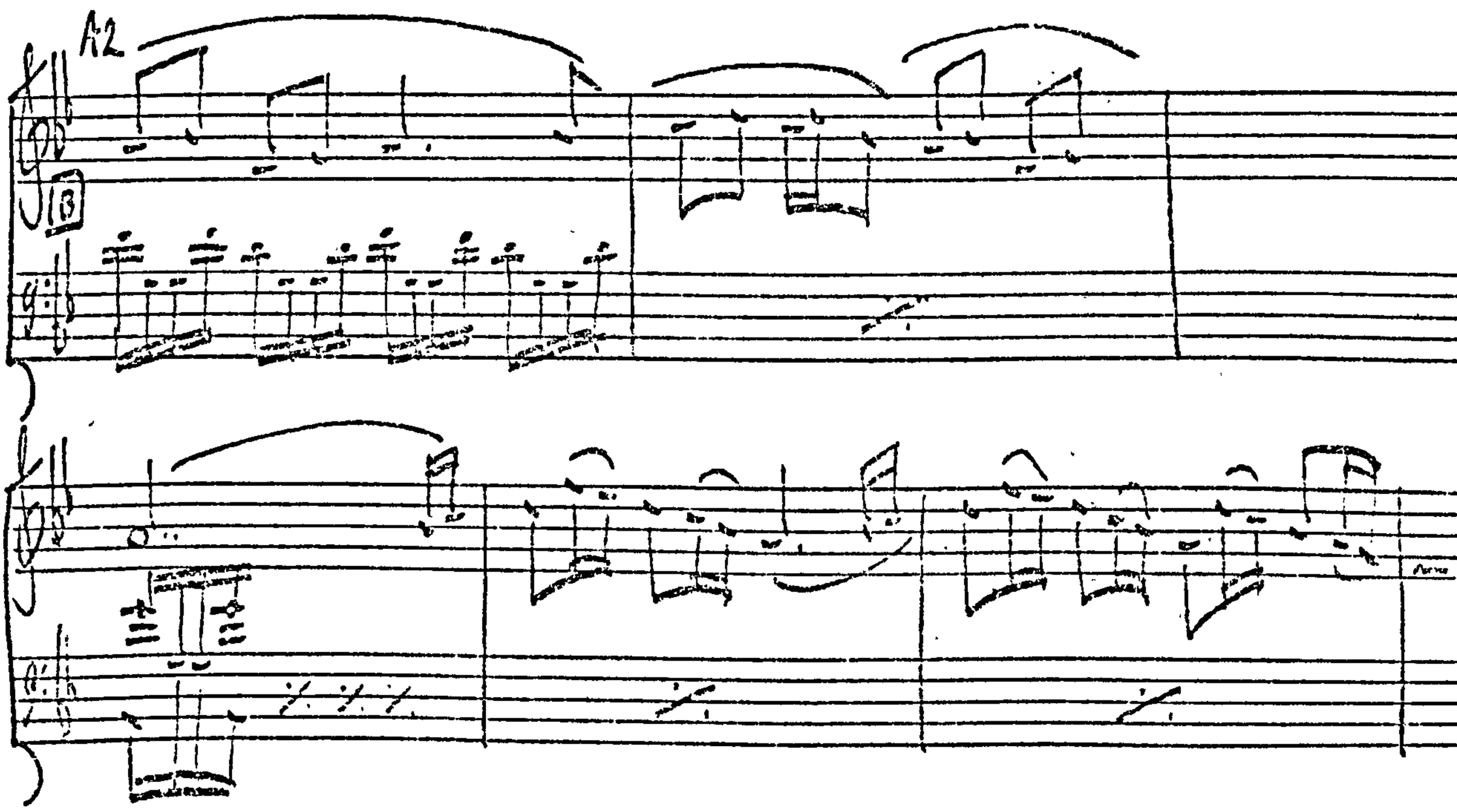
(i) the key of B-flat is marked by an 'insistent' G minor chord: this gives rise to an undulating harmonic progression and a F - G note relationship.

Ex.163



(ii) the main theme itself (A2) shows the melodic orientation to B-flat held in check by the persistent G minor chord :

Ex.164



until,

(iii) the B-flat tonality is emphatically affirmed (and confirmed) by the striking brass cadence.

The interplay of (i) and (ii) together with the gradual establishment of B-flat, is enhanced by (a) the transformation of the opening A1 cello theme into an accompaniment for A2 (and Ex.165 shows the beginning of this process with its typical harmonic undulation), (b) the F - G note relationship, and (c) the gradual increase in speed from the opening 'Largo' to 'moderato'; appropriately the climax (and affirmation of B-flat) is marked 'largamente' and expands into 3/2 bars.

Two of the principal features of this paragraph - the gradual confirmation of the main tonality and the gradual evolution of the main theme (and its accompaniment) together with the associated increase in speed, strongly suggests and reflects a programmatic approach similar to that previously observed in 'En Saga' - and both features are obviously very effective in programmatic contexts: the opening cello solo of this work appropriately suggests the beginning of another epic 'saga'.

There is however one essential difference between this opening and that of 'En Saga', and this is one of the main factors contributing to its more overt symphonic quality: 'Pohjola's Daughter' starts within its main tonality which is itself characterised by the 'dominating' position assumed by the submediant chord, and this tonal characteristic is nearer to Sibelius's symphonic arguments than, for example, 'En Saga'. More importantly this tonal fluidity will necessitate the establishment of a second, sonata, key-centre, and this was avoided in both 'En Saga' and 'Lemminkäinen's Return'.

The second paragraph of the exposition (pp.11-18) introduces further thematic and tonal ideas. Immediately after the brass climax of the B-flat paragraph there comes a new and contrasting idea in E major, 'Tranquillo molto'. There is no modulatory passage and the similarities (of abrupt tonal change and orchestral effect) seen between this passage and the first movement of the Third Symphony (finished one year after 'Pohjola's Daughter') are interesting.

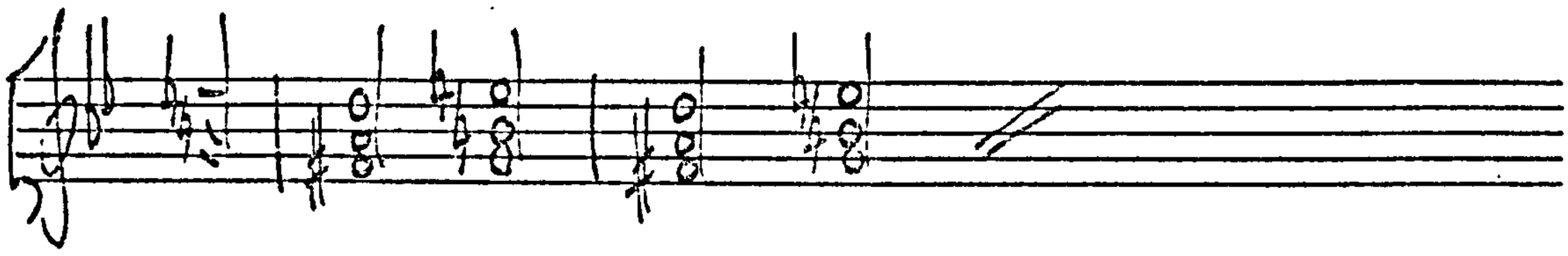
The main themes of this second section, B1 a,b, and B2, (Exs.166, a,b, 167) perhaps portray the 'Daughter of Pohjola': certainly this 'daughter of the air' is subtly suggested by the shifting and unconfirmed tonality of this section (and by the variety of the thematic guises of B2); equally since most of the first part of this exposition was concerned with the clarification of its main tonality, a clear-cut tonal episode at this point would lose much of the ethereal quality of this second half as it actually stands. The tonal identity of this second half paragraph will not be lost since the timpani persistently keep B-natural clearly in the texture.

The 'development' section (pp.19-25) is brief, extremely energetic and merges into the recapitulation. It rises to two short 'ff' climaxes before reaching the C major chord (one bar before Letter H) which is taken as the dominant of F major and, with the reappearance of one of the second subject themes (B2) it both completes the climax of the development and begins the recapitulation. Here the reappearance of this theme leads to the establishment of a B-natural pedal (on timpani and trumpets) and this is maintained as an energetic string figure (derived from B1) is worked to a climax accompanied by a whole-tone scale in woodwind - breaking off abruptly (at Letter J) with a repeated B-natural.

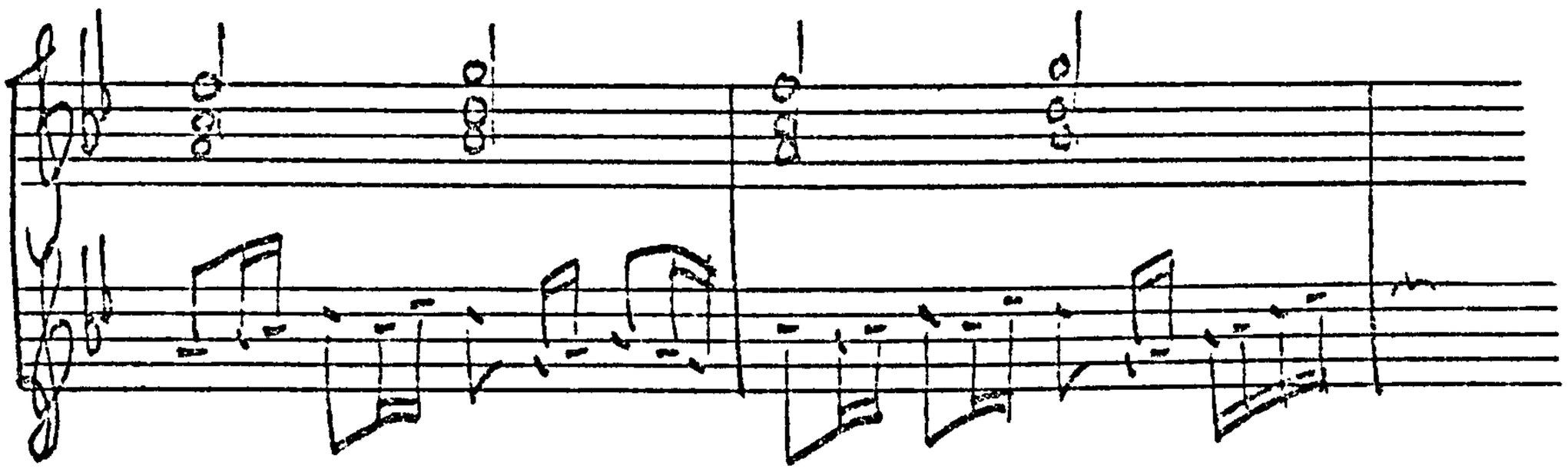
After a bar-line pause a short simple sequence points first towards E minor, but this is quickly shown to be a familiar undulating progression (V - VI) in G major and, after only 4 bars it is sequentially repeated so that it is now situated on the dominant of B-flat - and, of course, includes the opening G minor chord:

Ex.168

P.29



P.30



This resolution and 'explanation' of the opening tonal attraction to the G minor chord (within the key of B-flat) is essentially symphonic, and it recalls the first movement of the Second Symphony rather than any process in 'En Saga'.

From the reappearance of this G minor chord onwards a similar process to that of the first half of the exposition takes place, and it is worked to a climax much as before. The climax is extended - this time with the brass confirmation over a striking dominant accompaniment in strings - after which it moves directly and with considerable force (the brass lion-roars) to the flat submediant (G-flat); this is immediately contradicted and complemented by a new woodwind texture (at Letter O) which

restores the major tonic, and begins the short coda.

The woodwind texture, and indeed its triplet rhythm, is worthy of note since it only appears (along with other similar occurrences) in certain particular situations, and for quite specific purposes. The texture is peculiarly Sibelian and its most noticeable occurrences are designed to restore tonal balance and to reassert a previously established tonic - here it balances and answers the emphatic flat-side swerve - from which temporary departures have been made (this point becomes of even more significance in Op.55).[1]

The reappearance of the main second subject theme (at the beginning of the coda on p.43) is supported by a chromatically ascending bass. This B1 theme has not been heard since the exposition and it is now dramatically transformed as the result of its revised and broader scoring as well as the additional impetus of a more frequent first-beat accent; it appears to take up the inherent broadness of this theme, but paradoxically this enables it to maintain a more purposeful (and climactic) sense of movement.

The closing bars are quiet and intriguing since they appear to hint (with ironic humour perhaps?) at the tonal evolution of the exposition - almost as a motto, (Ex.169).

The symphonic qualities of 'Pohjola's Daughter' are the basic result of three features :

(i) it begins within its central tonality and it displays a particular attraction to the submediant chord,

(ii) there is a need to establish a secondary (sonata) key-centre as a complement and foil to the opening paragraph; and with the exception of 'Night-Ride and Sunrise' Op.55 (another

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1. Compare also bars 333-6 of 'Lemminkäinen in Tuonela'.

'symphonic' work) most of the other tone-poems, like 'The Bard' or 'Tapiola' are basically concerned (as was 'En Saga') with the vagaries of tonality and its establishment: they do not attempt to establish a second, sonata, key;

(iii) there is the later resolution of the opening tonal attraction; a recapitulation here is tonally necessary, and it parallels the symphonic procedure of the Second Symphony more closely than any other tone poem.

Equally, 'Pohjola's Daughter' is programmatic in its leisurely approach to the confirmation of B-flat, and the means of doing so with an accompanying increase in speed. Further both the second subject paragraph, with its shifting restless character and the development with its dramatic, almost theatrical climaxes, and character, suggest programmatic origins.

The chronological situation of 'Pohjola's Daughter' is important: for although an increase of speed within a movement has been previously seen in Sibelius's compositions, its use in this work suggests that Sibelius is becomingly increasingly interested in the creative interplay of speed, pulse, harmonic rhythm, and change of tonality - and the increased impetus of the B1 theme in the coda is as significant in this respect as the increase in speed in the opening paragraph: this is especially interesting since it achieves the (paradoxical) combination of a broader sense of phrase with an increased impetus and forward movement. And this is just what the finale of the First Symphony had lacked, and what the Second Symphony avoided by its static - perpetuo - repetitions.

The next completed orchestral work of Sibelius, the Third Symphony, pursues this interest in 'speed' and the matter becomes of considerable consequence in the unconventional design of its finale.

CHAPTER 11

SYMPHONY No. 3

CHAPTER 11

The Symphony No.3 in C major, Op.52, was written between 1904-7; it is a genial work, clear in design, modest in its orchestral colours,[1] and emotionally chaste. It has not achieved the popularity of the Second Symphony nor received the veneration of the Fourth, yet many Sibelian scholars profess it to be - like the Sixth Symphony - one of the most truly 'Sibelian' of all the symphonies.

The first movement is a clear and straightforward sonata design which possesses many subtleties. It is frequently described (as indeed is the whole symphony) as 'classical' in outlook, and noted for its 'athletic leanness': but both of these descriptions tend to minimise its tensile strength.

The exposition of the first subject group is clear and concise, it introduces a host of thematic ideas (Ex.170 a,b,c,d), all clearly in C major and for a large part over a tonic pedal: in fact harmonically, apart from three diminished 7th chords, the whole of this first subject paragraph is a diatonic and unblemished C major, and this avoidance of chromatic harmony may account for some of the classical outlook and 'cool' emotional appeal of the first movement - even the climax of this first subject is achieved through VI - I rather than V - I.

The climax of this first paragraph is crowned (just before Fig.3) with trumpets and trombones rising C-D-E over a tonic pedal in timpani (Ex.171). This is the complete affirmation and confirmation of the C major tonality, but it is at once followed by F-sharp in four octaves in woodwind and horns, and although this appears as a simple extension of the brass

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1. It is scored for: double woodwind, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, and strings.

motive it is taken as a pivot which effects an immediate and dramatic modulation to B minor: the effect is impressive after the consistent C major tonic pedal.

This new key of B minor presents a new theme,[1] B1 (Ex.172) - the first of the second subject group - and is supported by a reiteration of tonic and dominant chords. But although both this new key and theme appeared with dramatic suddenness they have been carefully prepared: the first significant chromatic note to appear in the opening C major paragraph was F-sharp - 'rfz' - while the initial rhythm and contour of this second subject theme was suggested by the woodwind on p.2-3.

After a repeat of its first melodic phrase this new B1 theme disintegrates into a rolling semiquaver figure (for strings in octaves, without harmonic support) and works round to G major. The acceptance of G major is gradual being finally achieved at the 3/2 bar (p.9 top line) and with the entry of the flute 3 bars later the codetta confirms the G major tonality.

This tonal confirmation is reflected in the gradual subsidence of the semiquaver figuration into a subdued quaver accompaniment while the reduced rhythmic pace of the flute and violin melody also helps to stabilize the key; and this tonal stabilization is enhanced by the establishment of a mediant (B-natural) pedal on p.10, the reappearance of a 3/2 bar, and finally the minim movement (itself a further reduction in speed) to a half close 'poco pesante' in the two bars before Fig.5.

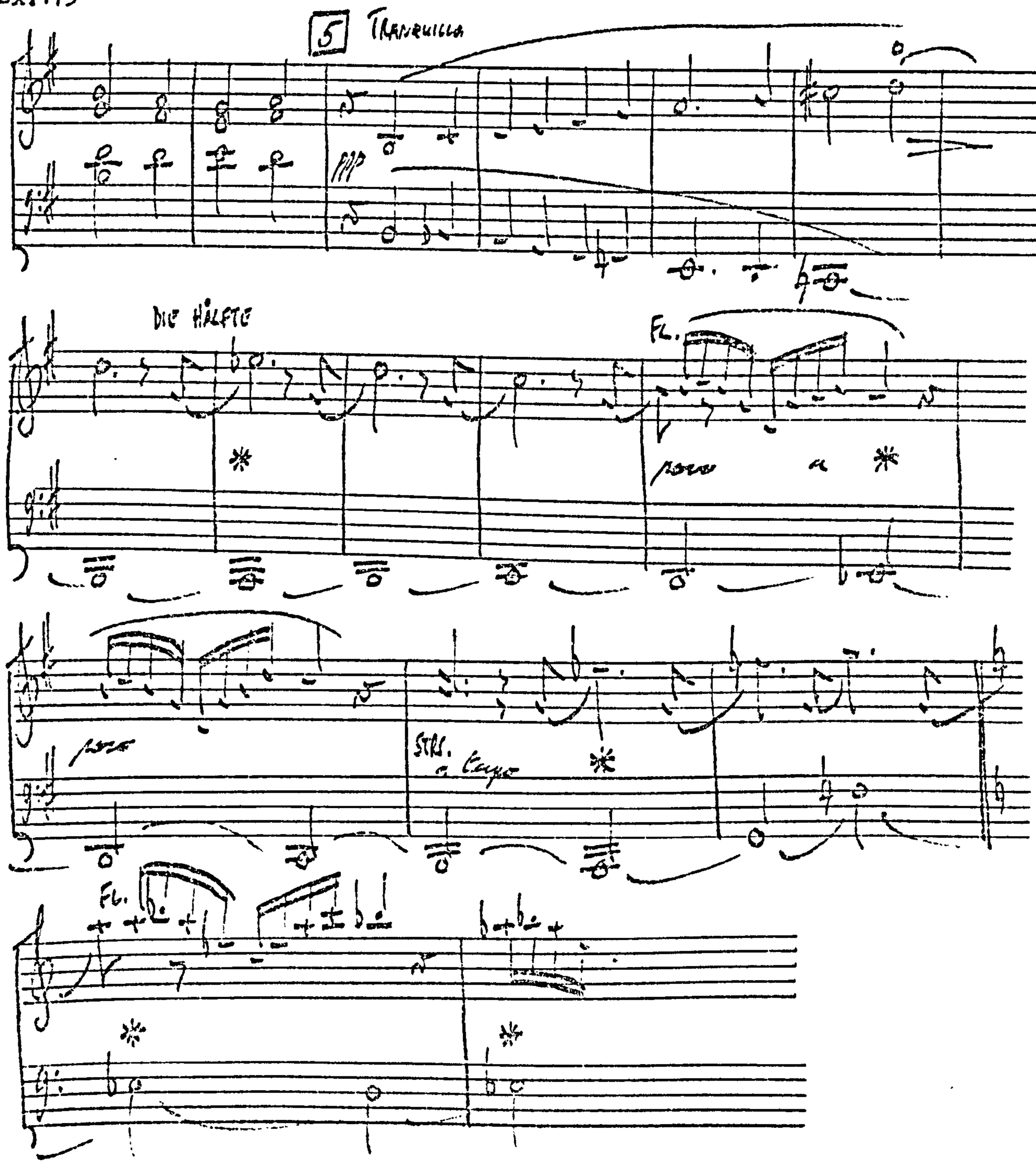
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1. The derivation of this 'new' theme is discussed later; at the moment one of its more important functions is that it introduces a fresh thematic character.

The following passage (from Fig.5 to the next double bar, a passage of some 12 bars) smoothly dovetails the end of the exposition into the beginning of the development section.

At Fig.5 a 'ppp' octave B-natural for strings (tranquillo) moves outwards in two unsupported melodic lines (Ex.173):

Ex.173



at first this appears to be a cadential elaboration with the contra-basses intending to complete their cadential function by moving down to G-natural. But the violin line momentarily touches on C-sharp and the resulting instability is at first balanced by an E-flat and then smoothed out by a flute reference to the semiquaver string figure of the exposition; the subsequent interplay of the string figure (now 'a tempo') and the flute phrase is accompanied by a continuation of the contra-bass line that now becomes increasingly purposeful, and together these two lines - still without any harmonic support - (and which give rise to a considerable number of augmented 4th clashes, marked by an asterisk in the preceding example) - move away from G major and generate a feeling of melodic and tonal exploration which initiates the development section with some subtlety and strength.

In fact the whole of this short passage makes for a continuity of thought which parallels the striking 'transition' between the first and second subjects: here, although there is a complete lack of rhetoric and emotional heat (in keeping with the cadential character of the beginning of this passage) this passage nevertheless generates a momentum that clearly begins the development section and thus gives it a sense of inevitable continuity.

The 'inevitability' of many of Sibelius's symphonic movements is in some measure due to this technique of either

(i) moving from one large area of thought to another with little (or no) transition, or

(ii) by making those functional passages serve two simultaneous purposes, and in fact to reflect, and perhaps parallel, the tensions and characteristics that mark the movement as a whole.

For instance it may be remarked that the opening C major paragraph is marked by an F-sharp which later swings the tonality to B minor, while in this short cadential passage at the end of the exposition (Fig.5 et seq.) there occurs the augmented 4th of G major - C-sharp - which disturbs the G major tonality and helps to initiate the development section; and this insistence on the augmented 4th is to become a feature of the development.

Before proceding it is worth remarking on the interrelationship of the main A1 and B1 themes; the preparations for this transformation have already been seen in the woodwind entries on pp.5-6 of the score, but the actual details of change are worth listing (and appear to support the suggestions made in Chapter 3); these changes are :

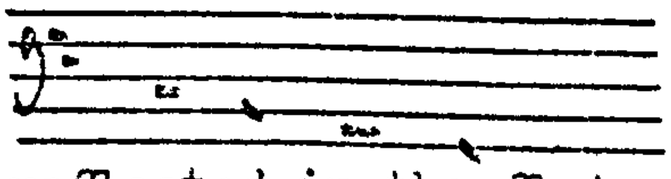
(i) the replacement of repeated melody notes  , with a sustained (and elongated) note;

(ii) the consistent use of a syncopated characteristic together with its associated 'off-beat ictus', instead of the'straight' rhythm of A1;

(iii) the appearance of a rhythmic 'knot' (of semiquavers), and

(iv) the appearance of a falling-fifth phrase ending; in addition these changes are enhanced by

(v) the contrast of textures: the opening octave presentation is replaced, at Fig.3, with a full harmonic support in a simple figuration.

Nor is this all, for Sibelius obtains a great variety of effect from the basic  motive: apart from the thematic reference it is also reflected in the flute and violin melody of p.9 (last two bars) - 10, in the minims before Fig.5, in the scales at Fig.5 (where there is a

further new texture: i.e.two unsupported melodic lines) and in the outline of the Violin I entries in bars 6-9 after Fig.5.[1]

To return: with the reappearance of the sequential semiquaver figure for strings (on p.11) as an active 'background', the first half of this development section settles down and proceeds to develop certain thematic ideas from the first subject paragraph only - and with a particular insistence on the opening 7 notes of A1. The effect of this first half is that of a preparation for some future event, and it is propelled by the gentle interruptions (no less than 5 times) of mild dominant and supertonic discords which are so presented as to outline the augmented 4th characteristic - Fig.6 is a good example of this presentation - and clearly shows the essential nature of the (passing) reference to F-sharp in the opening tonic paragraph.

The purpose of this seems to be to launch first the A1 motive, and then, through that, the whole of the second half of this development section; this first half has the emotional excitement usually assocaited with a conventional dominant pedal (and it is intercsting to compare the similarities of purpose and construction between this second section and the development section of the finale of the Second Symphony).

The second half of the development section (beginning 4 bars before Fig.8) is almost exclusively concerned with material from the second subject (first introduced here by solo bassoon) and accompanied throughout by the continuing string semiquavers and a series of pedal notes for horns. The horn pedal sequence begins on B-flat but climbs through a complete whole-tone scale before moving to B-natural (8 bars before Fig.9) where it remains until the tonic C major is restored (3 bars after Fig.10).

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1. Additionally between Figures 2-3 the c-basses only play C - B - A.

One of the most interesting features of this second half is the gradual rapprochement of the principal themes A1 and B1, (between Figs.9 and 10). This interrelationship has already been shown, and can be traced back to the similarities evident in their original announcement, but the interest here is that the relationship is demonstrated and made (obviously) audible. After the first slight melodic alteration in the solo bassoon statement (at Fig.9) - itself anticipated by the woodwind and horn phrases at Fig.4 et seq. - the relationship is stressed by its 6 appearances in successive bars; further it helps to clarify the reason for the apparent division of development with each half dealing only with its own material.

This thematic merging also makes the role of the string semiquavers worthy of closer examination, and concerning which Abraham wrote:[1]

> "It is not exactly thematic, but it exercises a binding function similar to that of the chordal-accompaniment figure of the Second Symphony, and produces a psychological effect akin to that of Sibelius's other long ostinato passages."

This is true as far as it goes, but these persistent semiquavers act not only as accompaniment but also as a kind of background (more than a binding function) from which themes can emerge and which appear, perhaps, to suggest a common genesis.

In passing, this background texture typifying or suggesting a common genesis of later themes has already been seen in Sibelius: the opening of 'En Saga' with its arpeggiated string figure is an obvious example;[2] it will also be seen in later works - most pertinently in the finale of the Fifth Symphony.

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1. Abraham, op.cit., p.23.
2. And attention was drawn to this aspect in discussing 'En Saga'.

The horn pedal sequence of the second half of this development section is also worthy of comment. Ex.174 shows the progressively diminishing distance between the entries, while the repeat of the progression in bars 19-20 just before the final move (from B-flat to B-natural) adds to the increasing excitement by delaying the now expected move. While not outside a normal compositional technique these horn entries suggest a more critical awareness of the effect of using and indeed deliberately controlling the harmonic pace. Considered in isolation this sequence may not appear significant, but the subtle change from horns which supply a harmonic background to successively and deliberately measured horn entries adding impetus and energy to the imminent recapitulation (- especially when combined with (i) the launching of the second half of the development section through the intermediacy of the first half, and (ii) the (demonstrably) growing rapprochement of the two main thematic ideas) stands revealed as a calculated and vital necessity; they are also significant for the future development of his technique.

For the most part the recapitulation is straightforward, through the second subject (retaining its melodic alteration) is restated in E minor from where it gradually works back to C major (thus presenting a parallel tonal move to that of the exposition, since E minor is to C, what B minor was to G). From Fig.15 onwards there is a move to the subdominant side of C major, while the impetus of the semiquavers is diminished: both tension and movement are relaxed by the bar-line pause (top line p.29) as well as the following pause on the diminished 7th chord immediately before Fig.16.

The coda (which begins at Fig.16 and resolves the tension of the movement) bears some relationship to the closing theme of the exposition,

but the relationship between these two passages is not as (obviously) close as some authorities would appear to expect. For example, Layton writes :[1]

> "The actual theme of the coda is entirely new, though it seems related to the closing idea of the exposition; but, as is often the case in the symphonies, the relationship is not one of contour (though for the best part of three bars they share the same rhythmic pattern) but a less easily defined kinship of spirit."

But in fact the relationship is more than Layton allows: the first three notes of this new theme as well as the phrase in bars 3-4 clearly refer to the main theme(s). At the same time the 'kinship of spirit' of which Layton remarks suggests the possibility that this coda is successful - not only because it is derived from the main themes - but because it is different, and not a literal repeat of previous material: there are moments in the course of a (large-scale) composition where the composer needs to make a (comparatively) new statement, i.e.where variety - even if it appears only momentarily and as a foil - is as important as unity. Sibelius's coda is not a terminal development, but it is a tonal, formal, and emotional necessity: it reaffirms the C major of the movement and provides a suitable and necessary area of C major (complete both with brief references to some first subject material and a 'new' theme) that effectively completes the recapitulation and confirms the tonal evolution of the second subject.

The first movement of the Third Symphony is regarded by some writers as evidence of the fact that this is Sibelius's first mature symphony: certainly the reduction in orchestral textures, the almost text-book sonata 'form', the general lack of Romantic excesses, and the avoidance of heated climaxes, are taken as representative of a major change.

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1. Layton, op.cit., p.40.

But this is not an abrupt change of style, neither is it an abandonment of the creative ideas experienced in the first two symphonies, for the Third Symphony continues to explore a (similar) tonal evolution and in so doing it also draws upon the experience of more recent works - notably the Violin Concerto and 'Pohjola's Daughter'.

The tonal structure of the first movement of the Third Symphony displays both its indebtedness to previous works and its own unique character, as well as suggesting some derivation from the first movement of the Second Symphony where the second subject, in the dominant key, was approached from the mediant: the key scheme was D major....via F-sharp minor....A major. In the Violin Concerto this key scheme is elaborated (in keeping with its melodic solo instrument) so that it becomes :

D minor....via B-flat and D-flat....to B-flat minor

This marks an important change, for the second main key (B-flat minor) is now reached through its own mediant, and this is the basis of the key scheme in the Third Symphony: C major...via B minor...to G major.[1]

This tonal scheme is presented dramatically by its immediate juxtaposition of C major and B minor, which in turn suggests some reflection of the similar procedure already noted in 'Pohjola's Daughter'. There the change of key (B-flat to E natural) was (i) dramatic, (ii) an immediate juxtaposition, and (iii) followed immediately the confirmation of the main tonality of B-flat, which was itself (iv) marked by a particular tone colour held in reserve for and until that moment: the first movement of the Third Symphony shares all these characteristics, and its impact is as imaginative as it is logical and clearly indebted to the previous experience of both the symphonies and the symphonic poems.

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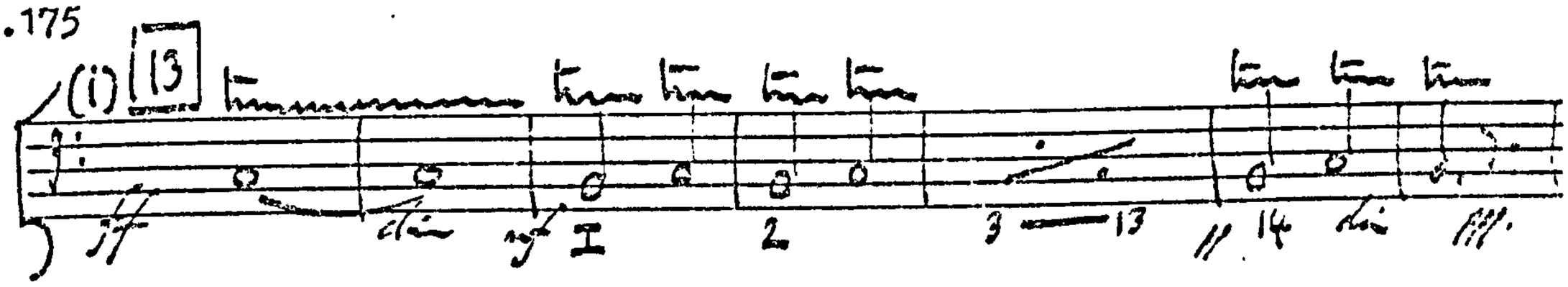
1. If the key scheme of the first movement of the Violin Concerto is abbreviated thus

   D minor...via C-sharp (D-flat) to B-flat minor

   its closeness to the Third Symphony is even more apparent.

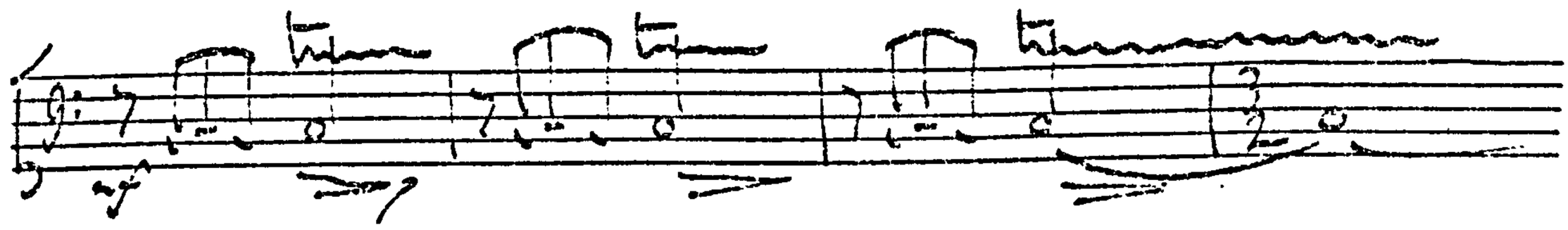
But this is not the extent of the subtelties of this first movement, for the approach to the beginning of the recapitulation was from the dominant of L minor (the development finishes with a long B-natural pedal in horns) which then steps up to C major. The significance of this is revealed later when the second subject is restated in E minor - thus presenting (L minor to C major) a parallel tonal movement to that of the exposition. Moreover it is interesting to remark that the striking movement from C major to B minor in the exposition appears to be recalled here (Fig.13 et seq., pp.23-5) by the timpani who comment on this note-relationship thus :

Ex.175



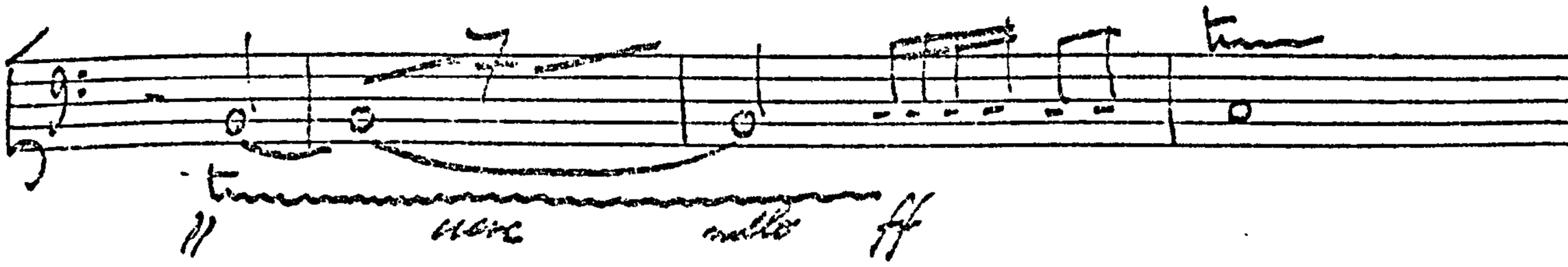
This note-relationship has already been pursued to some effect by the timpani :

Ex.176



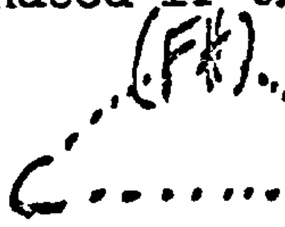
which was itself developed from :

Ex.177



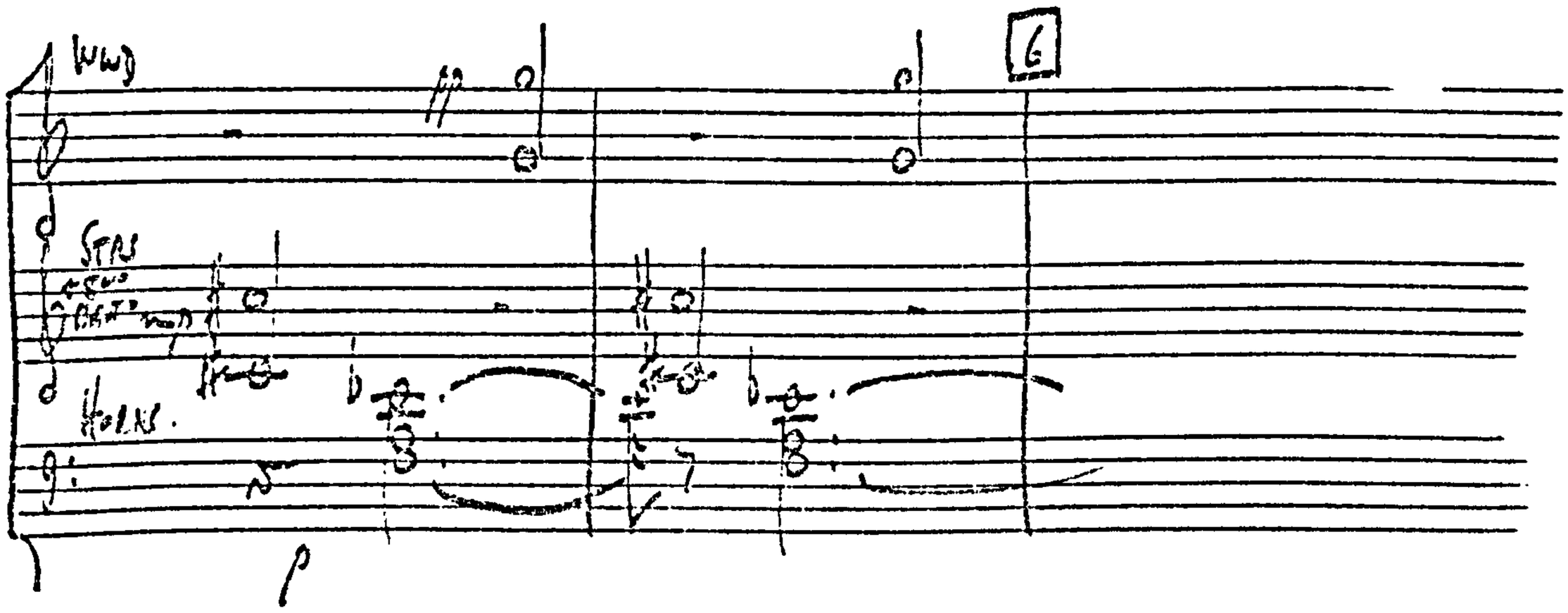
Of course in performance these 3 examples occur in reverse order, and at comparatively close intervals and this heightens the increasing insistence on this note-relationship.

The tonal ancestry of this movement is clear enough, but its tonal argument is presented here with a poetic refinement and a lack of rhetoric that make it both more subtle and more simple. The tonal evolution of this movement is no longer based on an internal tonal fluidity or ambiguity, but is now so sensitive that a 'passing' reference to the augmented 4th degree of the scale (i.e.F-sharp in C major), which conventionally points towards the dominant key, is suddenly taken as the dominant of the key-of-the-leading-note (i.e. B minor) before it moves to the key of G major.

Indeed if the tonal movement of the exposition was to be represented thus 

so that the role of the augmented-fourth is seen in relation to the juxtaposition of the main keys, then such passages as Ex.178 (or that on p.13, bottom line, bars 3-4, or at Fig.7,) occur with increasing fascination.

Ex.178



Moreover in a chronological context it is interesting to note that this is the first movement in which the presence of the augmented fourth degree of the scale effects a large-scale tonal evolution.

The subtleties and strengths of this first movement lie in the clarity with which it presents and pursues its creative purpose; but the feature that makes this movement so 'Sibelian' is the fact that it presents so many features - each with its own evolution and development - that work simultaneously and in conjunction; in this movement there is :

(i) the C major tonality with a 'passing' F-sharp (that is taken up tonally in the transition),

(ii) the key relationship C - B minor,

(iii) the augmented-fourth characteristic - in

(a) the transition, p.7,

(b) the dovetail to the development, p.10,

(c) the development section itself,

(iv) the common semiquaver 'background' of the development section,

(v) the rapprochement of the two main themes,

(vi) the C-B note-relationship taken up by the timpani, and

(vii) the balance and purpose of both the similarities and differences between the closing bars of the exposition and the coda.

Further the character and construction of the development section of this movement - though obviously indebted to the (First and) Second Symphony - is one of the first that could be described as "essential", in this sense, that it furthers and continues the essential tonal evolution of the movement not only by a development of the principal themes, but by

presenting the essence (and perhaps the source of energy) of the tonal evolution in a variety of non-thematic ways - as hereby the augmented fourth clashes, and the C-B note-relationship for timpani.

The tonal, harmonic, rhythmic, and orchestral coherence of this first movement is remarkable and always purposeful. Its simplicity is deceptive and this helps to explain why the movement (and the symphony as a whole) has failed to achieve popularity on the one hand, and why its essence has rarely been demonstrated by scholars on the other: moreover in contrast to the First and Second Symphonies, it substitutes elegance for rhetoric and poetry for passion.

The middle movement of the Third Symphony has frequently been damned by faint praise, dismissed as one of the simplest movements in Sibelius, and described as consisting (as Gray[1] puts it) "of little else than the ringing of changes....upon a single melodic formula by shifting it up and down on to different degress of the diatonic scale."

But this movement is more than just a moment of light relief between two more 'important' outer movements, since Sibelius appears to have used it as a pattern for the middle movement of the Fifth Symphony, while on examination its simplicity is shown to cover an intrinsic musical strength and subtly conceals a rather unique musical character.

The movement is written in G-sharp minor (a convenient enharmonic notation for A-flat minor, thus preserving Sibelius's mediant key relationship between movements) and is headed "Andantino con moto, quasi Allegretto, crotchet = 116"; the time-signature is 6/4 (3/2).

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1. Gray, op.cit., p.31.

The design of the movement is a ternary form in which the two outer sections (very similar in essence and working) illustrate the deployment of a complete tune, and indeed it is the obsessiveness with which this theme is pursued that marks out the movement from the usual ternary form. The main theme,(Ex.179) and in fact the first complete melodic sentence, is not completed until the fifth bar after Fig.3, and it is marked by (i) a phrase for clarinets and bassoons that points towards B major, and (ii) includes two phrases that momentarily suggest the mediant key itself; there is also, particularly at the end of the phrases, some interplay of the 6/4 - 3/2 timing and the whole sentence is largely supported by horn pedals. The second complete melodic sentence (which begins on p.34 bar 1 and lasts until the full close immediately before Fig.6) includes a short (but telling) phrase in G-sharp major and slightly alters the original order of the individual phrases, so that there is thus a (enjoyable) feeling of repetition that avoids being literal.

At Fig.6 a short passage - at first carried by celli div.à 3 and later completed by the woodwind - enlarges on the original phrase for clarinets and bassoons (mentioned above) and suggests a tonal movement towards B major, but this is not taken up here and, at Fig.7, there is a return to the main theme in the tonic key. However the contra-bass line now consistently includes E-sharp and centres around F-sharp (as dominant of B minor) and following this the main theme makes a (complete) statement in B minor (beginning four bars before Fig.8). Within this statement the individual phrases are largely presented by different woodwind instruments thus suggesting that the original continuity is not so completely maintained here.

This B minor statement comes to a full close at Fig.9 and the following section (until Fig.12) manages, for the moment, to break away from the melodic presentation of the main theme and to suggest a concise 'development' section - and one which avoids overweighting the movement. It begins with a 2- and 3-part texture for strings, pizz., which presents a working of the opening three notes of the main theme and then, at Fig.10, launches a new idea in woodwind (in contrast to the main theme). This new idea makes successive starts in various keys thus suggesting one of the processes of development, viz.modulation, but each attempt at stating the woodwind theme is held in check by the obsessive A-flat (G-sharp) of horns, timpani (2 notes) and lower strings. Eventually the insistence of the string section on A-flat, the repeated dominant 7th chord for horns, and the 2-note chord for timpani causes the movement to come to a momentary rest on the sustained and unaccompanied G-flat for oboe:

Ex.180



and this is then taken as a convenient way of returning to the tonic key and the abbreviated third section of the movement. The closing bars are characteristically functional, brief, and pointed: in particular the tempo markings of the last 10 bars are worthy of note (allargando...all'.... Andante: allargando), while (following a comma) the 'a tempo' direction of the final two bars is almost diagnostic of the presence of Sibelius.

The orchestration of this movement is a feature of some interest, and for convenience its most striking and important characteristics may be briefly listed as follows : there is

(i) an almost continual use of woodwind in thirds,

(ii) a considerable amount of pizz.for strings,

(iii) a complete change of texture at Fig.6 and the eloquent passage for div.celli,

(iv) the 2- and 3-part writing for strings in the 'development', and

(v) the momentary misalignments in the woodwind phrases of Fig.10 et seq. (Ex.181) which add point to the suggested modulations; in addition there are

(vi) horn pedals for a large part of the movement, while

(vii) between Figs.2-3 the flute appears below clarinet.

The middle movement of the Third Symphony is deceptively simple, but its obsessive pursuit of the main theme, together with the suggested process of development in the middle section, sustains its interest and gives it a strength that keeps it from being overshadowed by the two outer movements. Its deployment of such a complete melody suggests some sort of derivation from a slow movement (the most usual place for complete melodies) though here it is easily contained within a very modest time-scale. In contrast, the scoring of the movement, its serenade quality (the 'plein aire' feeling) and indeed its tempo, suggests a derivation from the scherzo - or rather those movements that Brahms usually wrote instead of a scherzo: perhaps the term 'Intermezzo' would be more appropriate in this instance.

This movement is a unique fusion (not a mixture) of some characteristics of both a slow movement and a scherzo, moreover there is no obvious division of these separate characteristics but rather a coherent presentation of melodic material (and its development) derived from a distillation of these movements, and unfolded in a movement of

more modest proportions than its use of such a complete melody would at first sight suggest.

Critical discussion of the form and construction of the finale of the Third Symphony ranges widely, but although scholars and analysts are almost unanimous in their assessment of its importance and achievement, they have not always demonstrated clearly the reasons for their admiration and conviction. Tovey's analysis is perhaps the most pertinent and succinct: he wrote:[1]

> "The finale is in a form invented by Sibelius... The essence of the whole is just this, that nothing takes shape until the end."

- but it must be noted that the invention and novelty of this movement are clearly derived from past experience (particularly the finales of the first two symphonies) and may be considered as a logical and highly imaginative result of them. Although several writers refer to this movement as in 2 sections, the function of the passage between Fig.8 and four bars after Fig.13 clearly distinguishes it from the proceding passage, and the movement may therefore be seen in 3 sections:

(i) from Bar 1 to Fig. 8,

(ii) Fig.8 to four bars after Fig.13, and

(iii) Fig.13 + 4 al fine.

See Abraham

But although the first of these sections is an exposition and the second is a development, this movement has nothing in common with sonata forms; neither is it a mixture of scherzo and finale elements: its character and nature are peculiarly unique and indivisibly coherent.

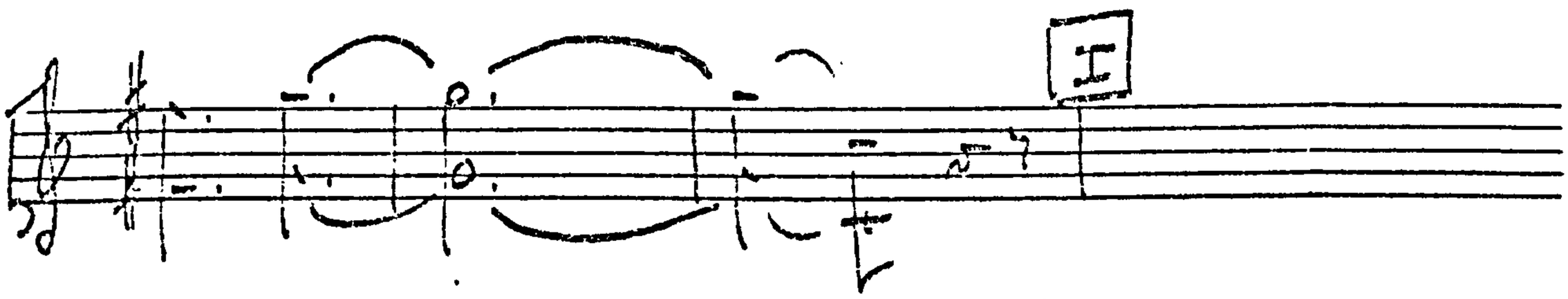
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1. Tovey: Essays in Musical Analysis, Vol.III, p.125.

The first section opens with a melodically articulated perfect cadence (on oboe and flute) and it is followed by a viola trill which leads to a theme, A1 (for oboe and clarinet, Ex.182) whose third and fourth bars are seen to be the opening 'cadence': indeed these bars are used again (two bars after Fig.1) to make an even more emphatic perfect cadence. The subsequent thematic phrases - on oboe, clarinet, then strings with a marked subdominant flavour, and finally oboe again - all continue to emphasize this cadential aspect and establishment of C major. A further cadence is avoided (at più allegro) by the diminished seventh which keeps the end of the phrase open, and against which strings introduce a slight, 3-bar, staccato figure[1] before flutes recall the main melody of the second movement.

The character (and purpose) of this opening C major paragraph is important: it establishes the C major tonality with considerable (cadential) emphasis, but it also suggests that the oboe theme (A1) - together with the falling phrase-ending of the flute

Ex.183



- is more of a convenient starting point than a significant theme; and the subsequent phrases (after Fig.1) - although they too hint at possible thematic ideas - are also allowed to dwindle into cadential formulae.

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1. The principal characteristic of these three bars is the staccato quality: the melodic figure it carries is little more than a convenience and can be changed as needed.

And this feeling, that the establishment of tonality takes precedence over the theme it carries, is heightened firstly by the 'avoidance' of a thematic development (hence the continuing cadential aspect of the phrases after Fig.1) and, secondly, by the quotation from the second movement. This quotation[1] gives this opening paragraph a sense of review before proceeding: it taps the nervous energy of the previous movement as if that will give it the thematic momentum and character it apparently lacks. These opening bars therefore, present four features - (i) the insistence on cadences, (ii) the establishment of C major, (iii) the A1 theme and in particular the falling phrase-ending, and (iv) the quotation from the second movement - which together make a complete (and almost closed) statement that is not at once taken up, and whose significance is seen only later.

The first paragraph is completed by a repeat of the theme from the middle movement (on oboe) and the phrase is now rounded off by the addition of the original cadence figure; but although the oboe finishes its phrase in C major, the phrase-ending (now changed to C - G sharp)

Ex.184



is successively extended by violins, bassoons, and flutes and provides the opportunity for a tonal change to A minor.

Before continuing it is necessary to note the directions which accompany these bars between 'più allegro (p.47) and Fig.2 (p.48), since two appearances of the string staccato figure are marked "Viol.1 tacet ad lib - 3 takte" while the first 4 bars of p.48 are marked "vi...de".

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1. played by flutes, beginning last bar p.47 and continuing until bar 6, page 48.

No writer has commented on these strange directions, though it might later prove possible to offer a suggestion concerning the apparent uncertainty here.

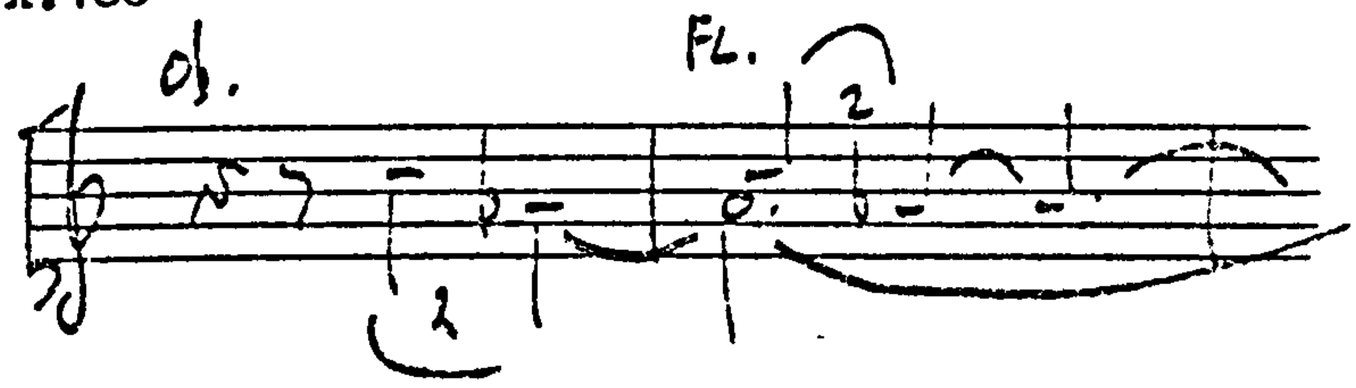
To return: just before Fig.2 the expected C major cadence is avoided and the alteration of the phrase-ending gives the passage a continuous sweep so that the G-sharp moves it tonally to A minor (at Fig.2), but with a pedal C. Here, after a very few bars of string staccato texture, a new theme, B1 (Ex.185) for woodwind and lower strings (and later horns) is introduced, and for which the string figure is transformed into a filigree arpeggio figure - legato. This new theme is soon abandoned (at Fig.3) and the motive force of the string staccato texture quickly works back to C major where the opening theme reappears (shortly after Fig.4).

The most interesting and significant feature of this A minor episode is that it is never prepared and established as a second, sonata, key-centre; there has <u>not</u> been a sonata move from one key to another: instead A minor is presented as a direct apposition to C major, and thus appears to question its establishment, or, to suggest that only by such a new (tonal and thematic) approach will the movement be empowered to progress satisfactorily.

Two other features deserve attention: the first concerns the character of the B1 theme and in particular the held B-natural of the contra-basses and bassoons (p.49). This B-natural seems to leave the end of the phrase open, and to suggest a continuance that it not fulfilled here: instead it is answered by the woodwind and horn phrases which, although they possess a more obvious melodic character, seem to be as conventionally convenient (and almost as cadential) as the opening woodwind phrases in the initial C major paragraph. Additionally this B-natural hints at an underlying tension - a certain instability - within the key of A minor itself (and perhaps suggests a desire to return to C major.).

The second feature occurs shortly before Fig.4 where the move back to C major now presents the previous C - G-sharp interval as C - A-flat (with some quiet emphasis)

Ex.186



while rhythmically it is changed to a duplet, and evokes a rising diminished-fifth in reply.

However shortly after Fig.4 the opening A1 oboe theme is reintroduced and linked with part of the second, B1, theme. This oboe theme is now slightly enlarged and the original subdominant string phrase (of A1) is then taken up tonally (just before Fig.5) so that the reappearance here of the woodwind falling third motive (now E - C, together with its associated reply) leads to a return of the filigree arpeggio figure for strings in F minor.

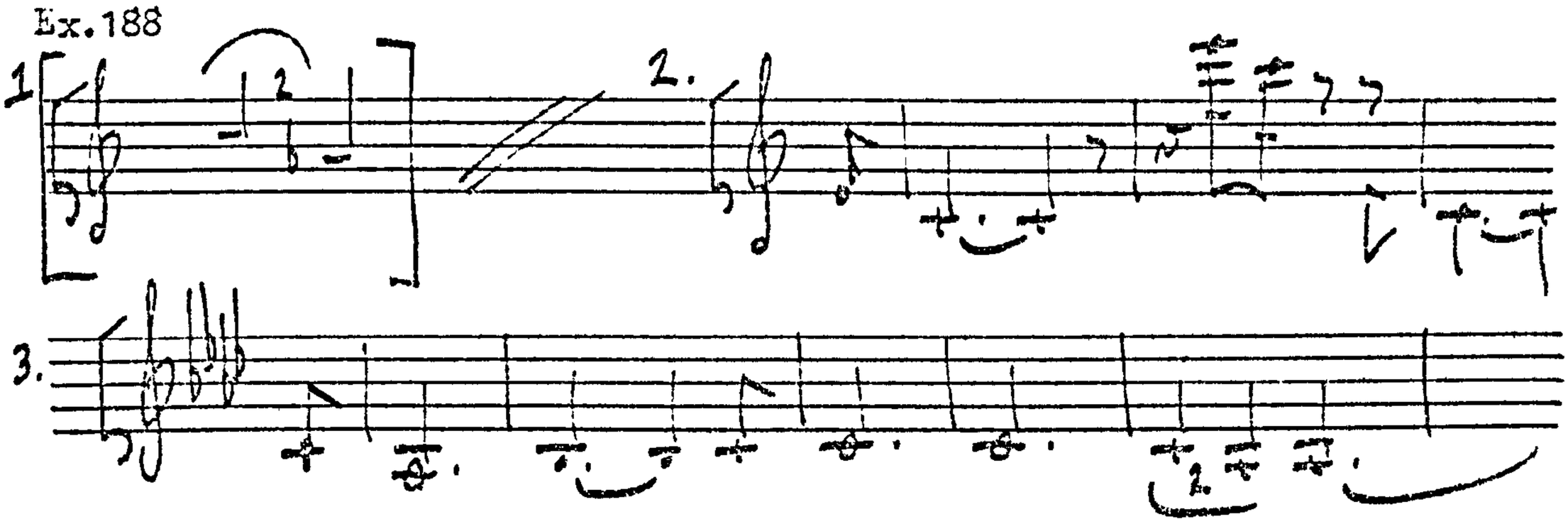
In turn this (F minor) accompaniment now supports the introduction of a further new theme, C1 (Ex.187) for horns (in A-flat?), but this too is soon abandoned and the previous B1 theme reappears - again in woodwind, lower strings, and horns. Immediately prior to the introduction of this new C1 theme (i.e.from Fig.5 onwards) the falling-third motive is yet again presented with some emphasis:[1] it appears five times in quick succession before the appearance of the new horn theme which begins with it - and

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1. Although the second phrase of B1 also begins with a falling-third - with the accented beat on the lower note - it is not until the passage immediately following Fig.5 that this change in rhythm is demonstrated as a point of some significance.

indeed this motive is the most prominent feature of that theme (Ex.188):

Ex.188



The reappearance of the second (B1) theme at Fig.6 is directed 'poco a poco ravvivando all'... Allegro" and, with the disappearance of the legato marking for strings, it is worked up to a climax (at Fig.8) which leans towards A-flat major and initiates the second section of the movement - a 'development' section, though since it appears in rather a strange context, it may perhaps be more accurate to describe it as a cross between a 'development' and a section in which motives are 'hurried-up'.

The first part of this section is one of the most vigorous of Sibelius's symphonic developments. It begins with a closely worked thematic development of the clarinet phrase from A1, and out of this the more familiar string staccato texture emerges. Subsequently (in the second half of this section) the string texture launches part of the B1 theme (7 bars after Fig.10) which explores and attempts to cadence in various keys - at first F-sharp minor and C-sharp major, then A minor and C major.

The tempo indication that accompany these tonal explorations are significant: each movement towards a new 'key' (effected through a staccato texture) is directed 'a tempo' and this is in clear distinction to the 'dolce' and 'tranquillo' markings which accompany each statement of the B1 phrase in the various 'keys': and these directions are consistently maintained (from Fig.10 to just after Fig.12).

With the arrival at the threshold of C major, an A-natural pedal is established (Fig.12) after which an enlarged and transformed version of the previous C1 theme returns in divided violas; and this presents a most typical tonal ambivalence that hinges on the enharmonic identity of A-flat/G-sharp, and points to the tonal (and thematic) climax of this movement.

Four bars after Fig.13 the prevailing 6/8 of this movement is changed to common time, with the direction 'a tempo con energia (𝅗𝅥. = 𝅗𝅥 = 112)'[1] while the viola and cello theme (and for the first time it is unmistakably a complete theme, Ex.189) is presented in a clearly established C major: indeed this theme now remains to dominate the rest of the movement. And it is at this point that the novel design and construction of this movement comes to fulfilment - though again it is perhaps still necessary to state that it is not only a thematic fulfilment: the thematic climax here is important and symptomatic, but it is not the only (major) factor.

However this new theme signifies much of the completion of the previous workings of this movement, and it may conveniently be described as the first fully nature 'summing-up' theme to appear in Sibelius's symphonic compositions. The main purpose (and even construction) of the summing-up theme, has already been hinted at in the finale of the Second Symphony with its self-repeating second subject (itself a descendant from the 'big tune' of the finale of the First Symphony) but while this may show the antecedents of this theme, the comparison with the finale of the Third Symphony illustrates what was previously lacking in terms of both quality and context.

Three features are notable for their contribution to the success of this summing-up theme and the fulfilment of the unique and unorthodox design of this movement.

The first is simply that this theme is the result and climax of a motivic evolution and progress towards a thematic identity, that has been in development

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1. See also p.191.

since the beginning of the movement: moreover the careful avoidance of anything approaching such a complete theme prior to its appearance allows this summing-up theme to dominate - to crown the movement, and, as it were, to gather into one theme the melodic character of the movement - hence its convenient label. The structure of this theme, and in particular its repetitive rhythm is clearly derived from the experiences of (the Finales) the First and Second Symphonies; this structure is important since it enables the theme to be sustained for a considerable length of time (in order to balance the previous sections of the movement) without losing momentum.

Secondly (and occurring simultaneously with the achievement of the thematic climax) the C major tonality which is established here is a tonal achievement and not simply a tonal return. It fulfils the establishment of C major suggested at the beginning of the movement, and resolves the tonal ambivalence caused by the apposition of A minor, which has been reflected throughout the movement in the development of the C - A-flat/G-sharp motive. This tonal ambivalence is clearly pointed at Fig.12 where it is supported by an E-natural pedal.[1] This provides the opportunity for maintaining some tonal interest AFTER the establishment of the summing-up theme: thus, although the C-major tonality cannot be significantly disturbed again, there are nevertheless, two full closes in E minor (before Fig.19)[2] as well as some passing references to the A-flat/G-sharp enharmonic identity.

In turn this climactic establishment of C major appears to demand the driving tonal force of the F-sharp (augmented-fourth) which appears from Fig.14 onwards. The use of the augmented-fourth as a stabilizing tonal force has already been pointed out in previous works. Here it takes up the

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1. In both its function and place of occurrence this passage is somewhat similar to that passage (just before Letter X) in the first movement of the First Symphony.

2. First at Fig.15+6, then at Fig.18-1.

F-sharp which (first) appeared in the A1 oboe theme, and of course provides a pivot for the full-closes in E minor (in the last section).

The third feature of importance arises from an article published in 1950 when David Cherniavsky[1] made known some of Sibelius's tempo corrections - with particular regard to the MM markings appearing in the printed scores. The first serious discrepancy appears in this finale, where the first two MM markings (on p.46) should read :

(i) Moderato ♩. = 88, and

(ii) Allegro (ma non tanto) ♩. = ♪ 100

and NOT as printed:

(i) Moderato ♩. = 88

(ii) Allegro (ma non tanto) ♩. = 100

This is an important correction, for if the printed direction were followed it would have a serious effect at the change of tempo just after Fig.13 (a tempo con energia (♩. = ♩) = 112)[2] - it would necessarily result in a slowing down, whereas the tonal and thematic momentum achieved here demands an increased speed - which this correction would effect.

A part of the success of this last section rests on the fact (i) that it is moving faster than the previous exposition and development sections in terms of speed, while (ii) its change of time signature (as well as the increased frequency of the pulse) makes for a vigorous presentation of the theme as a whole and the falling-third duplet figure in particular, and (iii) there is the compressed rhythmic effect of presenting in one bar what was previously in two.

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1. David Cherniavsky: "Sibelius's Tempo Corrections", Music and Letters, Vol.XXXI, 1950.
2. Cherniavsky's article lists this as ♩ = 112 ♪ (- a printing error perhaps?).

These three features - (i) the climax and resolution of the thematic development, (ii) the simultaneous tonal climax with the achievement of C major and its continuing tonal interest, and (iii) the establishment of a new and more energetic tempo within a new time signature (which thus appears to resolve the previous conflict of 'a tempo' and 'tranquillo', as well as being an elemental and vital contribution to the success of this movement) - these three features provide the basis for the domination of this movement by this last section and the appearance of the summing-up theme.

The success of this finale has frequently been ascribed to a scheme which (as Tovey puts it) "builds itself up out of fragments until a full sized theme appears as a supreme climax"; this is quite true, but it is only one side of the musical coin - as the other features contributing to the success of this summing-up theme have just shown.[1]

The essence of this finale is that while nothing takes conclusive shape until the climax, that climax is noticeable, firstly for the number of separate and parallel ideas (though they are, of course, in a state of interpenetration, and developed throughout the movement) which simultaneously come to filfilment at that moment, and secondly, for the careful control of the rate at which the movement progresses - in all its tonal, thematic, motivic, and even orchestral manifestations: i.e.there is an additional quality in this movement which reacts directly upon (and in fact governs) its unorthodox form and construction. This controlled rate of progress could conveniently be called its musical 'pace'.

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1. It is therefore unfortunate that such statements as : "...the impressive C major on pages 61-70 must be regarded as not only the apex of the conclusion but as the most important section of the whole movement (Parmet p.41) are not sufficiently accurate.

The evidence of works like 'Lemminkäinen's Return' the First Symphony (first movement) and the revised version of 'En Saga', give ample proof of Sibelius's ability to sustain a vitally energetic and interesting thematic development over a slow harmonic and tonal progression - frequently supported by a pedal point. But in this Third Symphony the concept of 'pace' as a deliberately constructive factor goes further than that, since it exercises a particular and specific influence over the construction of the movement. It is perhaps more clearly seen if the main events of this movement are tabulated thus :-

1. C major is established (with cadential emphasis) and there is a falling-fifth phrase-ending, G - C, but
2. it largely avoids presenting a 'first subject theme' (though it does have the A1 oboe melody as a convenient starting point) - hence
3. the quotation from the second movement which appears to counteract this thematic 'shortcoming';
4. the motive changes to C - G-sharp, and creates the opportunity for
5. the presentation of A minor, with its B1 ideas,(but with a pedal C) as a direct apposition to C major, but this too fails to present much more of a significant 'theme';
6. the motive is now presented as C- A-flat, and as a duplet;
7. there is a return to C major, and some thematic 'development' takes place in that A1 and B1 are briefly linked together, while
8. The subsequent F minor (with an admixture of A-flat) episode presents the basis of a new (C1) idea, (and incidentally now shows the falling-third motive to have a thematic significance, even though it is not at once taken up); the return to the B1 idea leads to

9. the development section which is in two parts, the first largely motivic, and the second concerned with tonal exploration, gradually steadying to arrive at the threshold of C major with the emergence of the (viola) theme, and the tonal ambivalence of C major/A minor: this demands

10. the tonal and thematic resolution effected by

    (i) the achievement of C major

    (ii) the appearance of the summing-up theme, and

    (iii) the establishment of the new tempo

The deliberate control of the pace of this movement becomes more apparent when it is realised that the first 5 steps achieve little more than the placing side-by-side of two keys, without a 'significant' theme, and with only the beginning of a possible motivic development. From step 6 onwards the 'pace' gradually accelerates: there are a greater number of events (including the significant introduction of a further thematic idea, after which the first part of the development is vigorously worked and leads to the crux of the section with its establishment of the E-natural pedal, the emergent viola theme, and the A minor/C major ambivalence. This serves both to point the need for a tonal resolution and to signify that the fulfilment of this movement is imminent.) Equally the acceleration in the pace seems itself to demand the increased speed of the last section.

In some respects this movement appears to recall 'En Saga', but in that work there was a clearly recognisable theme present from an early stage, while there was clear tonal progression 'ab initio'. In contrast, in the finale of the Third Symphony (i) the 'theme' itself does not emerge until the final section, (ii) the pace dictates that there shall be a tonal apposition and not a tonal progression between C major and A minor at the beginning, and (iii) it demands its specific resolution.

Unfortunately, the tabulated scheme above is unable to show clearly

the impact of such other contributory (and vital) features as the string staccato texture which is used throughout the movement as a 'generating' force and from which the summing-up theme may be said to emerge.[1] It is perhaps for this reason that Sibelius was concerned at the beginning of the movement to avoid suggesting this generating staccato texture too soon on the one hand (hence the direction Viol.1 tacet ad lib), and giving too much significance to the quotation from the second movement on the other (hence the vi...de).

The valid appraisal of the unique internal construction of this finale is in fact realized only when all the contributory features are seen in a state of interpenetration, and progressing simultaneously under a deliberately controlled pace.

The finale of the Third Symphony is as unique as the first movement is subtle and the second movement is deceptively simple. Although there is an obvious avoidance of romantic rhetoric and a general tautness of orchestral textures, these are not indications of a total change of style, but rather an avoidance of now unnecessary orchestral weight and rhetoric. In the Third Symphony Sibelius is even more concerned with a tonal evolution; but it is presented in even more subtle terms, and tightly knit symphonic design (than its two predecessors) and which now includes the concept of pace as a constructive factor.

Two other orchestral compositions completed in 1907 were the 'Dance Intermezzo' Op.45 No.2, and the symphonic poem 'Nightride and Sunrise'. In the latter work, while there is no use of 'pace' as exhibited in the finale of the Third Symphony, there is a pronounced use of constructive changes of tempi as an integral and basic part of the original conception. These two works are considered in the following chapter.

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1. Cp.the first movement, and 'En Saga'.

CHAPTER 12

DANCE INTERMEZZO

NIGHTRIDE AND SUNRISE

CHAPTER 12

The 'Dance Intermexxo' Op.45 No.2 is the second of the three Dance Intermezzi composed by Sibelius[1,2] and is perhaps the most successful of them all.

All three Dance Intermezzi fall into two sections, and in Op.45 No.2, after four bars of introduction, the first section in B-flat minor begins with an oboe melody (A1, Ex.190) in 7-bar phrases (there are G.P. markings in the 8th and 16th bars) in which the familiar falling-fifth figure makes several appearances. The subsequent answering sentence (A2) moves towards the key of D-flat, but its first phrase remains in B-flat minor, while on being repeated it cadences in B-flat major and marks the beginning of the second section.

The second section 'con moto' has an enjoyable main melody (Ex.191) which is not immediately recognisable as typically 'Sibelian'; however, later presentations (Ex.192) of this melody illustrate more recognisable Sibelian traits, including both the replacing of the original quavers with a sustained note and the appearance (later on) of a rising-third phrase-ending.

With the approach to the climax of this work (at Letter L) the expected perfect cadence is suddenly interrupted, and (with a return of the five-flat key-signature) the ensuing 8-bar passage hovers on and alternates between the supertonic and dominant chords of D-flat before leading to the tonally ambivalent A2 answering phrase which has not been heard since the first section. Apart from its typically Sibelian behaviour

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1. See Chapter 10, p.156.
2. Op.45 No.2 is scored for: 2 flutes, 1 oboe, 2 clarinets, 1 bassoon, 4 horns, 2 cornets, castanets, tambourine, timpani, harp and strings.

this short passage illustrates Sibelius's economic musical craftmanship, and provides the work with a more effective climax approach to its short and conventional climax than any amount of the usual tonic-and-dominant re-iteration would have done; and to have indulged here in such obvious and stereotyped phrases would have disrupted the rather restrained style of this piece and broken its stylistic unity.

Indeed it is this very careful observance of the stylistic limits of this work that makes it more artistically successful - and indeed enjoyable - than either of the other two Dance Intermezzi, although the beginnings of both the other works suggest a more 'imaginative' idea and are marked by more characteristic mannerisms; however both the other two works disappoint since they create expectations (in their first sections) which are never fulfilled.

The date of composition of the symphonic poem 'Night-ride and Sunrise', Op.55[1] is given variously as 1907 or 1909, with more recent authorities accepting the earlier date. The situation may be summarized by the following quotation:

> (i) "Night-ride and Sunrise was completed in November 1909...The principal motif...was conceived during the spring in Italy in 1901 when I made a trip to Rome in April".[2]

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1. Scored for: 2 flutes and piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets and Bass clarinet, 2 bassoons and double bassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba, timpani, Gran-cassa, tamburo, tambourine, triangle and strings.
2. Sibelius, quoted in Ekman, p.202-3.

(ii) "A number of authorities, including Ekman and Abraham, date this 1909. This was, in fact, the date of its first performance in St.Petersburg. According to Fru Eva Paloheimo, the composer's eldest daughter, the date of composition was 1907".[1]

This apart (and either date is acceptable since it was obviously written between the Third and Fourth Symphonies) most writers agree that while this piece is undeservedly neglected, it demands a very searching performance if it is to succeed in the concert hall.

The overall tonality of 'Night-ride and Sunrise' is E-flat - the expansive key for Sibelius - and the work falls into two contrasting sections of which the first, with its persistent 'galloping' rhythm is obviously designed to represent the 'night-ride'. Although there is no official 'programme', Rosa Newmarch wrote:[2]

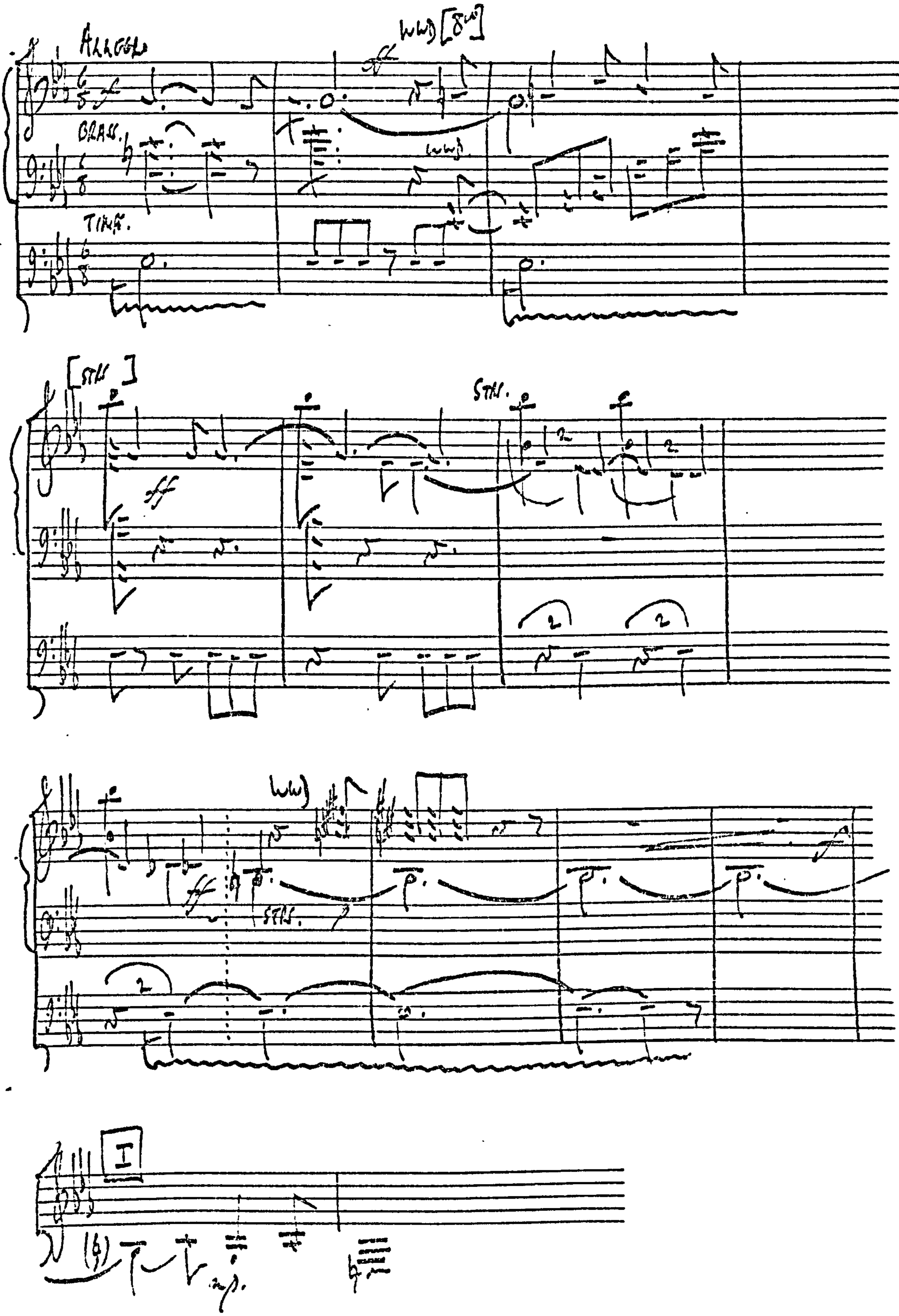
> "Sibelius often spoke to me of this work; he regretted that I had no opportunity of hearing it. I remember that he once asked me whether it might lead people to expect in it a reflection of the older romanticism of Raff's day, whereas the music is concerned with the inner experience of an average man riding solitary through the forest gloom; sometimes glad to be alone with nature; occasionally awe-struck by the stillness of the strange sounds which break it; not filled with foreboding but thankful and rejoicing in the day break".

The opening bars of the work:

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1. Layton, op.cit., p.72 footnote.
2. Rosa Newmarch: Jean Sibelius p.47.

Ex. 193



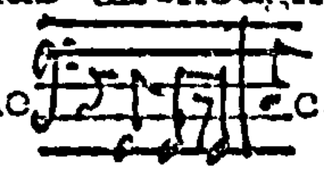
and indeed their continuation up to Fig.2 could be described as little more than an arresting introductory gesture which establishes both the E-flat tonality and the 6/8 rhythm: in fact they also establish the basis for the subsequent tonal evolution that is a large part of the creative basis for this work; characteristically the very opening chord is a supertonic chromatic ninth which moves directly to the tonic, after which the A-natural is taken up in bars 2-3. In turn this phrase is completed by some powerful duplets which finish the phrase with a sustained B-natural (and the chord of B major) that eventually resolves to C-natural (at Fig.1). In the following 10 bars (until Fig.2) the previous disturbance is gradually steadied by the E-flat of the timpani, and the paragraph eventually settles down in an undisturbed E-flat tonality (at Fig.2) - and this is confirmed by 4 bars of quietly emphatic E-flats from horns and timpani.

(In passing, the choice of key, the use of both Gran cassa and timpani, the early appearance of B-natural - which could later be taken as C-flat - all create the expectancy of a tonal evolution embracing E-flat and C minor).

The first thematic idea, A1 (Ex.194) is presented by strings four bars after Fig.2. It is a unison/octave theme having a wide tessitura - a characteristic it shares with the opening theme of the slow movement of the Second Symphony (as well as the third movement of the Fourth); this is not usual for Sibelius though the wide tessitura admirably characterises (both here and in the Second Symphony) a sense of restlessness and (inherent) disturbance.

This A1 theme is accompanied with only occasional tonic chords in woodwind, horns, and timpani, and it is presented with few changes until, at Fig.5, it begins to move away from E-flat.

As might be expected the tonality moves towards C minor (Figs.6-7) but although there is an early 'cadence' in C minor (3 bars after Fig.7) this new tonality is not achieved until a considerable passage containing more definite harmonic progressions has intervened; even so it is necessary for the sequential modulations (between Figs.11-13) to be repeated with only few changes (Figs.14-16) before C minor is ultimately established (at Fig. 17, P.12).

The reason for this comparatively long process rests on the fact that a large part of this C minor passage maintains both B- and A-flat, and (as in 'En Saga', for example) the tonality is balanced between the keys of E-flat and C minor. Thus although the timpani insist on C and G from Fig.7 onwards and there is the  cadence for timpani solo at Fig.14 even at that point there is an almost immediate resumption in E-flat major (complete with A-natural) as well as a reference to the opening duplet rhythm. In turn this leads to a slightly altered repeat of the section between Figs.11 and 13.

It is only when (at Fig.17) :

(i) the theme is reduced to little more than a cadential figure, 'sul pont.',

(ii) there is an unmistakable and vital tonal direction given by timpani, and

(iii) (in contrast, and for the first time and only for these bars) a marked emphasis on B-and A-natural,

- that C minor is finally established.

Immediately after this Sibelius reintroduces both B- and A-flat and these remain for the whole of the succeeding C minor section, which begins (a few bars after Fig.18) with the change of time signature from 6/8 to

24/16 = C (Ex.195).

The original A1 theme is now transformed into one of Sibelius's many typical staccato/ostinato string passages, and this accompanies two new themes which are successively introduced (at Figs.19 and 21) by woodwind, B1, B2 (Exs.196, 197); during this ostinato the string section is reduced so that only one-half of the section plays at one time. The orchestral texture is then gradually strengthened (and string tutti restored at Fig.24) as these two themes are worked up by simple repetition to a moderate (but palpable) climax, complete with C-natural timpani rolls. This climax subsides at Fig.25 and the end of the woodwind theme remains incomplete: it is followed by the return of the 6/8 time signature 'tempo di commencio'.

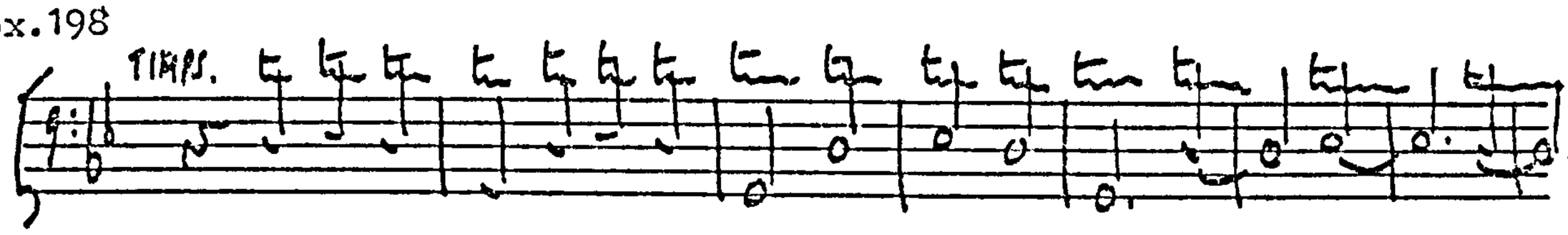
The first main theme is here restored to its original shape, and immediately begins to move away from C minor to G minor: as usual the timpani anticipate this tonal movement (as early as Fig.26) though the establishment of G minor is not completed for some time and is effected by the employment of some 'new' material (mostly from the 'introduction' and not used since then.)

The key of G minor is eventually established at Fig.32, though it is persistently marked by E-flat and F-natural, and shortly afterwards a further change of time signature (to Common time, 'moderato assai' (minim = crotchet)) leads to a largely literal transposition of the earlier C minor episode though the scoring is reversed - woodwind now have the semiquaver figuration while the two melodies are in the strings.

One of the new and more interesting features of this G minor section is to be seen in the timpani part, for (from Fig.33 onwards, as the section reaches its climax and then begins to subside) it persistently uses the notes G - D - E-flat, and makes a particular point of the relationship

at Fig.36, thus :

Ex.198



In contrast the contra-basses reiterate the following figure:

Ex.199



and there is thus a further explicit example of Sibelius's vital employment of the tonal role of the timpani.

After the subsidence of this G minor episode, the timpani maintain their three-note figure(though an increasingly longer note values) and against this the strings present a short phrase (Ex.200) recitative-like in rhythm and inflection, and something like a codetta in function; the intensity of this phrase (mostly due to its bowing) recalls similar phrases in earlier works which have been remarked upon previously. At first this phrase maintains its G minor tonality, but it quickly moves towards E-flat and finishes on the dominant chord (B-flat); two bars later the time signature is again changed, this time to 3/2 = 6/4 Largo (ma non troppo).

But the actual (and expected) return to E-flat is delayed and, after some isolated 'bird-calls' for woodwind, a further new theme is gradually introduced - and hovering, at first, between C minor and E-flat. Typically Sibelius initially supports these 'bird-calls' with a G major chord, but, shortly after the change of time signature, the phrase is completed (three bars after Fig.38) with an octave B-natural for horns, and this is sustained for 2 bars: it recalls (and explains) the held B-natural which originally occurred in bars 7-11 of this work.

This sustained B-natural (2 bars after Fig.38) is itself answered by a held D-flat for violins (and directed f<ff) after which the emergence of E-flat accompanies the introduction of a new theme. This new theme, C1, reaches its first complete appearance in a typical Sibelian texture at Fig.40 (Ex.201) and is followed by yet another new theme, C2 (Ex.202), which is scored for horns and bassoons. (There is a delightfully scored change of texture here: it allows the horn tone to emerge from the preceding string and woodwind texture).

A few bars after Fig.42 the process is reversed as the theme is taken over by strings, but it shortly comes to a pause on the subdominant chord (6 bars after Fig.44).[1]

After a double bar the first of the new E-flat themes, C1, reappears and acts as a preparation for the entry of the second theme, now on trumpets and trombones, which is expansively presented[2] and allowed to build up to the climax of the work. But this imminent climax is interrupted

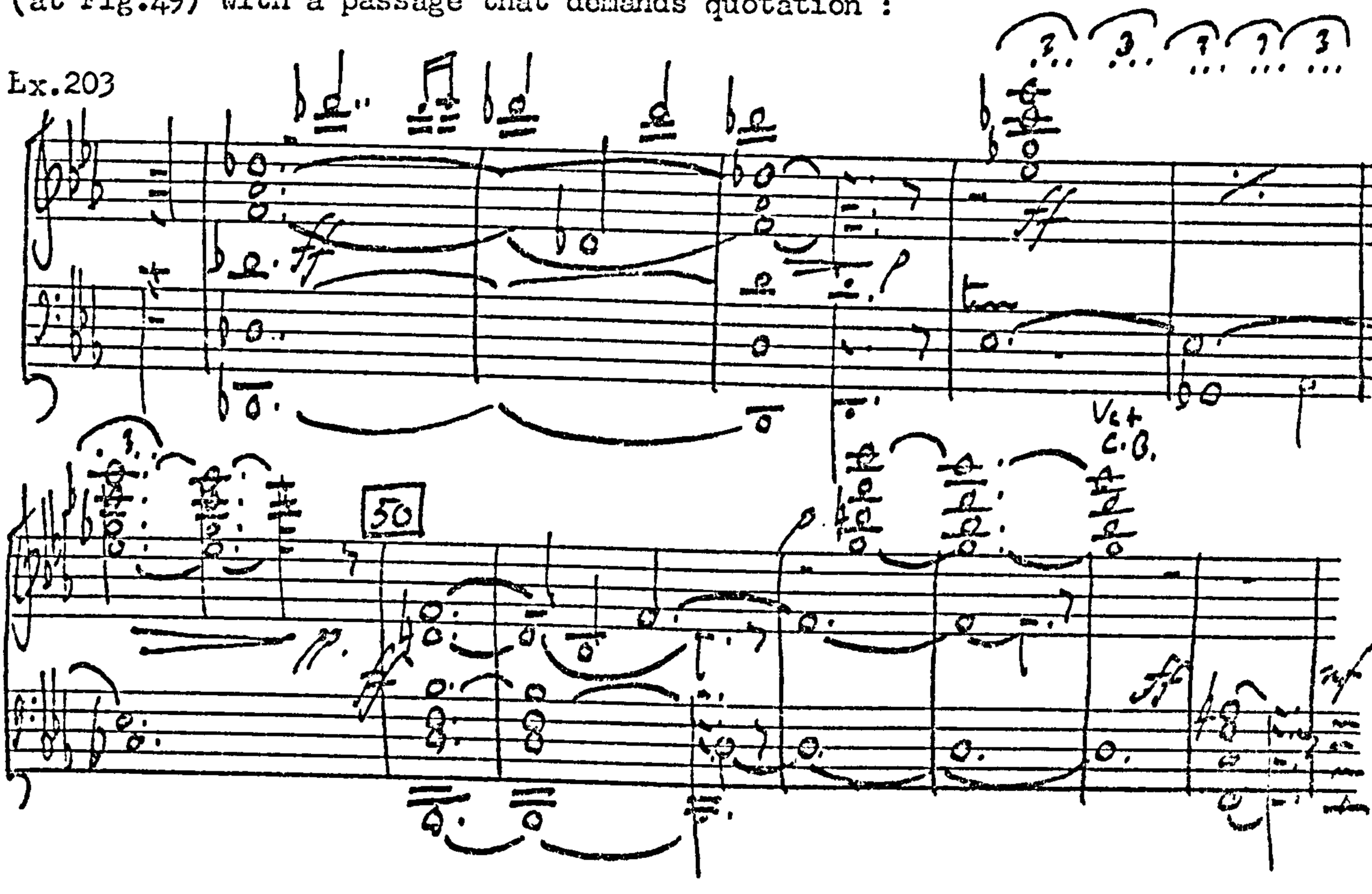
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1. The 'glissando' direction for violins and violas 2 bars after Fig.44 is unusual for Sibelius: it does, however, help to make a point of the progression to the subdominant, and this will be explained shortly.

2. It seems to anticipate some textures of the Seventh Symphony.

(at Fig.49) with a passage that demands quotation :

Ex.203



and 5 features of this passage are to be noted;

(i) it is approached (one bar before Fig.49) from the subdominant,

(ii) it sustains a D-flat major chord for 3 bars, and this is then

(iii) answered by the chord of C-flat (B-natural) major before a resolution on the dominant of E-flat, 'ff' (at Fig.50);

(iv) immediately after this the strings again suggest the dominant of C minor (though significantly the marking is 'p' - before there is

(v) a further emphatic supertonic chromatic (seventh)chord which resolves directly on the tonic chord of E-flat major, after which a mere 9 bars completes the work.

This passage - absolutely Sibelian in its behaviour and tonal prevarication (of Symphony 1, 'En Saga') is both the emotional climax of this work and the fulfilment and climax of the tonal and thematic evolutions.

The whole of this E-flat passage, from Fig.38 onwards, has been marked by both the (ambiguous) supertonic chromatic chord and the answering subdominant - and the subdominant has consistently appeared at phrase-endings in order to counteract the possible 'ambiguous' leaning of the supertonic to C minor (moreover the subdominant was subtly emphasized just before and after Fig.44 by both an appoggiatura and a glissando). However at Fig.49 this subdominant is suddenly taken as the opportunity to suggest the 'key' of D-flat major, which is then immediately contradicted by the chord of C-flat (i.e. B-natural).

The subsequent hint of C minor for violins is finally and firmly rejected by the 'fff' supertonic chromatic chord for brass and timpani; thus this passage purposefully and convincingly fulfills and resolves the tonal and harmonic implications of the opening bars of the work.

'Night-ride and Sunrise' is a straightforward work which can (in a good performance) create a tremendous effect from only modest and purely musical sources. It also exhibits a further and continuing use of several of Sibelius's most frequently observed devices and procedures, but although common to several works they do not become 'mannered' and 'empty' since each new work (of significance) shows them in a new context - and frequently associated with a further development of a previously established technique or idea.

The antecedents of the tonal construction of this work are obvious: indeed the original move from E-flat to C minor, though lengthy and subtly prolonged, was foreseeable from the very opening bars; this C minor submediant relationship was then balanced by an almost literal G minor transposition, after which the whole design was completed and resolved by the second main (E-flat) section.

The impact of this second E-flat section is due to several reasons :

(i) here the E-flat tonality avoids the uncertainties (flat 6th and 7th) that marked the C- and C-minor episodes;

(ii) the key of E-flat is here a tonal achievement that emerges only gradually,

(iii) it resolves and explains the opening supertonic and B-natural chords,

(iv) it fulfilled the thematic evolution by presenting new themes (C1, and C2) as a thematic climax - rather like the appearance of the summing-up theme in the Finale of the Third Symphony (though it lacks the motivic feature) or the earlier 'Lemminkäinen's Return';

(v) these new themes were aided by the striking reservation of the brass section for this purpose, and

(vi) although there was a feeling of 'speed' in the first section (generated by the galloping string rhythm) there was also a comparatively slow tonal movement in which the acceptance of the other two tonal centres (C minor and G minor) was marked by both the appearance of new themes and - more importantly - by presenting them in a broader tempo.

The changing of tempo within a movement has been previously observed in Sibelius's orchestral compositions, and here it is carried out easily and to great effect. In this work the two new tonal (and complementary) areas not only use this broader tempo to mark their tonal achievement, but in so doing prepare the listener, psychologically, for the broader second (sunrise) section with its concommitant tonal and thematic fulfillment: in this sense the affinities with the finale of the Third Symphony are clear.

The affinities with the previous symphonic-fantasy - 'Pohjola's Daughter' - are also clear, and particularly so when considering the dramatic D-flat outburst which occurs in the last section of this work. This is not so much a passage of 'modulation' as some writers have suggested; the experience of 'Pohjola's Daughter' suggests that this D-flat (and the immediately following woodwind texture) could be taken as an extreme development of Sibelius's method of marking the flat-side of the key: but the passage as a whole is a typical tonal prevarication, and the climax and resolution of the tonal, (thematic) and harmonic implications of the very opening bars.

'Night-ride and Sunrise' continues the line of development first established in 'Lemminkäinen's return' (with which it shares an obvious programmatic link) and the revised version of 'En Saga', though here the tonal, harmonic, and thematic evolutions are now accompanied by constructive changes of tempi as an integral and basic part of the conception. This composition is a rewarding work, unjustly neglected, though it possesses a subtlety that only an intense (and sustained) performance will realize.

CHAPTER 13

SWANWHITE

IN MEMORIAM

THE DRYAD

CHAPTER 13

Following the completion of such works as the Third Symphony and 'Night-ride and Sunrise' in 1907, the intervening years till 1911 (and the completion of the Fourth Symphony) produced a number of compositions that range from the sublime to the pretentious, and includes some unevenly imaginative incidental music; unfortunately the one undeniable masterpiece of these years - the String Quartet (Voces intimae) Op.56 - falls outside the scope of this study.

In 1908 Sibelius accepted the commission of the Swedish Theatre to compose incidental music for the fairytale 'Swanwhite' (Strindberg), and originally he composed 14 numbers, scored for a small orchestra. One year later after some revision, and scored for a larger orchestra, Sibelius published the Concert Suite 'Swanwhite' Op.54.[1] This Concert Suite contains only 7 numbers, and according to Johnson[2] the revisions consisted largely of "an expansion of the original melodic ideas"; he points out that No.3, for example, was originally only 25 bars long, whereas in the published suite "it is stretched to a monotonous 66 bars."

The first number, 'The Peacock', falls into two sections of which the second is almost a literal repeat of the first, apart from a slightly enlarged scoring. It is repetitive, and uses simple melodic ideas which show few characteristic Sibelian traits. Ralph Wood drew attention[3] to the 'pedal point' for oboe, clarinet and harp which persists throughout the work (Ex.204) and described the piece as "an extremely original piece

1. It is scored for: double woodwind, 4 horns, strings, timpani, harp, with castanets in No.1 and triangle in No.3.
2. Johnson, op.cit, p.118.
3. Ralph Wood in Abraham, op.cit, p.85.

of music for all the extreme simplicity of its material; in other words it is quintessential Sibelius"; but he then found it necessary to add: "if in some moods, in the concert hall, one might find it sound dull, ordinary, monotonous, that would certainly be an impression put into correct perspective if the music were heard in its proper context."

This comment suggests that much of the strength and imagination of this first piece lies in its dramatic (and extra-musical) associations: certainly as a concert piece it seems to bear out Johnson's implied criticism.

The second piece, 'The Harp', opens with more promise: it starts from a D major/minor key centre and gradually works round to the main key of A-flat minor. The main section of this piece (and particularly that quoted in Ex.205 which occurs near the beginning of the main section) does occasionally seem to have some of the delicate poetic quality found in first-rate Sibelius: it shows the archtypal features of (i) flutes in thirds, (ii) a 'typical' thematic shape (see also comment on Ex.205), (iii) the undulating harmonies of the harp, and (iv) the C-flat mediant pedal of the timpano. Unfortunately after these few bars the magic is not sustained in the subsequent repetitions.

It is interesting to note the key of the piece, A-flat minor, since its rich darkness (as well as the opening tonal ruminations) seem to be very much in keeping with the idea of 'the harp' as a reflective instrument. Notice also that the opening tonal progression parallels that of 'En Saga', and this too is in keeping with the idea of reflection and meditation; the comparison is not without interest for future works, for 'The Bard' Op.64 uses an equally rich and dark key (E-flat minor) and features an important solo part for harp.

'The Maiden with the Roses', No.3, is a charming and unpretentious piece in E-flat minor; in spite of Johnson's remark it does not 'weary' the listener by undue length, and it is delicately scored. The change of mode, to E-flat major for the next piece ('Listen.....the Robin sings') prepares for the most musically ambitious number in its construction and the most musically valuable in its achievement.

The opening bars (Ex.206) of this fourth number recall the beginning of Op.22 No.1 (which was also in E-flat) and although the material of this piece is straightforward and undramatic, yet it manages to achieve a strength and depth without ever stepping outside its own delicate boundaries of either harmony or orchestration: for example, although it is scored for 4 horns and double woodwind, there is hardly a 'f' or fully scored chord in this first E-flat section.

There is a short middle section in B (= natural) major (the theme of which is shown in Ex.207) which, in contrast, has a 'romantic' warmth and quality about it in both its scoring and material; yet even here (where the 'look' of the score again recalls Op.22 No.1) there is a restraint even in its most passionate moments. The scoring of the woodwind recalls the Third Symphony, as does its means of giving even this short and lightweight movement some depth of character by suggesting a 'development' without ever losing momentum by delaying too long the return to the original material.

The opening material returns more in essence than in fact, and a large part of the final E-flat section is taken up with the figure quoted in Ex.208. This subtle undulation prophetically calls to mind (in miniature) the same pendulum swings of tonality that occur in the first movement of the Fifth Symphony, while the return of the opening bars - after a one beat rest - to settle this tonal 'argument' (Ex.209) is neat, effective, and seems to illustrate the almost 'symphonic' approach of Sibelius to this

piece: certainly this would account for a large part of its strength and musical achievement, and no other number of this Suite can match this piece in any particular.

The fifth number, 'The Prince Alone', is virtually monothematic and presents one settled e..otional 'picture'. Its modal touches suggest its chronological nearness to 'Night-ride and Sunrise', and it makes its point with effective simplicity and without undue length - though it never manages to achieve anything more than this.

'Swanwhite and the Prince' (No.6) is, after No.4, the other most successful piece of the Suite. It has something of the naïve charm of the 'King Christian II' or the 'Pelléas' Suites, and indeed seems to share some rhythmic, harmonic, and textural features with those works - as is evident from the passage quoted in Ex.210. Again its simple concentration on an uncomplicated and unpretentious musical idea ensures its easy and purposeful flow: its si..plicity strengthens the impression of its sincerity.

The last piece of the Suite, 'Hymn of Praise', is one of the weakest. It uses only a minimum of harmonic resource and the piece fails because it has a static quality which soon becomes sterile.

As a Suite Op.54 is an uneven mixture: two of its numbers (Nos.4 and 6) are imaginative and enjoyable, while No.3 has an unpretentious charm. The remaining pieces are, unfortunately, either disappointing or nondescript.

In the same year (1909) that he published the 'Swanwhite'Suite, Sibelius also composed the 'In Memoriam' Funeral March for Orchestra, Op.59 - a work of both factual and musical dispute. Opinion as to its musical value ranges from "a profoundly moving work" (Gray)[1] to "Sibelius's worst work" (Wood),[2] and while according to Ekman the work was not connected with the death of any particular person, Sibelius's eldest daughter assured Johnson that it was written in memory of Eugen Schauman.

A careful consideration of this composition leads to the conclusion that - as with some of the Dance Intermezzi - the work is an unhappy compromise between typical Sibelian procedures and the formal necessities of a Funeral March: and that this compromise is responsible for the sharp division of critical opinion.

The opening of this composition establishes both the tonic key of C-sharp minor and the conventional March rhythm. The first main theme, A1a, b, (Ex.211) is straightforward though its second phrase (A1b) is somewhat bombastic. This first complete sentence evokes a second sentence, A2 (Ex.212), that is at first situated on the dominant chord but then moves towards a cadence in the dominant minor key. And the following phrases gradually confirm this change of tonality, first by the presentation of a new phrase (at Fig.2) which leans towards E major (the submediant of G-sharp minor) and then by a simple cadence phrase for oboes.

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1. Cecil Gray: Sibelius; Oxford University Press, 1934; p.111.
2. Wood, in Abraham, op.cit, p.64.

The first section of this composition is rounded off by a short codetta[1] whose main characteristics are a recitiative-like first phrase and a very conventional and cadential second phrase.

After the full close in G-sharp minor (at Fig.6) only a rhythmically animated unison G-sharp remains; this is sustained for 4 bars and leads directly into the second 'section'.

The short second section (Figs.6-8) is apparently little more than a convenient way of returning from the dominant key to the tonic (where the subsequent third section will very largely present a repeat of the first). But it contains the most 'inspired' moment of the entire work, and the pathos and sincerity of the opening (bassoon) phrase shines out (Ex.213).[2] This initial phrase is answered by a simple phrase for oboe, after which (from Fig.7 onwards) the remainder of this section is concerned with the (anticipation of, and)preparation for the return of C-sharp minor - and the third section. Nevertheless the peotic intensity of the opening of this middle section, its muted orchestral colours, and particularly its (ambiguous) tonal situation allow it - momentarily - to act as a 'development',[3] and it gives this Funeral March a depth that is at once welcome and paradoxical.

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1. The unison D-natural (at Fig.4) which follows directly on the G-sharp minor cadence is certainly in keeping with the 'tragic' inspiration of this work. The device is used to more effect later in this work, and anticipates the 'dovetailing' function it performs in 'The Oceanides' Op.73; it also recalls the transition and the dovetailing of the exposition and development in the (first movement of the) Third Symphony.
2. Layton misquotes this passage (he mistakes Horns in E for Horns in A).
3. The 'Development' function of this short passage could possibly be derived from the experience of the middle movement of the Third Symphony.

It is welcome in that it is so fine a moment, and paradoxical in that (i) such a phrase should occur in what is largely an uninspired work, while (ii) the fact that it is followed very shortly by a repeat of the main theme is almost a matter for despair: the two themes - though obviously related - are separated by an emotional chasm.

The third section is largely a tonally adjusted version of the first: the procedures and orchestration are much as before, and the previous leaning to E major (as submediant to G-sharp minor) is now balanced and replaced by a leaning towards A major (as submediant of the tonic key). After this the cadence theme (for oboes) returns in C-sharp minor, though before proceeding to the codetta a repeat of A2 gives rise to a short sequential passage which culminates in a final 'ff' presentation of the A1b phrase before reaching an emphatic plagal cadence (three bars after Fig.14).

The codetta follows, but its initial G-natural (i.e.F-double-sharp) is allowed to anticipate the beginning of the codetta, and it intrudes directly - and forcefully - on the C-sharp minor chord irself (Ex.214). The final bars of this work are directed 'poco a poco più pp' and 'morendo' and could be interpreated as the gradual disappearance (from view) of the Funeral procession itself: characteristically the work ends with two C-sharps for solo timpano.

'In Memoriam' runs to 36 pages of full score and presents certain evidence that suggests a 'fettering' of Sibelius's creative imagination due to the necessities of the March. The opening 15 pages, for example, suggest a symphonic background (and breadth of thought): the establishment of the tonic key is quickly followed by a move to the dominant which is emphatically confirmed (and extended) and indeed occupies more room than the tonic key - and this could have led to the evolution of a large

design of some value. Equally the short middle section is at first suggestive of some sort of development, but its promise is summarily dismissed by the conventional repeat of the first section whose bombast seems all the more inexcusable after the muted passion of Ex.213.

'The Dryad', tone picture for orchestra, Op.45 No.1, was composed in 1910. It is scored for a large orchestra,[1] though it is one of the few orchestral works of Sibelius to omit the timpani. Both the title and opus number of this work suggest its connection with Op.45 No.2 'Dance Intermezzo' and with 'Pan and Echo' Op.53; and like both those works 'The Dryad' falls into two sections.

The tonality of this work is D major, and it begins with its most imaginative strcke (again a similarity with 'Pan and Echo'): the opening bars, A1 (Ex.215) and in particular the first six bars which hint at F-sharp minor, are peculiarly Sibelian in shape, rhythm and inflection, while the entry of the cellos and contra-basses (beginning off the beat, of course) is a veritable fingerprint. After these opening 11 bars, a 'rfz' scale of A major - which pauses on G-sharp - leads to an emphatic D major cadence (Ex.216) which is slightly extended to lean towards its own submediant (B minor) at Letter A: and this extended cadence is then sequentially repeated (first on E-flat, then E-natural). The last two bars of this cadential sequence are repeated twice before an emphatic brass-call, A-sharp - D-sharp, effects a modulation to G-sharp minor. And it is in this new key that A1 returns (in diminution, Ex.217) and completes

1. It is scored for: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, tambourine, castanets, tamburo, Gran cassa and strings. There are no timpani: other works to omit the timpani were 'Belshazzar's Feast' Op.51, and 'En Saga'; but in this respect 'En Saga' is exceptional.

its phrase with a full close: the final cadence chord hints at a dance rhythm, and is marked 'saltato'.

This G-sharp minor cadence is immediately followed - with no modulation - by a repeat of the emphatic D major (- B minor) cadence: and this cadence is itself followed by the outlining of a G-sharp minor chord (on solo flute; accompanied by strings 'saltato').

At this point it becomes clear that the diametric opposition of the keys of D major and G-sharp minor reflects the essence of this work which is to reveal the gradual emergence of a dance movement from the leisurely opening in D major. This evolution is now accomplished though the alternation of (i) phrases derived from the original D major cadence and (ii) the introduction of passages (usually directed 'poco stretto') which suggests the emergence of a dance (and frequently contain the A1 theme in diminution). It is this fact that explains the necessity for the unusually large number of detailed tempi directions which mark this first section.

The remainder of the first section is occupied with the growing antagonism of the material derived from the opening and the dance elements, though it is now presented in the keys of C major and F-sharp minor. From Letter D onwards the cadence theme is presented in a very attenuated form for solo oboe (Ex.218) - and punctuated by some 'rfz' brass interruptions; this continues until the dance elements finally triumph and the second (dance) section is introduced at Letter E (poco stretto) with a conventional 'introduction' (on the chord of E-flat) and the usual bar-line pause.

The second section proper begins, at 'Commodo'; on the dominant chord of D minor - in which key it is to remain. This dance section is largely concerned with a gradual increase in speed (reaching 'Vivace', on p.15),

but in spite of its use of such devices as the overlapping of phrases (and the direction 'subito piano') this section remains rather 'wooden' in its rhythms. The section introduces two new themes (Exs.219, 220) and makes some reference to the diminished version of A1 and to the A major scale that originally introduced the emphatic cadence (at Letter A). The climax is reached at Letter K where there is a gradual reduction in speed, and the original D major cadence is simply dovetailed into the last phrase of the dance. Subsequently the closing bars in D major typically allude to the f-sharp minor hint of bars 1-6 (and their pointing towards B minor) as well as presenting A1 in diminution, and as a kind of motto (Ex.221).

The most interesting and significant feature of 'The Dryad' is that it is the first orchestral work of Sibelius to present the tonic key and the key of the augmented fourth in direct juxtaposition and, as it were, in conflict: and this is to become a vital factor (unleashing a violent tonal conflict) in the Fourth Symphony which was completed only one year after the composition of 'The Dryad'. In this present work the tonal conflict is pursued with some interest but without any great passion and this seems to reflect the general attitude and character of this work: for it appears to present the genesis of an interesting idea which is more valuable than the use to which it is put here, and the musical composition it in fact creates.

It is unfortunate that the 'Dryad' of Sibelius is not related to the 'Faune' of Debussy!

CHAPTER 14

Canzonetta

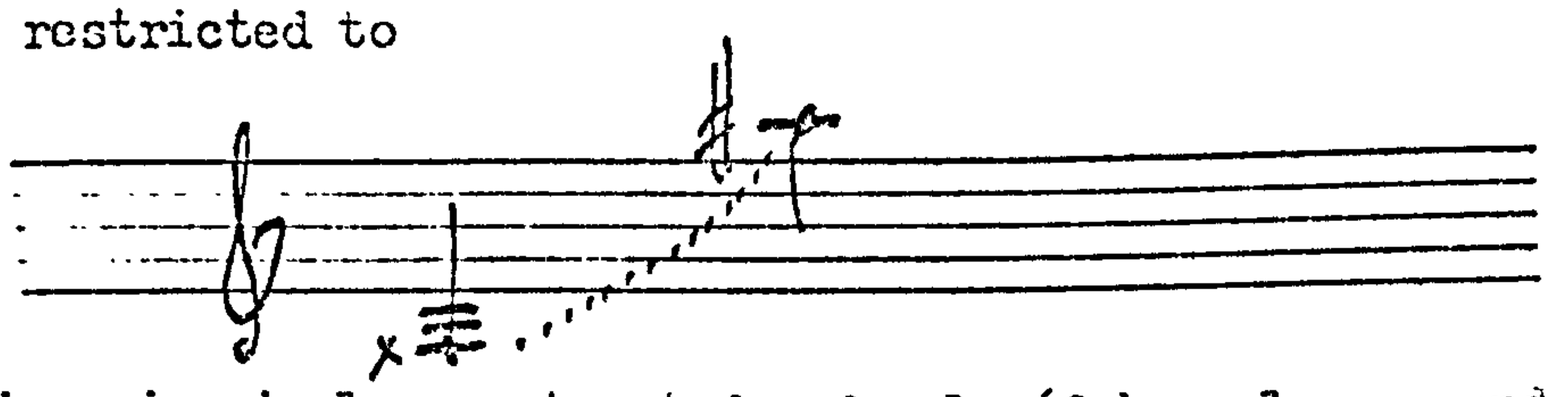
Valse romantique

RAKASTAVA

CHAPTER 14

In March 1911 (less than one month before the première of the Fourth Symphony) the Finnish National Theatre presented a revised version of 'Kuolema' and Sibelius added two new pieces to the existing instrumental music (that he had composed in 1903). These two new pieces were Canzonetta Op.62a, and Valse Romantique Op.62b, and Ekman states[1] that they were written in January, during the composition of the Fourth Symphony.

The first piece, Canzonetta, is written for strings alone, and apart from the contra-basses, they are muted throughout. The key is G-sharp minor, one of the rarer keys for Sibelius: it seems to release a particular warmth and richness, and this is heightened by the fact that the main melodic idea is played by violas (for a large part of the work) while the range of the violins is restricted to



This piece is simply constructed and only 60 bars long: and in keeping with its title of 'Canzonetta' it is almost exclusively concerned with its one main melodic idea, A1 (Ex.222), presented first in G-sharp minor, and then shown, in an immediate and literal melodic repeat, to be in B major. The idea is slightly extended and the first section finishes in the tonic key.

There follows a short middle section of only 12 bars, wherein the main idea is sequentially extended before breaking off at a comma and presenting eight bars of dominant preparation which takes up the quaver figure of A1. This leads to a complete restatement of the first section, with the melody still in the violas while violins add a simple quaver decoration.

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1. Ekman, op.cit., p.206.

'Canzonetta' is a pleasant piece that rightly relies on no more than its si..ple melodic charm and the warmth and richness its choice of key evokes.

Its companion piece, Valse Romantique is scored for 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 horns, timpani, and strings, and again it falls into 3 main sections, although this time the third section contains no re-scoring - it is a literal repeat.

The first section presents the main idea (Ex.223), some subsidiary ideas, moves towards the dominant key, and then delays the expected perfect cadence. Seven bars after Letter D (p.13) it breaks off unexpectedly to present a very simple working out of one of the subsidiary ideas before moving back to the main idea in the tonic key (p.17). The scoring is adequate, but, as in most of Sibelius's Valses, the rhythmic necessities of the dance seem to have stifled his creative imagination.

In contrast, 'Rakastava' for String Orchestra, Op.14, presents 3 short pieces wherein Sibelius's creative imagination is seen to have (gained) a poetic refinement and intensity that makes it one of the best of his smaller compositions.

The history of this 'suite' is interesting for it was originally composed in 1893 when the University Chorus of Helsinki sponsored a competition for an original work for male chorus, and Sibelius won second prize with 'Rakastava' - using words from the 'Kanteletar'. It was subsequently revised twice, and eventually 'rewritten' in 1911: its various versions may be listed as :

Version I : for Male chorus a capella — 1893

VersionII : for Male chorus and string orchestra - 1894

Version III: for mixed chorus a capella - 1898

Version IV : for string orchestra, triangle and timpani - 1911

Concerning these versions Johnson[1] writes :

> "In 1911, Sibelius rewrote ('arranged' would be misleading) 'Rakastava' for string orchestra, triangle, and timpani..... This final version....has led such Sibelius scholars as Ralph Wood to suspect that it is closer in kinship to the Fourth Symphony (1911) than to anything the composer wrote around 1893. This is correct, but it should be added that 'Rakastava' really belongs to both periods. It is an excellent illustration of Sibelius's development as a composer. After 18 years, he employed the same melodies, and, to a certain degree the same harmonies, but in the suite for strings the melodies undergo an almost magical transformation in terms of rhythmic and contrapuntal subtleties."

However it is not to be doubted that the 1911 version amounts to a significant rewriting that betrays its kindship with the Fourth Symphony: internal evidence alone is conclusive on this point.[2]

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1. Johnson, op.cit., pp.63-4.

2. The following analysis (and comment) shows that this work is a mature Sibelius composition, and it eventually begins to prompt the question "is there any significance in the fact that Sibelius chose to re-write this work in 1911 - the year of the Fourth Symphony - after a complete break of some 13 years?" It will be remembered that a similar question (and answer) arose in Chapter 7 when discussing 'En Saga'.

The first movement in D minor, 'Rakastava' (The Lover)[1] illustrates the mature Sibelius's concern with, and exploration of the vagaries of tonality and its establishment (i.e.in non-symphonic works); moreover in this movement there is the suggestion of a (symphonic) tension, and the movement certainly recalls some of the procedures (and essential creative ideas) of, say, the exposition of a first subject group in the first movement of a symphony.

The opening 6 bar phrase establishes the tonic key, introduces the first main theme, A1 (Ex.224) and comes to a normal half-close, though the phrase is marked by the interplay of B/B-flat and C/C-sharp. The opening is characteristically Sibelian: note the gradual introduction of the opening chord, the rhythmic flexibility imparted by the slight syncopation, and the underpinning of the dominant chord (by contra-basses) at the end of the phrase.

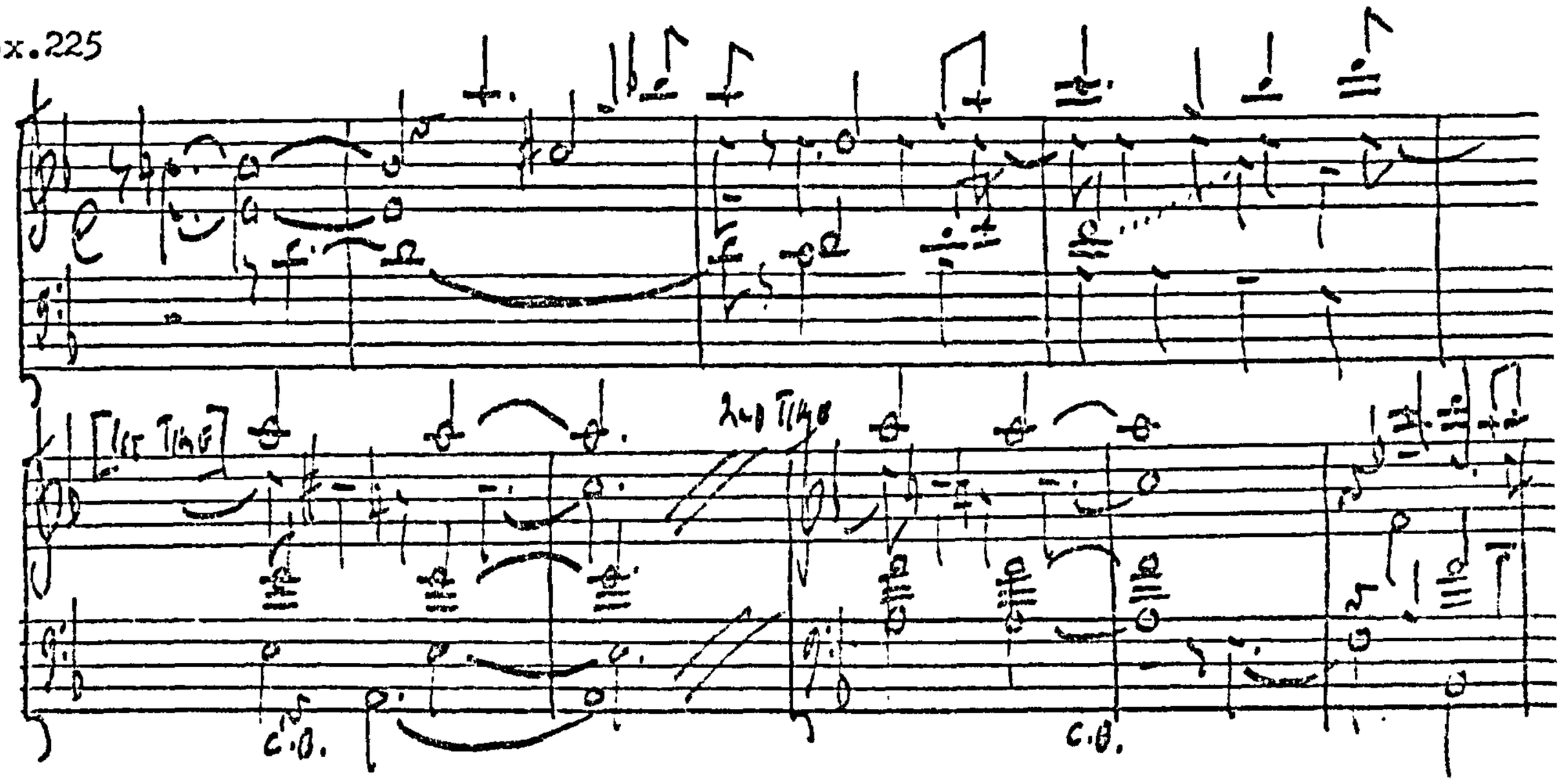
The subsequent answering phrase begins as though for a normal repeat (which would conventionally finish on the tonic chord) only to find that the phrase finishes with a dominant minor chord instead. This allows the following contra-basses entry to provide the opportunity for what is to be a considerable (and sustained) enhancement of the submediant chord.

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1. In describing the first version (1893) Johnson writes (p.63): "...the text was taken from three runos in the first book of the 'Kanteletar': 1. 'Where is my Beloved?'; 2. 'My Beloved's Path'; and 3. 'Good Evening, Little Bird'". For reasons that will emerge later the title of No.1 seems more appropriate to the 1911 version than its present one.

The musical argument could be represented thus :

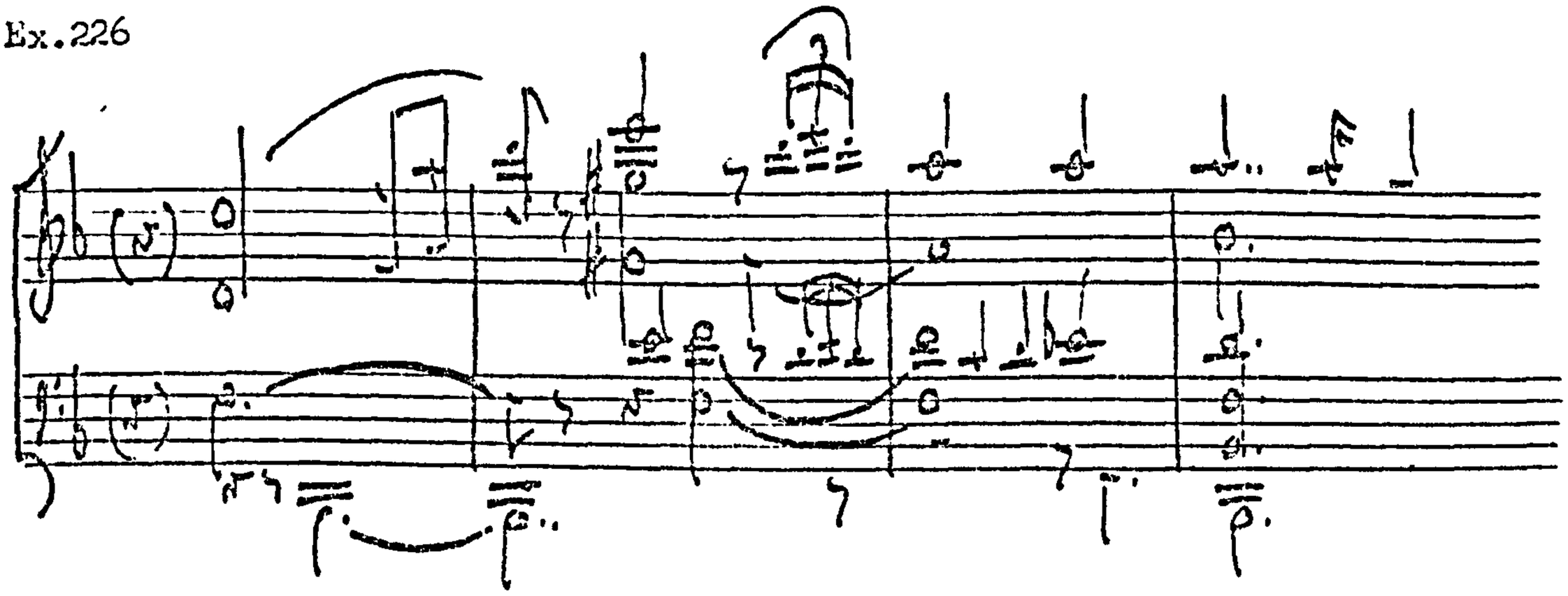
Ex.225



The enhancement of this submediant chord, which assumes some of the characteristics of a 'key', is effected by (i) the 'perfect' cadence of the contra-bass entry both here as well as the F - B-flat contra-bass entries which are not altered until one bar before Letter B, and (ii) the subsequent B-flat major/minor oscillations and the triplet semiquaver figure of accompaniment to which it gives rise.

The persistance of this submediant 'key' is exemplified in bars 1-2 of page 4. Here although there is the opportunity for D minor to reassert itself through the intermediacy of the augmented sixth chord (on B-flat)

Ex.226

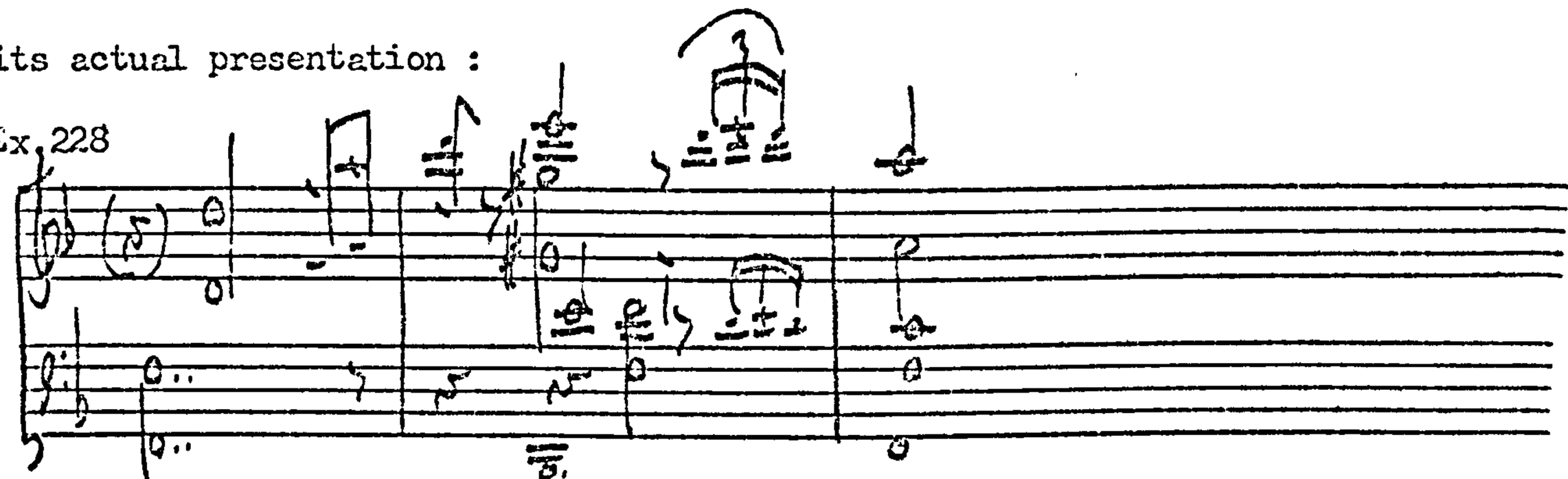


- this opportunity is not taken up and the following 10 bars repeat the previous B-flat major/minor oscillations, and move to a half-close.

This time the half-close is followed by the appearance of a new phrase, A2 (Ex.227) - though it is one which recalls the opening in its rhythmic and melodic construction, and seems to possess a certain 'questioning' quality. This A2 phrase is answered by a quietly stated B-flat minor cadence whose sequential repeat finishes on the chord of F major.

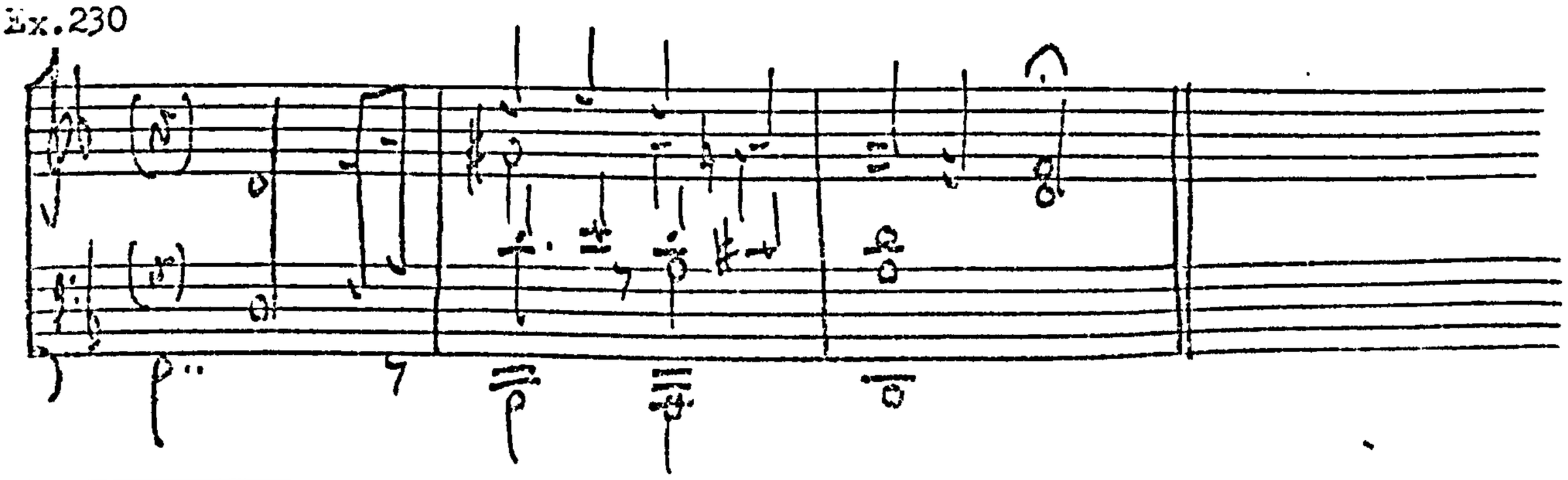
At this point the sustained F-natural bass note, and the enharmonic use of D-flat leads allows D minor to emerge. though the phrase once again comes to a climax on the augmented sixth chord - with a subtle difference in its actual presentation :

Ex.228



The questioning A2 phrase now returns again and it gives rise to a characteristically active string figure (Ex.229) - derived from the previous triplet semiquaver figuration - whose sequential modulations (steadied by timpano rolls on B-flat, then G) are again completed by the appearance of A2; and, as before, this leads (via B-flat minor) to the sustained chord of F major from where D minor emerges easily and with a characteristically subtle change in the final presentation of the augmented sixth chord :

Ex.230



The second movement 'Hakestetun tie' (The Way of the Lover) is scored for strings and triangle: and, of course, it is in the key of B-flat major. It is charming and unpretentious, and largely consists of alternations between a major and a minor melody[1] (Exs.231, 232) both of which consistently fall into 3-bar phrases. The scoring is delicate and even the simple inner parts give rise to other melodies.

At Letter D (only 12 bars from the end) there is a sudden move into D minor (for 6 bars) though still using the same material, and each bar is marked by a single stroke for triangle - indeed this is the entire triangle part.

These 6 bars are at once answered by a 3-bar phrase that centres on D-flat before the final 3-bar phrase briskly and succinctly finishes the movement in B-flat, though on a 6/3 chord (Ex.233).

The significance of this ending has rarely been mentioned,[2] but the facts :

(i) that this movement was in B-flat,

(ii) that it mostly consisted of alternations between major and minor,

(iii) that is made such a late reference to D minor (marked by the triangle) and

(iv) finished on a 6/3 chord.

- are all clear indications of its tonal relationship with the first movement on the one hand (taking up and in fact enlarging on the D - B-flat (tonal) relationship rather like a 'second subject' or a slight development - though

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1. I am forced to disagree with Layton's statement (p.86) "There is no more wonderful tune in all Sibelius than that of the exquisitely wrought and moving second movement, The Path of the Beloved").

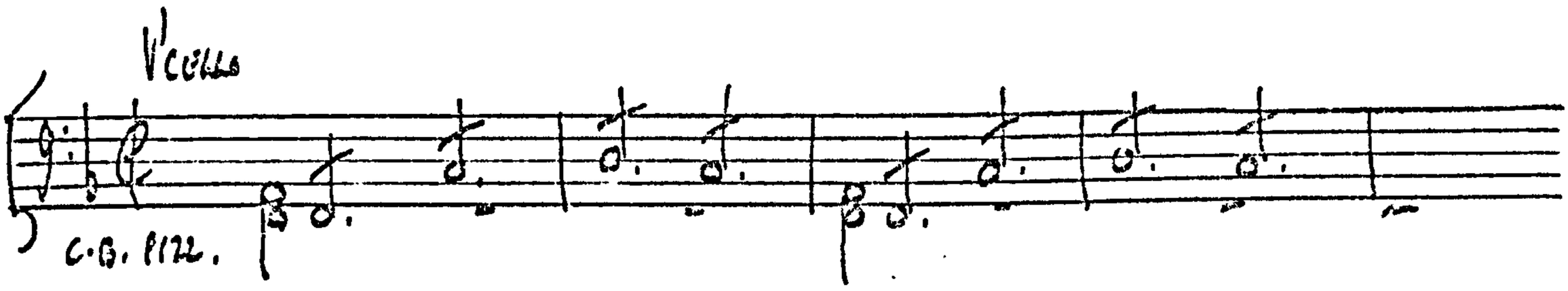
2. Wood (in Abraham, op.cit., p.59) described this as "an ending comparable, for abruptness and apparent inconsequence with that of the second movement of the Fourth Symphony" - and this leaves unremarked the tonal and formal function of these bars (and as will be shown later, is equally unjust to the Fourth Symphony).

it never loses its melodic simplicity which is a nice foil to the first movement) and, on the other hand, clearly implying - from the lateness of its D minor swerve and the final 6/3 chord - that some sort of tonal 'resolution' (recapitulation) must follow in the third and final movement.

The suggestion that the first movement has in some ways acted like a (Sibelian) first subject paragraph while the second has appeared almost as a second subject (or development) is supported by the function, character, and construction of the last movement: "Hyvää iltaa....Jää hyvästi" (Good Night, My Beloved....Farewell).

The last movement opens on a chord of F major and a two bar ostinato:

Ex.234



This provides a balance to the B-flat of the second movement and supports a theme (for violin solo) that is drawn towards D minor and indeed quickly establishes a thematic relationship with the first movement. This A1 theme (Ex.235) makes three appearances but its climax is consistently marked by the augmented-sixth chord on B-flat (as in the first movement) which is itself characterised by a two-note motive (G-sharp - A) for solo cello. But the key of D minor is not yet achieved for some considerable time - again a fact that in balancing the tonal 'tensions' of the first (and second) movement, also serves to establish the overall tonal proportions of the entire suite. A significant resolution of this augmented sixth chord is consistently avoided, and the first section ends inconclusively (and still ambiguously) on the chord of F major (p.12).

At this point it is fascinating to attempt the 'composition' of the remainder of the suite for oneself, and given the evidence of the first 12 pages of this score (i.e.up to the 'Doppio più lento' which is about to begin) it should be possible - theoretically at least! - to sketch something like the conclusion of this work.

The evidence of these three movements so far is this: the first movement in D minor contains an enhanced (and persistent) submediant chord. The second movement takes up this submediant as a key in its own right and explores further the major/minor oscillations (which first appeared in the first movement); later its sudden swerve to D minor and its final 6/3 chord illustrates both its tonal relationship to the first movement and prepares the way for a third movement which will present a tonal balance and resolution; it must bring the continuous line of thought, so far presented, to a satisfactory conclusion.

The last movement opens on an F major chord, and although this suggests a balance to B-flat, the key of D minor is not as yet accomplished. What is now required (by Sibelius) to complete this elegant design?

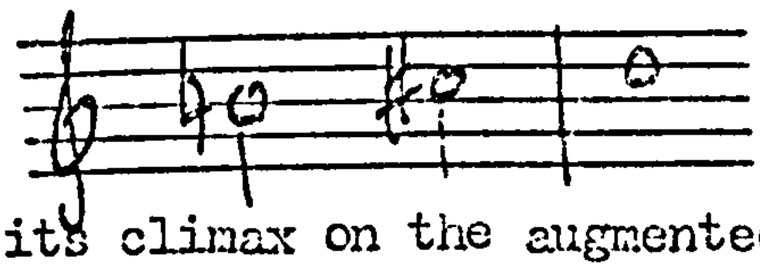
The prime requirement must be to establish D minor, and to counter-balance the tonal tensions of the previous movements - and may require some sort of D minor coda. And the means to fulfil these requirements must not destroy the delicately balanced dimensions (in emotion as well as size) of this suite; in short it needs one of these active string passages which can explore a variety of tonal openings, can generate sufficient energy to disperse the previous tensions, and can approach the dominant of D minor.[1]

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1. Such a passage has already been observed in the fist movement where it fulfilled a similar function; it was also observed in the second movement of the Second Symphony (4 bars after Letter O). In some respects it parallels the effect of the woodwind triplet figures which occur towards the end of 'Pohjola's Daughter' and 'Night-ride and Sunrise'.

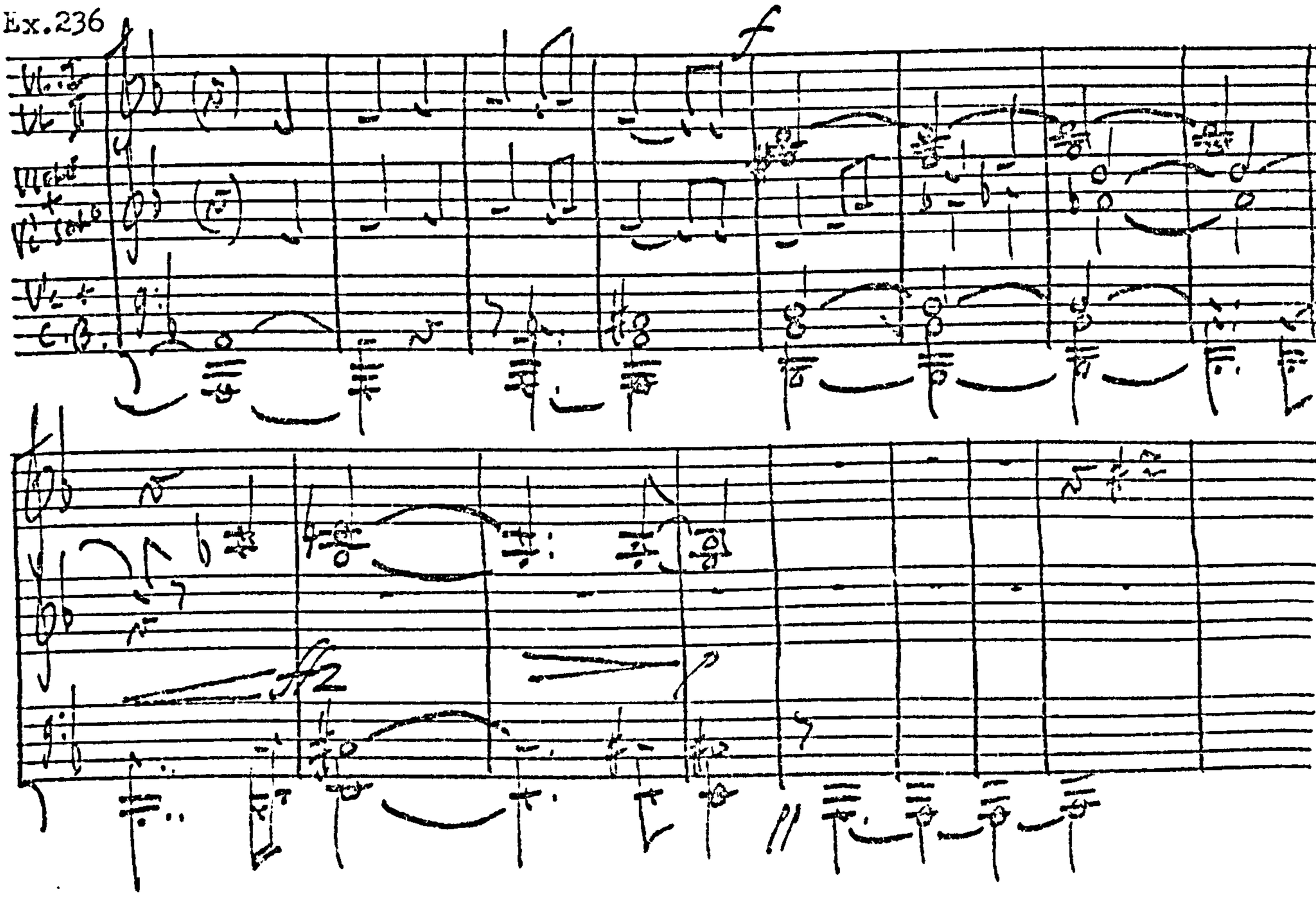
This, in fact, is largely what Sibelius does; the passage between 'Doppio più lento' (p.12) and 'Lento assai' (p.14) presents a typical scurrying figure for strings which, although 'signposted' by the F natural timpani rolls, comes first to a pause on an augmented sixth chord on D-flat (one bar before Letter B) before its sequential treatment leads to the introduction of a new 'theme' in an F major key that is marked by B-natural. From Letter C onwards this is pulled round to D minor, and settles on a dominant (A-natural) pedal at 'Lento assai'.

The rest of the movement (in effect the 'coda' that was previously suggested) uses little apart from tonic and dominant harmonies occasionally illuminated by a major subdominant chord, and some clear references (mostly for viola solo) to both the main theme of the first movement and the



opening. Characteristically the movement reaches its climax on the augmented sixth chord on B-flat:

Ex.236



- after which the suite is shortly and succinctly completed, with, of course, a last reference to the augmented sixth.

The structure of this last movement is convincing evidence of Sibelius's overall tonal view of the Rakastava Suite: the musical argument is lucid throughout the work though the last movement demands a very sympathetic performance if it is to succeed in the concert hall since its formal and emotional function needs a control that will avoid making it sound sectional and unsatisfactory - for it lacks some (- not much -) of the exquisitely poetic feeling of the first movement or the immediately approachable and haunting simplicity of the second.

The conclusion that 'Rakastava' is nearer to the Fourth Symphony than any work written in 1893 is not to be doubted: the internal evidence confirms this beyond all doubt - the ability to suggest the function of large-scale tonality within such a small time-scale, and with an avoidance of emotional heat as well as such details as the significant differences in the successive presentations of the augmented sixth chord in the first movement, the tonal reference, entry of the triangle and final 6/3 chord in the second, are all indicative of Sibelius's mature ability and creative imagination (and strongly hints at the period 1907-11).

Moreover the comparison with other works of similar size clearly suggests that its undoubted achievement arises from the essential 'tonal' argument: comparable works, lacking this central tonal idea, are mostly conspicuous by their failure.

CHAPTER 15

SYMPHONY No. 4

CHAPTER 15

The Symphony No.4 in A minor, Op.63 was completed in 1911, and although its first performance was apparently successful[1], its subsequent critical reception was far from cordial. Today however the Fourth Symphony is recognised (by Sibelian scholars, at least) as Sibelius's most profound symphonic creation, and one of the more important works in the symphonic literature of the twentieth century.

The first movement is uncompromisingly Sibelian in essence and material, and although clearly a straightforward sonata design, it is unusual - in the symphonies so far composed - in that it is a slow movement.[2] The initial tempo direction is 'Tempo molto moderato, quasi adagio', and Cherniavsky's account of Sibelius's tempo corrections suggests a MM marking of ♩ = 45-54.

The opening parase, A1 (Ex.237) presents the essence of the movement with its augmented fourth, syncopation, and consequential alternating and overlapping F-sharp - E pedal ostinato.

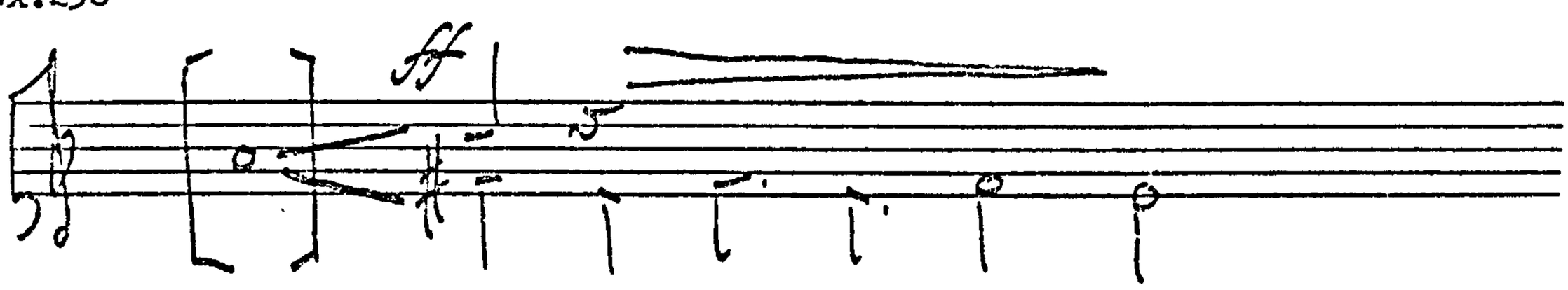
This opening recalls the Second Symphony in which the first movement started with material used either as a cadence or to establish the key; the opening (dramatic proposition) of the Fourth Symphony begins with the interval C - F-sharp and then the alternation F-sharp - E: a commentary on a note-relationship that conventionally occurs later in the course of a piece. The initial augmented fourth interval could be seen as suggesting the tension which exists between the (mediant) tonal poles on either side of

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1. See, however, Johnson, op.cit., p.126.
2. It is perhaps worth stating that this first movement is not a slow movement in the accepted sense. This is not merely a change in the conventional order of movements; it is a symphonic first-movement that happens to move in a very slow tempo.

A minor: its essence may be sketched thus:

Ex.238



The second feature to appear in the movement, the first main theme, A2 (Ex.239), for solo cello, is leisurely and rhapsodic; it lacks the impetus of the opening, while the marked contrast of the diatonic and flattened sevenths, G-sharp/G-natural, serves to heighten this (rhapsodic) impression. The rhapsodic quality is enhanced by mediant progressions and the melody being thickened out in thirds.

This A2 cello theme is accompanied by the continuing F-sharp - E pedal, though the undulation is broken three bars after Letter A on the significant note F-sharp which is enharmonically supported by violas and celli. When the pedal ostinato is resumed, the leisurely harmonic progression settles on the chord of C major - which could be taken as the normal mediant key. The ostinato finally stops 4 bars before Letter B, but 2 bars later 'poco Largamente' (and against a sustained C major chord) an F-sharp (and C-sharp) pedal point (re)appears. This new pedal then supports (at Letter B) three bars of dramatically forceful brass 'lion-roars' and - with a momentary and impressive increase in harmonic rhythm - the key of F-sharp major is achieved, and the main theme of the second subject is introduced. This theme B1 (Ex.240) is based on the opening augmented fourth and is marked by syncopation.

The 'inner connection'[1] between the second subject and the opening augmented fourth - and the tonal drama these musical characters are acting out - may now be seen. The second subject/augmented fourth theme is a dramatic incident, a climax, but as such it is related to, and comments upon the opening proposition and the first subject theme A2 (with its underlying and continuing tension); hence Sibelius had no option but to include it in his second subject - note too, that the allusion to the opening is exact, for this B1 theme leaps between the minor mediant and major submediant of F-sharp major.

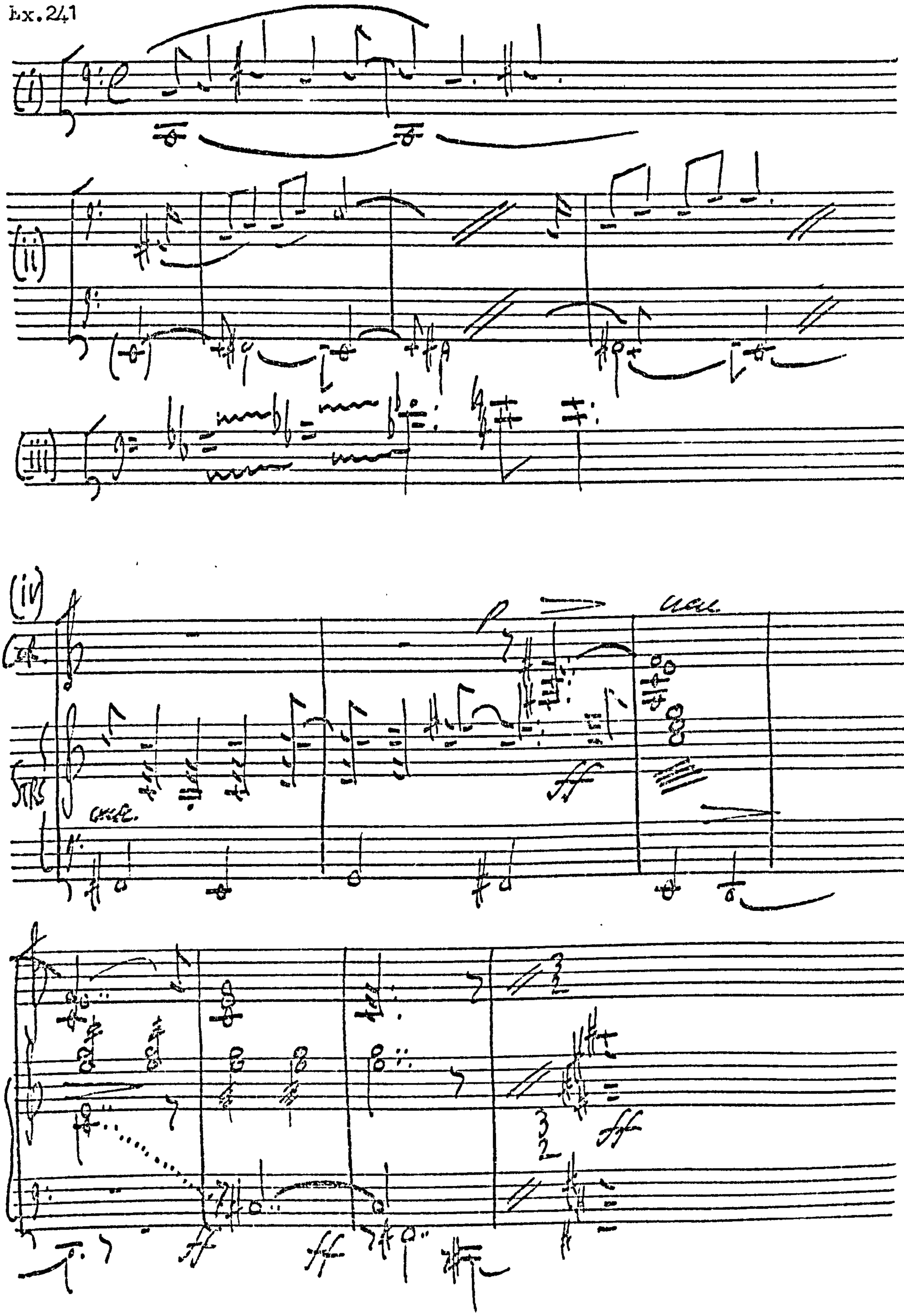
It is this interdependance and (eventual) explicit statement of symphonic significance that makes for the 'inner connection between all the motives' and illustrates the principle of organic growth; equally it cannot be denied that the augmented fourth becomes the focal point of that growth, but only as a result of its context.

Thus far the exposition may be summarized as follows: (and as sketched in Ex.241):

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1. See quotation on p.237, footnote.

Ex. 241



a dramatic detail, a proposition type of theme which suggests a commentary on a note relationship, is (dramatically) presented but left without immediate explanation. It dwindles into an alternating pedal above which a broader and more leisurely minor theme is announced. This new theme moves smoothly towards its relative major, but as it approaches the threshold of C major the pedal re-asserts its dominance and the tonality is quickly pulled round to the F-sharp major. The climax of this tonal drama is marked by a dramatic comment - the opening augmented fourth: this takes up the symphonic significance of the opening three notes. (The augmented interval has been subtly maintained - without emphasis - throughout the opening paragraph, since the thirds on the bottom line of p.2 are on G-flat and C in quick succession, and of course the C major chords (p.3) of the strings and the F-sharp of the horns outlines this characteristic.)

Following this the rest of the exposition presents several features which can be quickly and easily placed into the overall scheme. The subsequent material of the second subject group is both necessary and vital: it provides a considerable amount of corroborative evidence to mark the structural importance of the establishment of this new tonal centre as well as providing some necessary variety and 'relief' from the all-pervading augmented fourth.

This additional material - (i) a sequential repeat of the 4 chords for trumpets and trombones which effected the modulation to F-sharp major and now move to the dominant-of-the-dominant, (ii) a new phrase, B2 (ex.242) whose rhythm recalls the opening of B1 (though the interval is now a 7th) and which moves to the subdominant of F-sharp major, (iii) the gentle emphasis of the subdominant by the horn calls, and (iv) a powerful perfect cadence (in the successive 4/4 - 3/4 bars, pp.4-5) - these four features circumscribe the new key briefly and effectively.

The exposition is completed by a short codetta (beginning at Tempo 1, p.5). This shows the complete acceptance of the F-sharp tonality, and the original augmented fourth is now replaced by a woodwind phrase using only a perfect fourth (Ex.243) - a change symptomatic of the new tonality and signifying a (momentary) relaxation of the tonal tension.

The development section begins by dropping quietly into E minor in a rhythm that recalls the opening of the movement: the contra-basses A-sharp completes the allusion (as well as being a dovetail) and reveals that the tonal drama is not over. This section soon settles into a pattern (4 bars after Letter F) and is at first entirely concerned with the two phrases which contain the augmented fourth. The (contrapuntal) texture is sparse, frequently unsupported, and at first consistently syncopated. It maintains tension without allowing any particular tonal centre to emerge, and avoids any more normal sense of deliberate progression, or even an easily discernible sequential pattern in the rising and falling augmented fourth phrases.

The section is bound together and marks its progress by (i) the F-sharp - G motive (leading to the augmented fourth, first on flute and clarinet, p.7, later on cellos and basses, p.7-8), (ii) the evolution of a further woodwind phrase (itself an expansion of the augmented fourth interval), (iii) the tonal 'signposting' of the timpani, acting as a perfect pitch 'memory', and eventually (iv) the clearly recognisable sequence for woodwind (p.10) with the final move to an A major chord which is outlined (allargando) immediately before Letter I.

The end of the development section is dovetailed into the opening of the recapitulation, but although the tonic key and the opening augmented fourth are reached in the two bars before 'Adagio' (Letter I) the main weight of the recapitulation falls on the repeat of the second part of the second subject - in which the augmented fourth motive does not itself appear. This considerable abbreviation of the recapitulation (- a further similarity with the Second Symphony) is symptomatic of the tonal resolution of the movement. In view of the fact that the original tonic has been re-established and its tonal tension has been satisfactorily resolved there is now no need for the opening proposition. This is a natural abbreviation, justified and indeed created by the necessities and resolution of the musical argument.[1]

After this the emphatic subdominant harmony together with its horn calls and brass cadence are all restated, and at 'Tempo I' (2 bars before Letter K) the coda balances the codetta, and makes its relaxed reference to the first subject; but it also makes one vital change; the perfect fourth phrase for woodwind is finally repeated as a diminished fifth (Ex.24) for strings.

To call this change vital may evoke some surprise since the diminished fifth is largely considered as a musical synonym for the augmented fourth;[2] but here the use of the diminished fifth represents an admirable balance to the augmented fourth: for whereas throughout this movement the augmented fourth is aggressive, the diminished fifth - with its highest note, B-flat, falling to the tonic - has an air of resignation about it.

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1. It is difficult not to feel that this creative necessity for an abbreviated recapitulation is frequently ignored - certainly it is rarely stated; a similar point arises in the second movement of this symphony.

2. Even D.Cooke in his book 'The Language of Music' makes no distinction, yet the function of each interval can be strikingly different - as here.

Analytical comment on this first movement has (in the past) frequently stated that 'it all evolves from the opening augmented fourth',[1] but this argument is acceptable only in the sense that the augmented fourth is 'primus inter pares', and without the interplay of all the other thematic and tonal features its dominating character and position would disappear: in this respect it is similar to the finale of the Third Symphony where the summing-up theme dominates the movement by virtue of its inherited situation and evolution.

And in this movement the effect of the pedal ostinato, the orchestral effect of its actual overlapping, and a metrical 'discrepancy' (pointed out by Parmet) are all worthy of especial note.

The opening phrase quoted in Ex.237 shows the establishment of the undulating ostinato; five full bars are allowed for this to become established and the change from crotchets to dotted crotchets then minims should be noted. This change has the effect of slowing down the energetic (syncopated) rhythm of the opening phrase to that of a gentle undulation and a slower speed - above which the rhapsodic melody of A2 can be introduced.

Further the fact that this ostinato accompanies the A2 theme is important for two reasons: first, its alternations suggest a prevailing tension (from

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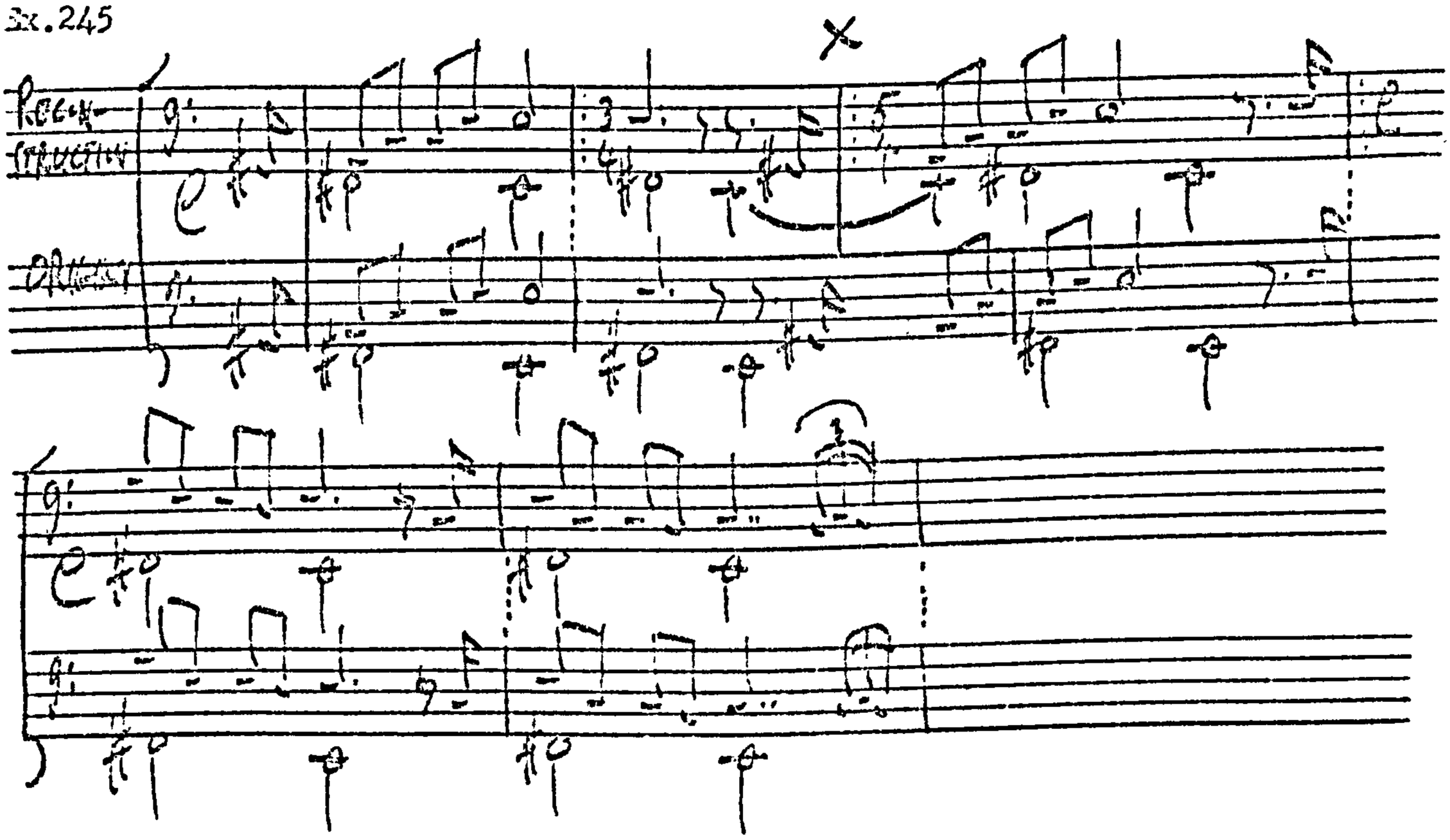
1. This argument is frequently supported by Sibelius's oft-quoted conversation with Mahler: "When our conversation touched on the nature of this symphony I said that I admired its severity and style and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motives. This was the experience I had come to in composing, Mahler's opinion was just the reverse. 'No' (he said) 'the symphony must be like the world. It must be all-embracing'" (Ekman p.191) - and this is capable of supporting several completely different interpretations.

the opening dramatic comment) which is not present in the melody itself,[1] and, secondly, that by its overlapping (and presence) it inhibits the sense of progression of the first main theme.

The orchestral effect of the overlapping of the divided basses (which is not disturbed until 3 bars after Letter A) consistently lessens the impact of the change of note on the accented beat: the aural effect is that of one note growing out of the other (rather than a clear change) and this reduces the impact of the metrical rhythm.

In this context Simon Parmet's reconstruction of the opening phrase[2] is interesting:

Ex.245



1. Again a similarity to the Second Symphony.
2. Parmet, op.cit., p.49.

The comparison of Parmet's reconstruction with the original Sibelius shows only one main difference (at 'x') and Parmet comments :

> (that Sibelius) "...can also have had other reasons, which elude our judgement, for selecting a notation differing from that which we would consider natural and correct. And it is just this that appears to be the case with the main theme of this movement. Sibelius did not write the score as it is without some valid reason."

Later (p.50-1) Parmet concludes:

> "The solution to the problem would seem to be this: the bass-ostinato motif gives us the correct metre, while the theme itself....must somehow be regarded as being detached from any mutual connection with the metrical scheme, thus appearing as a freely treated reciticative-like element."

This largely supports the suggestion made above concerning the importance and functions of F-sharp-E ostinato; further the reason for the 'discrepancy' (pointed out by Parmet) may simply be that Sibelius's intention was to avoid the first beat 'ictus' at 'x' because it would have sounded too metrically exact and decisive - and suggestive of a regular progression. The essence of the A2 theme is its rhapsodic characteristic, and in keeping with this it takes some time for the theme to settle down to its natural rhythm, and even when it does there are entries which thrust against the rhythm. Later on, the syncopated entries of violas, violin II, and violin I (p.2 bottom line) give rise to a similar effect.

These features (the undulating ostinato, the rhapsodic characteristic, the rhythmic discrepancies, the overlapping) combine to enhance the idea of rhapsody and are designed to support the idea of leisurely progress.

In describing the procedures of this movement reference has already been made to the similarities between this movement and the first movement of the Second Symphony - both works start with a tonal proposition type of theme, the tension of this proposition is not explicit in the subsequent

'first subject' melodies, the significance of the opening becomes more apparent with the presentation of the second subject, there is a later tonal resolution of the opening proposition, an abbreviated recapitulation becomes necessary - these, and other similarities demonstrate that this first movement of the Fourth Symphony has a clear basis in earlier experience: and it is a logical, though far-reaching development of them. But this movement is exceptional in Sibelius's symphonic compositions in that it reaches emotional depths uncharted by its predecessors, and it presents its musical and emotional argument in an unusually intense and concentrated manner.

Many writers have referred to the 'compression' and 'lack of unnecessary detail' of this work, viewing these characteristics as a continuation of the process of reduction observed in the Third Symphony. Taking these terms literally it is difficult to accept fully this view since there are few 'unnecessary' details in the Third Symphony, and the paradoxical characteristic of this movement is that it achieves the illusion of a vast design.

This movement fulfils the suggestion of a large design without becoming diffuse, without using a large amount of diverse material, and within a remarkably short span of time. This illusion is largely created by the interplay of two complex features: first (1) the slow pulse, speed, and the leisurely and rhapsodic drift of the opening paragraph, apparently to C major, on the one hand (and necessarily including such 'details' as the initial abandonment of the opening augmented fourth proposition, the tendency to avoid a regularly recurring metrical pattern in the individual phrases hence both the 'discrepancy' pointed out by Parmet and the syncopation of the earlier part of the development section, as well as the inhibition of the harmonic rhythm itself by the pedal ostinato) and, on the other hand (2) the briskness of the tonal action is establishing F-sharp major so quickly

and forcefully after having approached it from the remoteness of C-major, as well as directly taking up the symphonic significance of the opening three notes (and later extending to include such features as the avoidance of a conventional progression in the development so that the 'pace' of the section cannot easily be assessed, as well as enabling the recapitulation to emerge - again with little forewarning - out of the tonal 'chaos' of the development, and not forgetting the impact of the abbreviated recapitulation itself.)

The interplay of these complex (though musically lucid) features results in the establishment of a complex musical 'pace' whose essence is the interaction of these apparent opposites, and it is this that enables the movement to suggest and achieve the convincing illusion of a vast design without the necessity for real, commensurate dimensions. The 'compression' of this movement necessarily arises from this fact, though in contrast it possesses a remarkable illusion of space and freedom.

In the first movement the augmented fourth, C - F-sharp, suggested the two (conflicting) tonal alternatives reaching out from the central A minor tonality; in the second movement in F-major, Allegro molto vivace, the tritone is more conventionally situated since its hinges on the augmented fourth degree (B-natural) of the key and the resultant F - B- natural interval. Although critical discussion of this movement has largely been concerned with (i) the continuing influence of the augmented fourth, and (ii) the 'form' of the movement (with its suggestion of a 'return' of the scherzo), this change in the position of the tritone has not been mentioned.

This movement falls into two main parts, the first a scherzo (in 3/4) in ternary form, and a second which has been variously described as 'a kind of Trio' and a coda.

The scherzo begins with a simple F - A quaver ostinato for div.violas

above which oboe solo announces the main theme, A1, (Ex.246). The first note of this oboe theme is exactly that on which the first movement finished: a quietly effective way of linking the movements and suggesting that there is to be a further consideration of some part of the central creative idea of the first movement. (The device is used again between the third and fourth movements). This suggestion of the continuation of some part of (or reverberation from) the creative idea of the previous movement is also to be observed in the timpani part of this scherzo since it is restricted to the notes F-sharp - E and thus maintains the note relationship established in the first movement - and this tuning is not changed until the trio/coda.

The first main oboe theme (A1) of this scherzo avoids B-flat for some considerable time, but the eventual correction of its B-natural (by B-flat, one bar before Letter A) robs this augmented interval of some of the dramatic power it possessed in the first movement. Similarly the B-natural of the subsidiary phrase for strings, A2 (Ex.247) is later 'corrected' (counter-balanced) by E-flat, after which the development of a short sequence of diminished 5ths (for oboe and violins in dialogue) continues this reduction of dramatic impact. Thus although the very 'lightness' of this scherzo has a 'sinister' quality, the augmented 4th is so far contained within the key of F major and not allowed to disrupt the movement. The first section of this scherzo is completed by a short phrase for violins, A3 (Ex.248), which concludes with a sort of 'Neapolitan' cadence, i.e. $\flat$II b - I.

At Letter B the second section - which acts in the manner of a development - begins with a new phrase for strings, B1 (Ex.249) in unison/octaves[1] in 2/4 (- note that this change of time signature applies only to violins, violas, and cellos). This gradually begins to move away from the tonic key - supported by the F-sharp - L progression in timpani - and towards the evolution of another idea (B2). But this too quickly becomes sequential and (just before Letter C) once again in danger of losing its impetus. The sequence is broken by the abrupt restoration of 3/4 while the following crescendo figure for strings is interrupted by an unexpected chord for brass. This chord is sustained for 6 bars and its (complete) lack of rhythmic articulation is adequately compensated by the dynamic marking of fp<al.....f. It is answered by a G minor chord for woodwind (held for 4 bars and marked 'p') after which the two chords are sequentially repeated a tone higher, though both are now sustained for 8 bars. (This short passage is also accompanied by F-sharp - E on timpani).

As the woodwind maintain their A minor chord, a B-flat pedal is established by contra basses, and over this (at Letter D) the original diminished 5th sequence is presented in inversion; during its presentation the B-flat pedal is taken over by horns, and shortly afterwards a (simultaneous) E-natural pedal appears in timpani.

In turn this diminished 5th sequence leads directly to a repeat of the last sentence (A3) of the opening section, though this time the cadence is completed by the chord of D-flat. This introduces a new theme for flutes, C1, which (is directed 'tranquillo' and) moves to E-flat in which key the strings reply with A2 - 'a tempo'. The flute theme is repeated a tone lower and finishes its phrase on D-flat: and this is then

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1. I find that the essence of this passage is counterpoint; certainly the tensile thinness of the passage recalls those contrapuntal passages in other works where there is the beginning of a movement away from the tonic key.

quickly taken to effect a modulation to G-flat from where (at Letter G) the 'Neapolitan' cadence effects the quiet return to F major and the complete and literal restatement of the first section of the scherzo.

At Letter I a short codetta - marked by a chromatically rising trill for violins and violas that suggests the imminent emergence of a more obviously sinister development - provides a convenient link to the second part of the movement, which begins at Letter K and is directed "doppio più lento". Opinion is divided as to whether this second part is a trio or a coda, though since it appears (in retrospect) to illuminate and fulfil the inherent possibilities of the first section perhaps the term 'coda' is the more appropriate.

This coda falls into two almost equal sections, of which the second is a slightly extended (and orchestrally strengthened) repeat of the first. The construction of this first section is simple: it presents two (apparently) new melodic ideas, and is accompanied by (i) the ceaseless F-E violin trill, (ii) a very considerable timpani roll on B-natural, and (iii) a rising figure which passes through lower strings (in quaver triplets and moving in a consistent cross-rhythm).

The first of the new melodic ideas (announced by oboe and clarinet) has two complementary sentences, D.1a, D.1b, (Exs.250, 251) with the first completing its phrase with the interval F - B natural, and the second B-natural - F: the second sentence is somewhat aided in this tonal argument by the subsequent 'rfz' entries for bass and cello, which by their thematic alteration seem to reinforce the tenacious stability of the F (minor) tonality. The second new melodic idea,[1] D2 (Ex.252) is first presented by violas (p.23, bottom line, bar 6) and some slight development of this idea takes place - marked (particularly in the 4 bars before Letter L)

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1. These new themes, D1 and D2, are rhythmically altered versions of B1 and B2 from the scherzo.

by some striking harmonic clashes. The 7 bars following Letter L brings the developing tension of this coda to its first climax with the grinding clash of D-flat against C-natural, but the tension is momentarily relaxed as the D-flat resolves to C and the movement is steadied on the dominant of F major: it is significant that the timpani support this C-natural.

However the influence of the B-natural reappears almost immediately (bottom line p.24) and leads to the essentially literal repeat of the preceding part of the coda which now lasts until the last bar on p.26. Here the development of the D2 idea is continued and enlarged, and the climax of the movement is reached (p.27, bar 4) with the augmented fourth for woodwind - now, 'rffz' - reinforced by horns, and accompanied by the continuing string trill (F - E) over the B-natural in timpani, trumpets and trombones. This provokes a very 'flat' version of D1 which hints - no more than that - in its closing bars at the opening of the scherzo.

These closing bars have excited considerable comment; they have been seen (by some) as the most significant and interesting of the movement, and assessed as symbolising a repeat of the scherzo section.

This idea cannot be accepted: the basis of this second movement is the continuing influence of the augmented fourth within the key of F major. Robert Simpson is correct in asserting that the augmented fourth "is prevented from affecting the large-scale tonality of the symphony until the last movement where the tension at last causes a fearsome upheaval"; nevertheless in this movement, while no other key centre is significantly established, the argument rests on the dramatic disruption which the B-natural causes (and is worked out) within the key of F-major.

This disruptive element is contained in the scherzo (though, as in the first paragraph of the first movement, it is clearly maintained throughout the section), but it then breaks free and creates a marked disturbance in the coda where it becomes the dominating feature which can no longer be restrained and rises to a considerable climax - presented as the naked interval F - B-natural.

The argument reaches its climax and is resolved within the last 15 bars of the movement, and timpani assert the final tonal (and thematic) conclusion. The closing string version of D1 suggests the possibility of a return to the scherzo, but this is not accepted since the argument of the movement has been completed and brought to a conclusion: to return to the opening would invite bathos and begin again a tonal evolution that has already been worked out. Characteristically it is the timpani that banish the very possibility of such a return.

The third movement in C-sharp minor, 'Il tempo largo'[1] is one of the most romantic (and personal) in all Sibelius, and it has been elegantly and accurately described by Simpson[2] as "an unclassifiable growth where a theme forms itself by quanta."

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1. Cherniavsky's article suggests a MM marking of ♪ = 80-92.

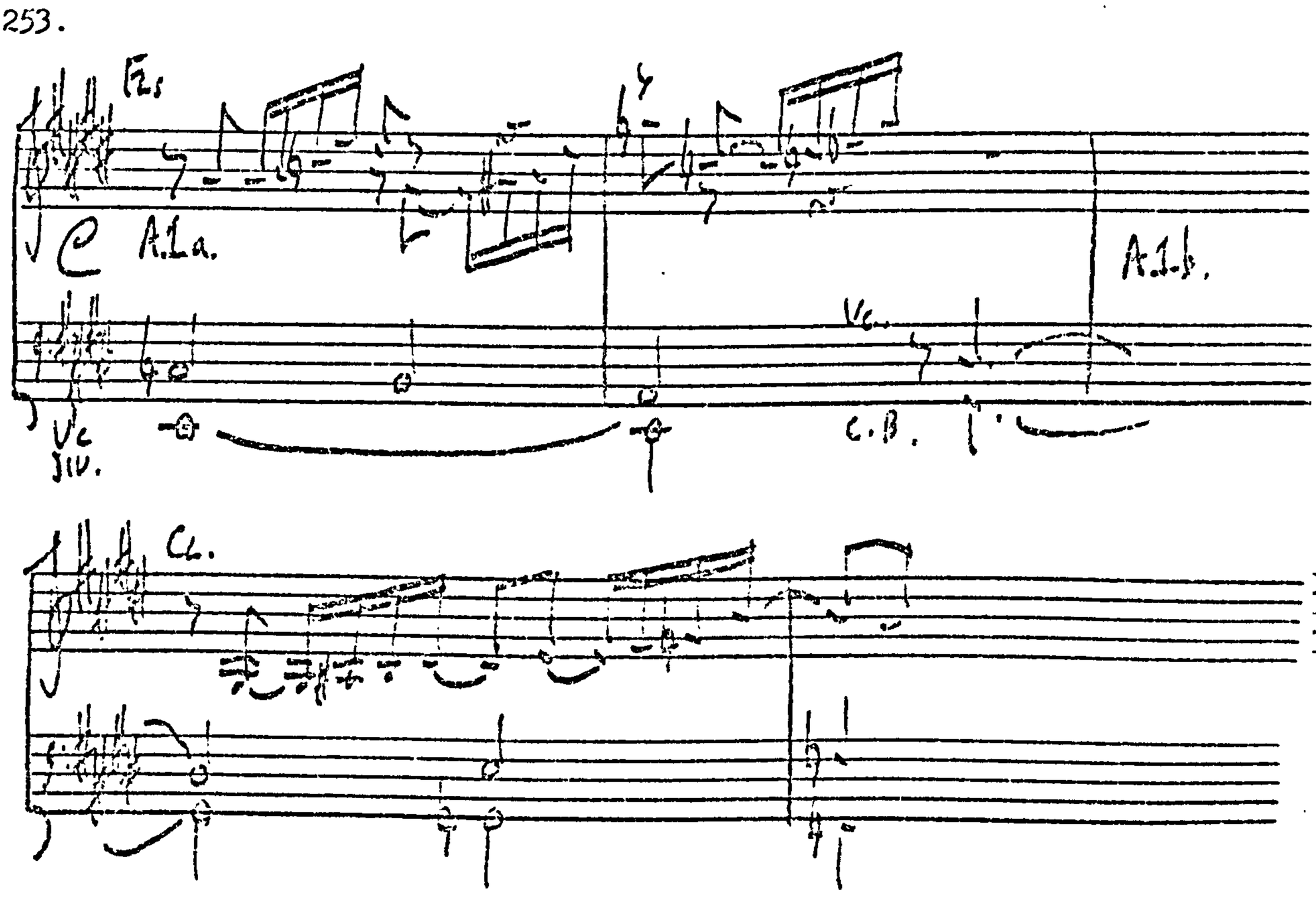
2. Simpson, op.cit., p.20.

The movement has a rhapsodic quality that is more than superficial— yet it is blended with a consistently purposeful evolution, and even if the growth is 'unclassifiable' the intention of the movement is clearly to reveal only gradually both (the growth of) the main theme and the establishment of its C-sharp minor tonality.[1] This intention is largely realised through the interplay of two states of the same basic thematic idea.

The course of the movement can conveniently be outlined as follows :

1. the movement begins with a gentle rhapsodic unfolding and the presentation of the basis of some thematic ideas; the first of these, A1a (for flutes), rhapsodic and sequential in character, is steadied by the appearance of a dominant (minor) chord, and is answered by a phrase for clarinets, A1b, and this clarinet phrase is later shown to be the basis of the main theme of the movement:

Ex.253.

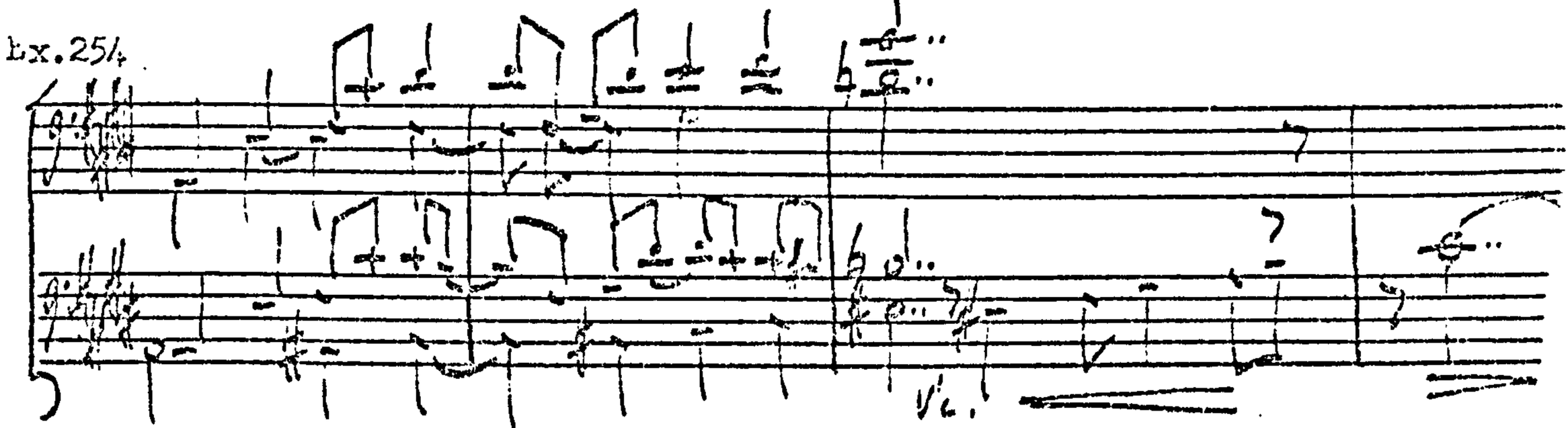


1. And this is a completely different process from that observed in the finale of the Third Symphony.

the sequential enlargement and development of this phrase is broken by the return of A1a and the passage comes to rest on a seventh chord on A-sharp;

2. next A2 - and the beginning of the main theme - is introduced by 4 horn soli: it is on the threshold of C-sharp minor and passes through its tonic chord before finishing its phrase on a diminished 7th [1]:

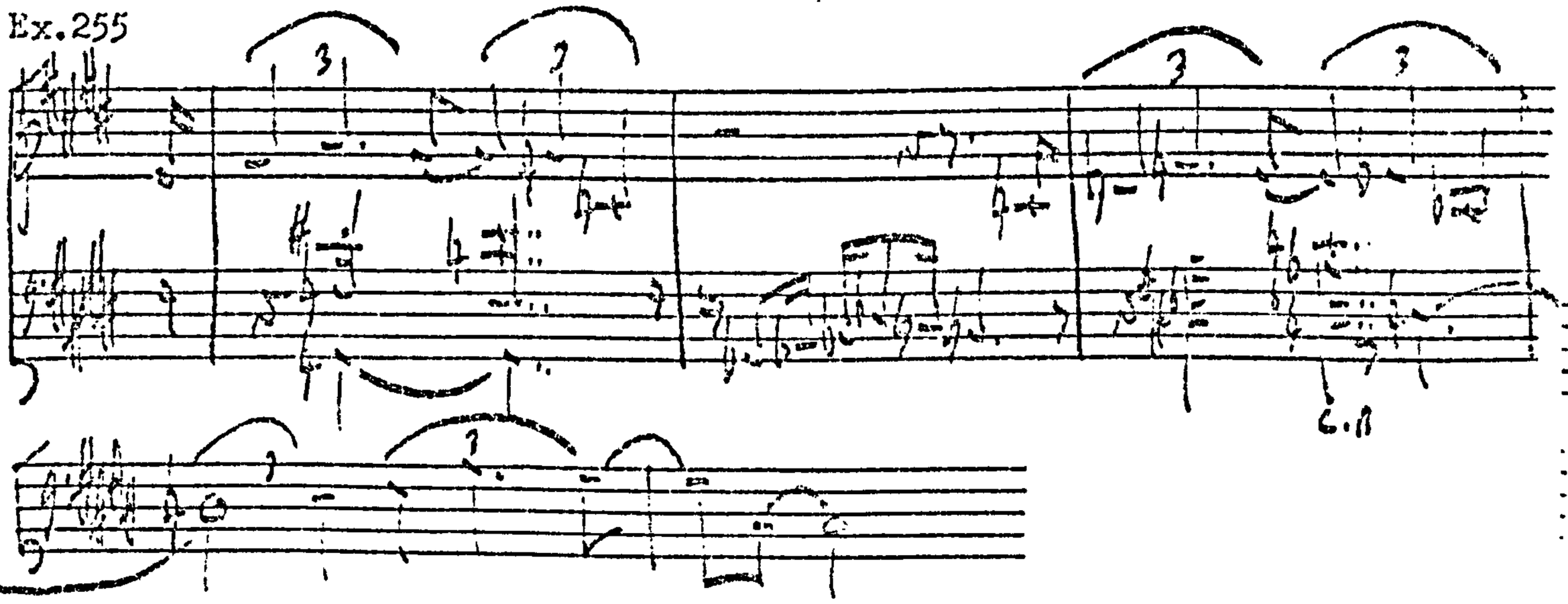
Ex.254



- but the tonic key is not immediately taken up, and the purpose of the (A3) cello phrase which accompanies the diminished 7th is not immediately clear; but it leads to the development of

3. a sequential passage, based on A1 a (and passing, en route, through a C major 'cadence'); this eventually completes its phrase on the chord of A-flat major:

Ex.255

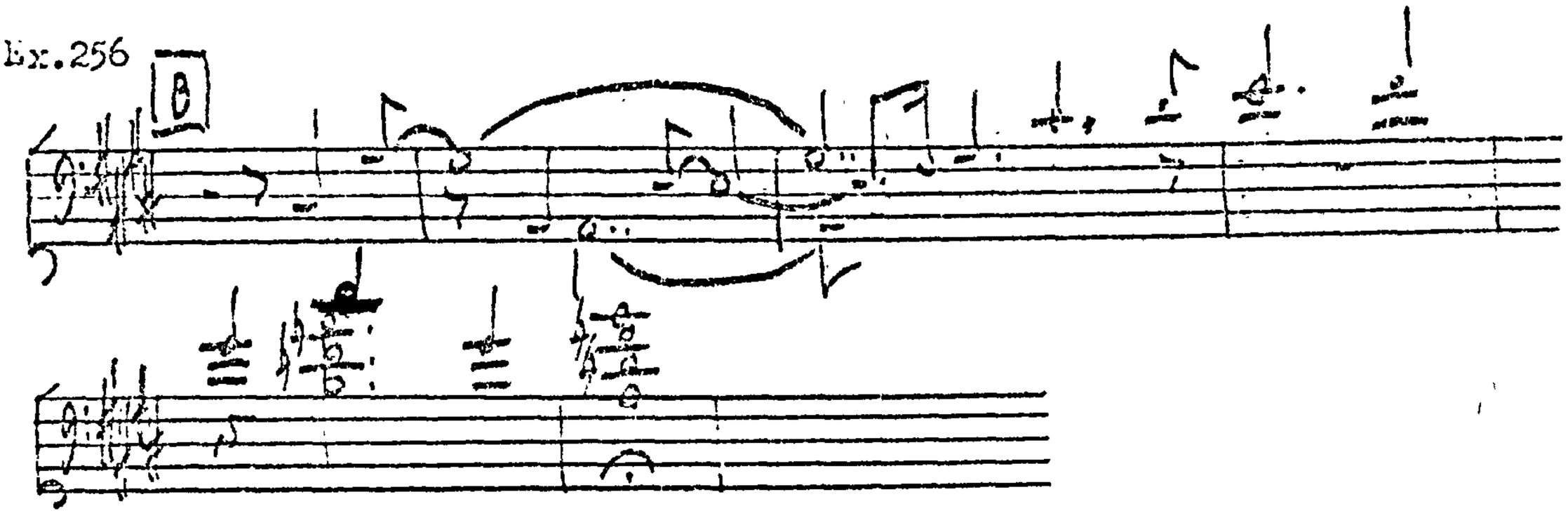


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1. Note: (i) the (semitonal) rising bass line,
(ii) the significant, and characteristic, quaver rest immediately before the final C-sharp in the cello phrase.

4. this is taken enharmonically (by the contra-basses) as the dominant of C-sharp minor, and its dominant function is confirmed by the presentation of a slightly extended version of A2, now clearly in the tonic key and, for the first time, beginning on the tonic note itself:

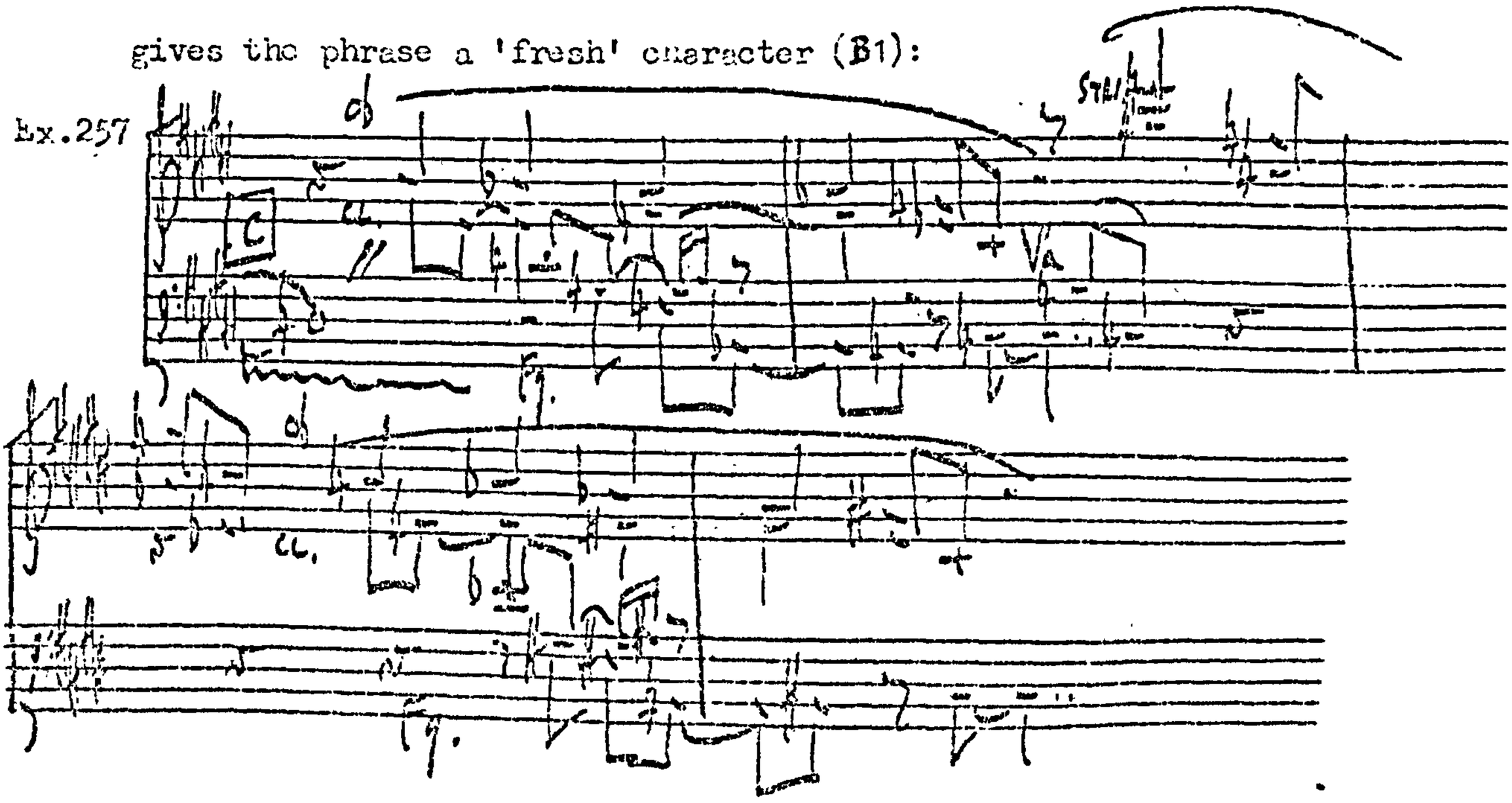
Ex.256



This theme comes to rest on a (6/4) D minor chord, and this provides the opportunity for

5. a return of the opening flute/clarinet rhapsody (at times in strict canon) over a sustained chord for strings; this chord is not at once resolved, and at Letter C it is gently abandoned;
6. here the main theme is presented sequentially, in both inversion and diminution, though the semitonal movement of the melody line itself gives the phrase a 'fresh' character (B1):

Ex.257

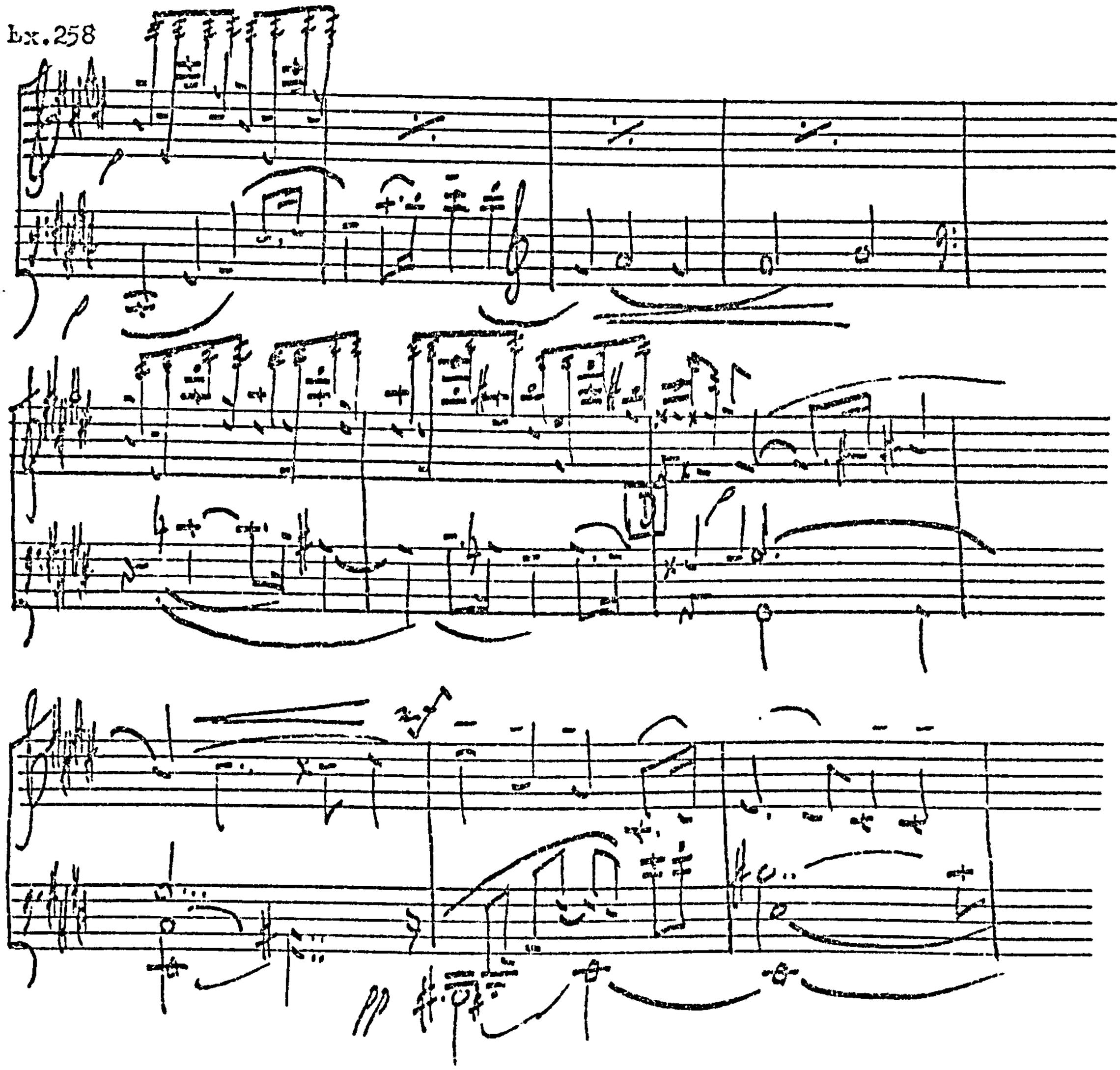


this passage of sequential 'development' quickly works towards the tonic key, where (7 bars before Letter D)

7. an extended version of A2 now moves to a normal half-close and is completed by a second sentence which is itself shown to be an enlargement of the earlier A3 phrase (with the melody in violas); and these sentences are now supported by the swing of harmony

tonic → dominant → tonic:

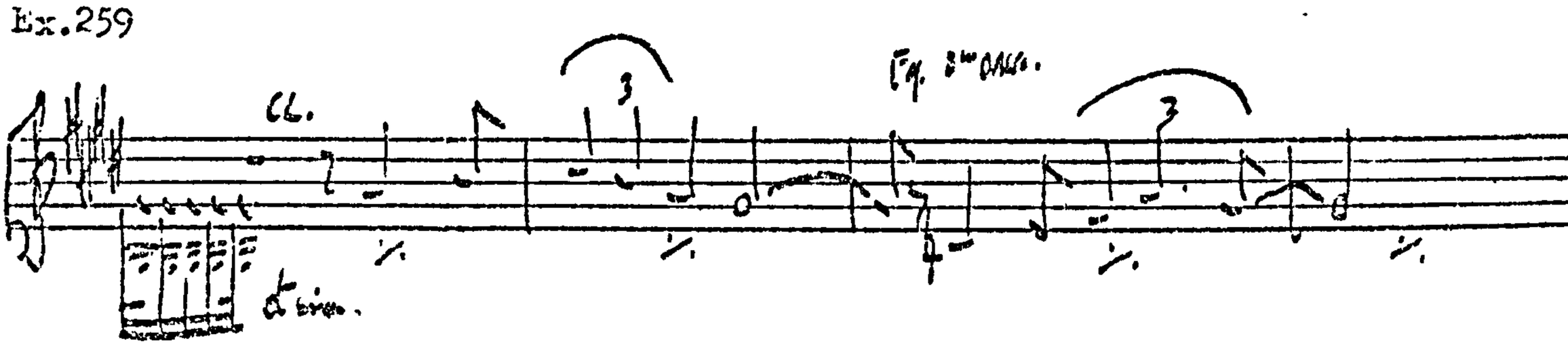
Ex.258



Following this an abridged statement of the complete theme leads to

8. the establishment of a (long) sustained dominant pedal - later supported by the entry of the timpani - over which the simple woodwind phrases hover round the dominant:

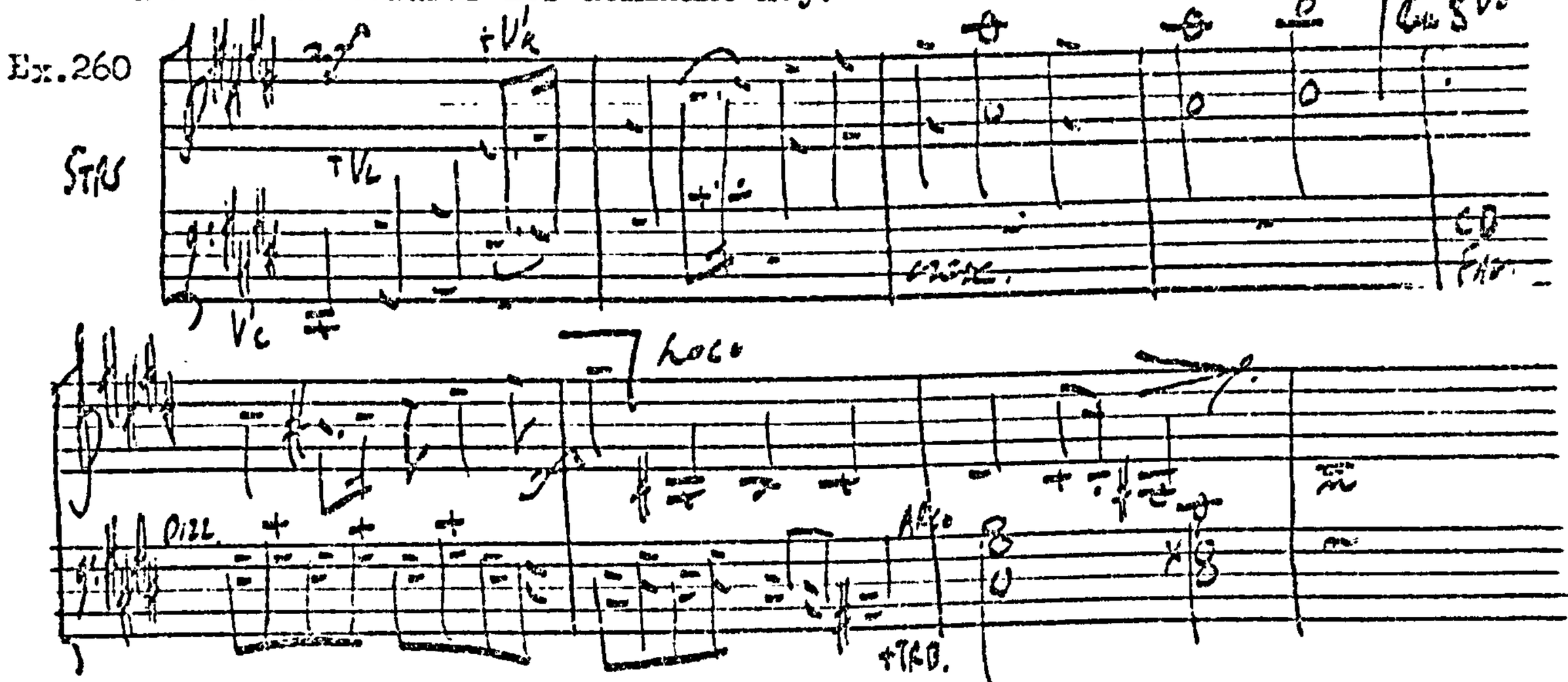
Ex.259



subsequently,

9. the restatement of A2 begins in C-sharp minor, but now completes a movement towards its dominant key:

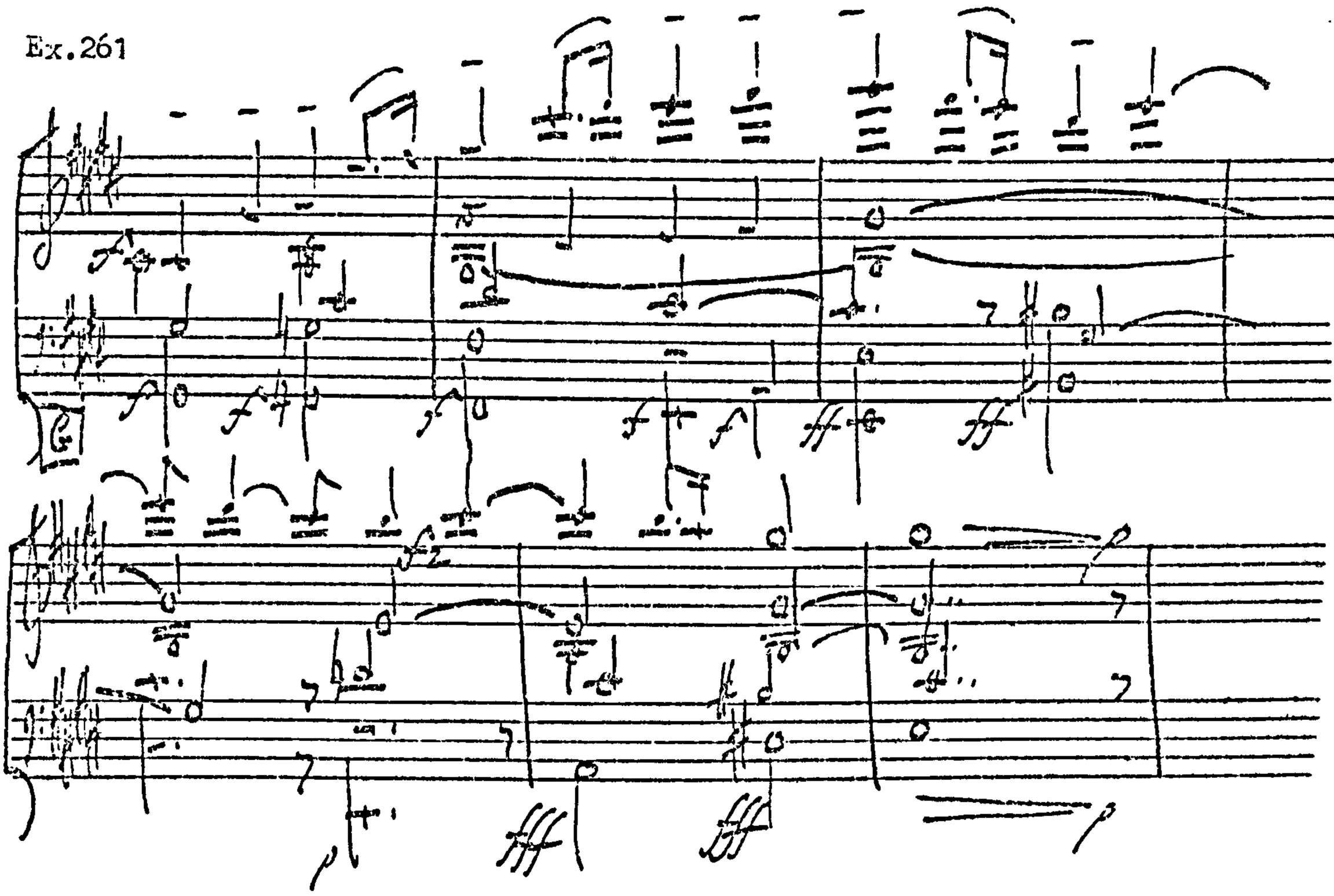
Ex.260



10. here, after a brief reference to A1a, the first phrase of A2 is presented in G-sharp minor; but this key is soon abandoned and (after hints of B minor and D minor) leads directly to the climax of the movement;

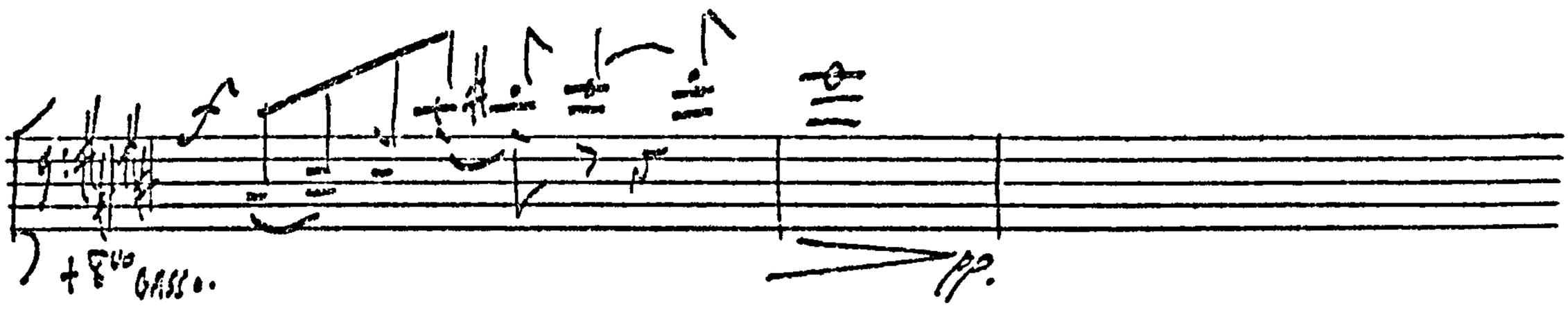
11. this climax (beginning at Letter G) is passionate and powerful though brief :

Ex.261



it is supported by a bass line (moving in contrary motion) which refers to some elements of the main theme (bars 1 - 2) and the summit of this climax is marked by the 'ff' and 'fff' entries of the contra-basses supported by the brass section. The 'fff' entry is the first direct reference to the augmented fourth within this movement: here it balances the previous 'ff' entry (which seems itself to be an augmented version of the rising fifth of the main theme) and before the short coda can complete this movement, the 'fff' entry evokes the following phrase from bassoons and clarinets:

Ex.262



This seems, momentarily, to take up the note-relationship (A - D-sharp) suggested by the contra-basses, but the matter is not pursued here,[1] and the coda, echoing some characteristic features of the previcus extended dominant pedal (though of course it is now changed to the tonic) quietly closes the movement on C-sharp in octaves.

The quality and achievement of this movement is both personal and profound, and it largely rests on two features. The first is the flute/clarinet opening which acts (in various forms, throughout the movement) as a subdued generating force - a rhapsodic background from which new ideas can emerge and evolve.

Several features of this flute/clarinet rhapsodic opening are worth noting. There is, to begin with, a clear though subtle distinction between the two states of the basic theme as presented in the initial A1a and A1b phrases; for although the basic and constituent phrase of both the flute and clarinet versions outlines the interval of a fifth, their differences in shape and character enables Sibelius to present either (i) the more direct sequence of the clarinet (which is later transformed into the beginning of a thematic statement, A2) or (ii) to enhance (through the flute entries) the idea of a rhapsodic and leisurely unfolding of (latent) thematic and tonal possibilities.

(Moreover the rhapsodic quality of the opening passage as a whole is enhanced by the choice of instrumental colour, which largely remains constant throughout the movement, the avoidance of a clear-cut key centre, the wide separation of the melody and bass lines, and the lack of harmonic support.)

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1. The significance of th. 'fff' entry and the phrase for bassoons and clarinets is seen at the beginning of the Finale.

The rhapsodic opening constantly suggests and points towards a wider range of thematic and tonal ideas, and the pattern of the movement is established shortly after Letter A. For, at that point, the A2 statement for horns presents a more definite and articulate version of the clarinet A1 b phrase; the pattern arises from the fact that each subsequent rhapsodic passage also results in either (i) a further release of a 'discrete amount ' (quanta) of the main theme, or (ii) a clearer definition (or statement) of the main C-sharp minor tonality, or (iii) the continuation of both that theme and tonality - and thus marks the progress of the movement. In this respect even the change of orchestral colour from the (rhapsodic) widely spaced lines of the opening 8 bars to the comparatively close-spacing of the new (horn) colour at Letter A contributes directly to the more purposeful quality of the A2 phrase itself.

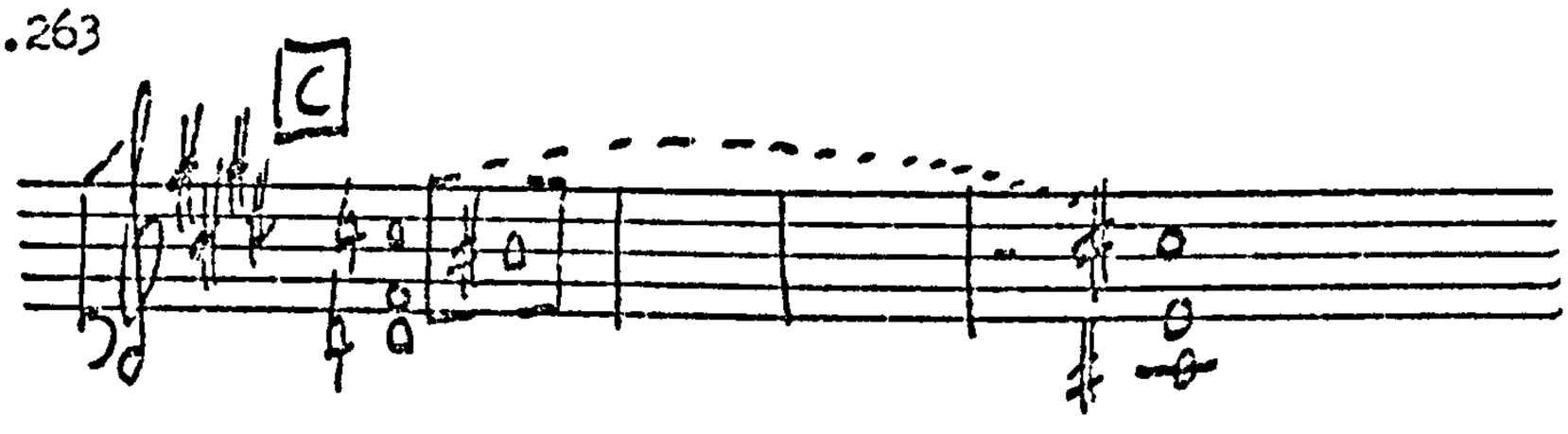
But the real significance of the leisurely rhapsodic flow is seen only when it is considered in conjunction with the pace of this movement. For, while the actual achievement of C-sharp minor and the unfolding of the main theme needs the whole of the movement, there is both a considerable amount of incident, and a remarkable briskness of action. Even allowing for the broad tempo, the main tonal and thematic evolutions of this movement - gradually expanding from the suggestion of dominant and tonic chords (in steps 1 and 2) to a confirmed dominant function (3, 4) and thence to the passage of 'development' (5, 6), leading to a complete musical sentence supported by a tonic - dominant - tonic swing of harmony (7), and followed in turn by the establishment of a dominant pedal (8), then the movement towards the dominant key and a statement of the main theme therein (9, 10), and from there to the brief, passionate, climax - all these are in fact presented with considerable briskness: one step follows another with little interruption or little delay.

But even so, in between each of these steps Sibelius takes the opportunity to return to the opening rhapsody, and thereby to suggest further possibilities which enlarge (and develop) the actual tonal and thematic evolution - as the following examples will show.

At Letter A the movement is shown to be on the threshold of C-sharp minor, but this key is achieved only after the subsequent passage has suggested a wider tonal possibility (the 'cadence' in C major) and the evolution of a 'new' thematic figure (A3); the ease and swiftness with which this is then turned towards the tonic key enables it to accrue all the impetus and enlarged tonal sense arising from the passage of tonal exploration which intervenes between the tonic chord (just after Letter A) and the achievement of the tonic key (at Letter B).

A similar tonal enlargement occurs in the passage around Letter C where the opening woodwind rhapsody and sustained string chord are suddenly abandoned; but when the key of C-sharp minor and the main theme reappear, it becomes clear that these 4 bars were (as it were) in parenthesis, and the harmonic progression was in fact:

Ex.263



This at once enlarges the tonal character of C-sharp minor, while it is only in the third bar after Letter D that the thematic significance of this 'new' B1 theme is revealed.

Finally, just after Letter F, the abandonment of the thematic statement in the dominant key of G-sharp minor is directly brought about by the reference to the A1a material: this enables the point of this new key to be made (and enhanced) without the actual necessity for a complete statement within the key itself - thus the climax of the movement can follow with increased vigour and effect.

The interplay of the suggestive power of rhapsody with the consistently progressive pace enables Sibelius to achieve the effect of a considerable tonal evolution, and the impact of a widely varied thematic development without having actually to fulfil their implications - and to do so within a remarkably small time-scale. Moreover a considerable part of the achievement of this movement resides in the fact that this concentrated design is not contained and limited,but expansive and free.

In some respects the concentration of this movement on the steady release of its main theme and the establishment of its tonic key, recalls the 'obsessiveness' of the middle movement of the Third Symphony; and, as will be suggested later, it seems to point towards the middle movement of the Fifth Symphony.

One of the more valuable orchestral works written between the composition of the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies was 'The Bard' Op.64, and the study of this third movement of the Fourth Symphony suggests that part of its most significant feature may have descended from this movement.

In one sense the third movement is the emotional 'kernel' of the entire symphony even though direct references to the augmented fourth are few: and this profound and intense movement proves to be an admirable foil to the exposed and fearsome tonal conflict unleashed in the finale.

The sonata-form outlines of the finale of this Fourth Symphony are clear, yet the essence of the movement (- and the climax of the symphony -) is not so much to be found in thematic identities as in the tension that arises from the direct juxtaposition of the tonalities they characterise - and this tension is not easily demonstrable by quotation.

The exposition lasts for some 60 bars (i.e.until the penultimate bar p.41) and the opening tonic paragraph introduces two main themes and a number of short accessory motives. The first of the main themes, A1, (Lx.264) begins with a direct quotation from the previous moment:[1] it is marked by the augmented fourth (D-sharp) and (after Letter A) this is presented in direct (and simultaneous) conflict with the D-natural of the violas. Three (tonic) motives of some importance arise from this first sentence: (i) a strong rhythmic motive for violas (supported by timpani) making a particularly emphatic reference to the augmented fourth (A1), (ii) a 4-note figure for 'Glocken',[2] and (iii) a subsidiary phrase for violins which is marked by the flat 7th (G-natural) and a falling-fifth phrase ending. (Lx.265a,b,c,).

The presentation of these motives is followed by the appearance of A2 (Lx.266 ; p.39 top line, last bar), a complementary phrase of A1; it is situated on the dominant chord and even includes a reference to the augmented fourth of the dominant, i.e. A-sharp to L major. But, in addition to its dominant situation, one of its most important and characteristic features is its sustained penultimate note - D-natural (i.e.the diatonic fourth of A major).

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1. It is interesting to recall that the finale of the Third Symphony makes a quotation from the preceeding movement; here apart from providing a convenient starting point (since this theme does not itself return later in the movement) this fact does help to account for the darker quality of this A major - as Simpson has pointed out.

2. There is a dispute as to whether this implies 'glockenspiel' or simply 'bells'; Johnson states (p.128 footnote)"Finnish conductors, with Sibelius as their authority, insist that the part....should be rendered on the glockenspiel."

Robert Layton informs me that, in a letter to Sir Thomas Beecham, Sibelius wrote of a small set of tubular bells.

The second main theme, A3, (Ex.267) is first announced by solo cello over a dominant minor chord: it is quickly taken up by the rest of the strings and (at Letter B) leads directly to a return of the three tonic motives, and an emphatic cadence that completes this opening paragraph.

This broad tonic paragraph could be briefly outlined as follows : the movement begins with a tonic sentence in A-major that is marked by the augmented fourth degree, and gives rise to a number of motives. It is balanced by a complementary sentence that centres round the dominant, and includes the (sustained) diatonic fourth.

In turn this leads to a further sentence (for solo cello) which is shortly followed by a return of the most characteristic and forceful tonic motives. At its climax (Letter B) this first paragraph is marked by the direct clash of the adjacent D-sharp and D-natural, while the final emphatic cadence is itself characterised by a suspension that again sustains D-natural - and thus makes a particular point of the diatonic balance and present containment of the disruptive augmented fourth.

Following this first tonic paragraph, a tonic-dominant (quaver) ostinato is established in strings, and over this (at Letter C) the woodwind suggest a new idea, B1[1] (Ex.268) that leans towards the key of E-flat - thus taking up the tonal impliciations of the augmented fourth D-sharp - though the string accompaniment remains firmly fixed in A major.

This contiguity of E-flat and A major begins to generate a tonal tension, but this is not immediately developed since the tension is smoothed out (momentarily at least) by the fact that the final note of this theme (A-flat) is accepted enharmonically by the dominant chord (of A-major) that

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1. Could anything be more 'Sibelian' than this theme? its rising-third, sustained notes, and rhythmic entry off the beat, are at the essence of Sibelius's (mature) melodic thinking.

accompanies it (p.43, 11 bars after Letter C). And following this a number of previously established features return to continue the smoothing-out process, including the dominant-based A2 (on clarinets, and this time its final D-natural is thrown into considerable relief by the semi-quaver 'flourish' that precedes it) and the Glocken motive.

The final steadying (or so it seems) of A-major occurs, on p.44, with the move to the tonic chord, the inverted tonic pedals (later changed to dominant) for woodwind and horns, and, at Letter D, the return of the three tonic motives in woodwind and strings.

But the previous (E-flat) disruption now begins to take significant effect, for the descending bass line passes through the tonic chord of A major while even the (previously) steadying force of the A2 theme is quickly undermined and the enharmonic translation of D-sharp to E-flat (2 bars before Letter E) begins to pull the tonality towards E-flat - and it is no longer held in check by a tonally stable accompaniment.

This movement away from A major towards E-flat generates a growing tension (from Letter E onwards, where it is momentarily marked by the bare clash of A-flat/A-natural) and in the passage between Letters E - F the increasing tonal conflict is presented as a gradually accelerating swing between the (implied) chords of A and E-flat. These chords are characterised by the 4-note (Glocken) figure in strings, the contradictory dialogue for flute and clarinet whose respective phrases finish on the notes E and B-flat, and are accompanied by the descending bass line; but although horns and timpani clearly point the tonal direction, this passage of tonal conflict eventually breaks out in an exposed form (at Letter F) with the direct juxtapositioning of the chords of E-flat and A-major.

However, although there is a clear intention to move to E-flat, this is not immediately accomplished and the subsequent bars introduce a new chorale-like theme in woodwind, B2, (Ex.269). This is not tonally established

until (shortly after Letter G) the horn version of this theme makes a clear modulation to E-flat: the emphatic quality of the full close here is both deliberate and vitally necessary. This is followed by a syncopated passage for strings, B3, (Ex.270) which quickly reintroduces (a syncopated version of) the B2 theme, and gives rise to a second phrase, B4, (Ex.271) that should be noted; at first this B2 (and B4) theme is supported by the chord of B major (with E-sharp in the bass). This ambivalent chord (which could be taken in either E-flat or A major) continues and maintains the tonal tension (as well as frequently outlining the interval of an augmented fourth between its outer parts) and reveals that the tonal drama is far from resolved: the sequential continuation of this theme then moves quickly away from E-flat and dovetails smoothly into the development section (which begins in the second bar after Letter H, p.50).

The development may be taken as lasting until the change of key signature on p.56, and it mostly consists of a string ostinato in C major against which the trumpets present a sustained version of the augmented fourth motive (A.1x) - accompanied by a similarly enlarged version of the Glocken figure.

After this the remainder of the development section is concerned with the (quiet) regeneration and re-intensification of the tonal conflict. This is accomplished in three stages and begins at Letter I where the C major tonality is changed to C minor: first there is (i) a simple juxtaposition of the chords of E-flat and A (with the latter directed 'rfz' - a violent reaction), then (ii) the introduction of a woodwind phrase for oboes (p.55 top line, last 2 bars et seq) derived from the syncopated B3 theme, and interrupted by the repeat of the tonal confrontation - though the E-flat chord is now motivically animated, and (iii) at Letter K this conflict is repeated between the 'keys' of C and F-sharp. After this the end of the development section merges easily into the beginning of the recapitulation (at the change of key signature) with a clear modulation to B major (p.56, bottom line).

Here the chorale-like B2 theme, with its B4 second phrase, is restated over a B major chord (and, after the contra-bass entry, this is again in first inversion) and its sequential repetition and extension gradually moves round to A major - which is at first emphasized by the resolution of the sustained D-sharp (p.58) and then tonally confirmed by the reappearance of the remaining tonic motives.

After this there is a straightforward repeat of A2 (maintaining its semiquaver flourish) and A3 (now played by all strings except contra-basses). But, although this looks as if it is to be a 'normal' (conventional) restatement, the A3 theme now effects an immediate and dramatic modulation to E-flat - and it is this new key that is now vigorously confirmed (on p.60) by the three main motives.

Here, in the established key of E-flat, the tonic-dominant quaver ostinato returns, and above this (shortly after Letter M) the B1 theme reappears in A major: a simple reversal of the process first observed at Letter C. (Note that this B1 theme is very slightly decorated, and suggests a relationship with the glocken motive). The result of this tonal opposition now leads to the climax of the movement, for in the following passage (until Letter S) the tonal conflict can no longer be restrained: it rises through a fiercely worked progression to culminate in a passionate resolution.

In this climactic passage (p.62-6) the augmented-fourth motive is first presented on trumpets, echoed (in diminution) on horns, and moving in mediant progressions(from A major, to C major, to E-flat in the bar before Letter P). After this the intensity of the conflict is emphasized and brought to its climax by :-

(i) the gradually slowing down of the string ostinato, first to a slow alternation and ultimately to a stop and the cessation of the string entry;

(ii) and the fact that after the mediant progression to E-flat (last bar p.63) there is an almost continual modulation that is itself purposefully pointed by

(a) the successive presentation of the chords of E-flat and A, (last two bars p.63, first two bars p.64),

(b) the successive octave leaps on C and F-sharp for trombone 1 and horn 4 (p.64 bottom line bars 1 - 2),

(c) the chords of C-sharp minor and G major in quick succession (p.64 bottom line, bars 4 - 6), and

(d) the presentation of the augmented fourth motive in B major, E-flat (D-sharp), F-sharp, and A in successive entries (p.65, bottom line, bars 2, - p.66),

(iii) the lack of sustained harmonic support (in the passage after Letter P) following the cessation of the string figure: this emphasizes the contrapuntal effect, and

(iv) the reintroduction of a syncopated string figure (9 bars before Letter R).

The crux of the argument is reached (last bar p.65) with 'fff' A major chord that accompanies the augmented fourth motive on trumpets (supported by timpani on A - E): note however that in the four bars before Letter S the tonic note itself is present only in the glocken figure, while characteristically this climax is marked by the steadying of the syncopated string figure to an alternation between the notes F-sharp - E!

The coda follows without a break - indeed its first chord (including a C-natural) anticipates the ending of the A-major chord - and it is largely composed of the interplay of the syncopated string figure and the

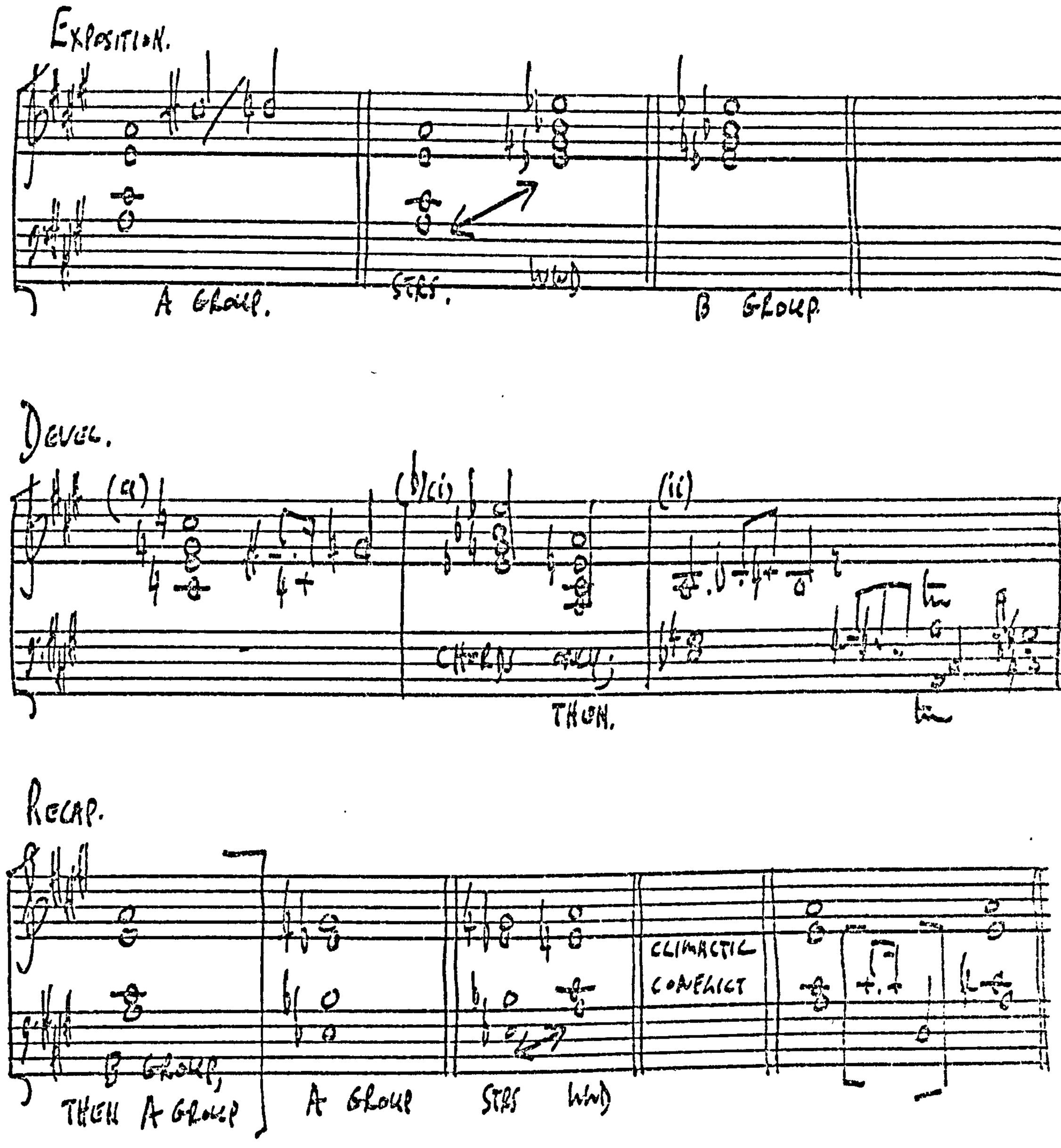
rising-third and falling-seventh (derived from the B1 theme): the essence of this coda is the harmonic progression from the minor subdominant, first, to a cadence in 'E minor' (one bar before Letter T), thence to an eventual perfect cadence in A minor. The insistence on the minor subdominant chord by the woodwinds rising-third - following the 'rfz' drop (of a major seventh) to D-natural[1] - consistently restrains the syncopated string figure, and eventually leads to a cadence. The closing bars (beginning after the comma at Letter W, and at first directed 'Griffbrett', are severely cadential but they possess a haunting quality: they make a subdued but determined point of A minor tonality with the 8 successive tonic minor chords that close the work.

The essence of this movement lies in the tension caused first by the disturbing influence of D-sharp within A major, then by the tonal polarity of the keys of E-flat and A and the conflict that arises from their juxtaposition: and this tension cannot be shown in thematic quotation, though its harmonic (and tonal) basis can be sketched as follows :

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1. The drop to D-natural is itself an indication that the disruptive energy of the augmented fourth has lost its ability to disturb the tonality..

Ex. 272


EXPOSITION.
A GROUP.
STS.
B GROUP
DEVEL.
(a)
(b)(i)
(ii)
THEN.
RECAP.
B GROUP
THEN A GROUP
A GROUP
STS
CLIMACTIC
CONFLICT

This sketch may also be used as convenient basis from which to demonstrate that the form of this last movement is so functionally determined by its content that it is in some ways unfortunate to have to describe it in 'sonata-form' terms, since this tends to conceal the essentially creative features of this movement and to obscure its formal 'innovations' and imagination - and three particular features are worthy of comment in support of this statement.

Firstly, the first main theme, A1, is abandoned after its initial appearance since the augmented fourth motive that arises out of it is sufficient to maintain the point, i.e.once the key of A major has been established it is the disruptive force of D-sharp within that key that is the important feature; Sibelius therefore has no need to keep this theme. Similarly the appearance of a 'second subject' theme in E-flat (just after Letter F, and particularly the horn phrase after Letter G) is less important than the fact that it takes place after the first climax of the tonal argument - and in passing it again illustrates why so many writers refer to the 'inevitability' of Sibelius's symphonic compositions; this B2 theme does not initiate the tonal conflict: rather it shows that the tension - which originally begins in the first main theme, becomes more urgent at Letter C, and eventually breaks out in naked conflict at Letter F, which is thus the climax of the argument so far - has been momentarily resolved in favour of E-flat; the almost banal ending of the horn phrase (at Letter G) seems to support this suggestion, for its emphatic full close is unusual in Sibelius.

Secondly once it is realized that the essence of the movement lies in the tension caused by the direct tonal conflict, then the purpose and construction of the development section is clarified. The development section is a masterstroke, since for the most part it is symbolic

rather than purposefully 'developmental'; it presents the tonal argument in a static form (while the F-sharp - C interval is a direct reference to the opening of the first movement). The logical place for the tonal conflict has already been demonstrated in the exposition (most pertinently in the section between Letters E - F) and the appearance of the second subject (and particularly its horn theme) comes as a momentary resolution and relaxation in the tonal argument. It is therefore creatively necessary that the recapitulation should show (i) some restatement of the passage between Letters E - F, possibly with a reversal of the tonal roles, (ii) that the climax of the work is an essential part of the recapitulation (and must not take place before it, as in the Second Symphony, for example) and (iii) that the development section must not pre-empt this later 'development', though equally it must not allow the tension to evaporate at this point. Sibelius's solution is two-fold: he presents an enlarged statement of the augmented fourth motive to act as (a symbolic) development and maintain the tension, and then uses the remaining part of the development section to regenerate, quietly, the tonal conflict and thus lead directly to the recapitulation.

The static quality of this trumpet statement is counter-balanced by the energy of the string ostinato: moreover the augmentation of the augmented fourth motive enables Sibelius to suggest a depth (of development) that would not be available by more conventional means without intruding on the tonal conflict that is to follow in the recapitulation.

Thirdly, the order and structure of the recapitulation is virtually determined by the evolution of the musical argument that has preceded it.

It is necessary both for the elements of the second subject to be presented first, and for the restatement of the first subject motives to take place initially in A major: only when these conditions are fulfilled can the tonality be pulled round to E-flat from where the tension caused by this crucial tonal juxtaposition can be worked out and resolved. In turn the resolution of the tonal conflict demands the change to the minor mode (in the coda) in order to dispel completely the disruptive effect of the augmented fourth: it also suggests that this violent tonal conflict is only just resolved - there is no heroic victory in this movement, but it does avoid tragedy.

The functional interdependence of ths three main sections of this movement clearly reveals its remarkable organic coherence.

The orchestration of this movement, and the symphony as a whole, has been taken by some scholars as indicative of a general 'trend' of reduction first observed in the Third Symphony. Johnson, however, views it as more than an orchestral economy, and poses the pertinent question "Can it be that in its early stages the Fourth Symphony was conceived as a string quartet?"[1] The idea is not without some attractions, but although it might be "a simple exercise to arrange this work for a string quintet without destroying any of the musical ideas", such an exercise would lose the vital tone-colour separation that is, in fact, a characteristic feature of this work; in the finale, for example, this separation of tone-colour is used to mark the tonal conflict, thus woodwind versus strings roughly equals E-flat versus A major; in the third movement there is an obvious interplay of the rhapsody (in woodwind) and the main theme which is (almost entirely) stated by strings, while in the first movement the strings carry the main weight of the exposition and development but are largely subservient in the development.

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1. Op.Cit., p. 128.

The general avoidance of a full-orchestral sound in this work is not so much a process of orchestral reduction, as simply that any additional orchestral weight would serve only to obscure (and lessen the impact of) the musical argument itself; Sibelius uses all the orchestral forces that are necessary, but, from the Third Symphony onwards he avoids orchestral richness or effects that are not musically necessary.

Sibelius's Fourth Symphony is perhaps his most searching symphonic composition; certainly it seems to be his most personally revealing and emotionally profound: and this is achieved by the use of his most frequent and characteristic features and procedures.

This symphony is directly concerned in all four movements - though less so in the third - with a tonal evolution that arises from the interval of the augmented fourth. In the first movement this is stated within a framework that allows the C - F-sharp polarity to reach out in different (mediant) directions from the central A minor tonality (and thus it is closer to the tonal schemes of its predecessors than it would at first sight appear). In the second movement the augmented fourth is (just) contained within the key of F major.

The third movement stands somewhat apart in that the tritone makes relatively few direct appearances, though it is a part of the entire fabric of the movement; nevertheless this movement serves as the emotional centre of the work. The finale is driven to a violent tonal conflict between keys and augmented-fourth apart, and the working out and resolution of this conflict dominates and sums up the entire symphony (and demands almost as many unconventional formal responses to creative necessities as did the finale of the Third Symphony.

This central tonal evolution of this work demands, and is characterised by Sibelius's most characteristic orchestral textures and techniques, some of his most elemental melodic phrases and ideas, and the use of pace as a deliberate and integral feature of his creative (symphonic) imagination.[1]

The Fourth Symphony is a masterpiece: and likely to prove one of the greatest symphonies of the 20th Century.

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1. More than any other of Sibelius's symphonies, this Fourth Symphony seems to bear out the statement by Georges Bracque: "In art there is no progress, only a clearer definition of its limits".

CHAPTER 16

Scènes historiques II

2 SERENADES for VIOLIN

Scaramouche

Chapter 16

Although the music that Sibelius composed in 1899 for the November 'Press Celebrations' was discussed in Chapter 7 (i.e.in its chronological setting) it was not until 1911 that three pieces were revised and published as 'Scènes historiques I', Op.25. When therefore it is learnt that in 1912 Sibelius published three more pieces under the title 'Scènes historiques II', Op.66, and that these three pieces are numbered IV, V, VI, in the score, it seems logical to suppose that both sets originated from the 'Press Celebrations' music. However although Furuhjelm apparently stated that one theme (from the 3rd piece of Op.66, 'At the Drawbridge') came from the music which accompanied the 3rd tableau of the Press Celebrations,[1] Johnson asserts that the other two pieces have nothing to do with those tableaux, and were not in fact composed until 1912.[2]

The first piece of Op.66, 'The Chase' is scored for double woodwind, 4 horns, timpani, and strings, and the very aspect of the score begins to suggest its later date: there is a more spacious look about it, a more delicately balanced texture which yet maintains all the strength of the earlier thicker texture. It has some of the momentum and verve of 'Lemminkäinen's Return' or 'Nightride and Sunrise', though in spite of all its skill it does not attain the stature of either of those earlier works. Of course it lacks their dimensions, but even so it seems to have lost in crude vigour what it has obviously gained in style and poise.

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1. It may also be remarked that Furuhjelm's statement may not amount to anything more significant that the comparable derivation of 'En Saga - from "some notes made in Vienna....very suitable for adaption" (see Ch.7, p.102 footnote); or 'Nightride and Sunrise' (completed in 1909) the principal motive of which (in Sibelius's own words) was "conceived in 1901 during the Spring in Italy when I made a trip to Rome in April". (see Chapt.12, p.197).

2. R.Wood had suggested that perhaps there was just enough stylistic and historical evidence to "clinch one's belief that the six pieces did indeed originate at the same time". (Abraham, op.cit., p.81).

The second piece (though it is numbered V in the score) is the 'Lovesong' (Minnelied) and this is scored for double woodwind, 4 horns, a single G-flat timp, harp, and strings. It is written in the rich key of G-flat, and the opening theme has a rhythmic and melodic plasticity (Ex.273) which those pieces of the earlier Op.25 set lack; note too how the end of this first sentence is left 'open'. This 'Lovesong' is skilful yet almost deceptively straightforward, and certainly it has an undeniable warmth about it - and in this respect does it not call to mind the 'Canzonetta' Op.62a which is written in G-sharp minor?

The last piece of this second set of 'Scènes historiques' is titled 'At the Drawbridge'. Once again this is 'lightweight' Sibelius; but it is more successful than 'The Chase' even though it has a greater degree of style and polish. It has a springing lightness about it in rhythm, melody, and orchestration, and these qualities were not evident in the Op.25 set.

But it is also true to say that these later pieces seem just to miss perfection; they appear just too polished, too suave, perhaps too cerebral. They appear to have exchanged the vital 'directness' of Op.25 for glistening refinement and if these three pieces of Op.66 are 'revisions' of works originally conceived for the 'Press Celebrations', then the revision has been dramatically (and demonstrably) greater and more ruthless than it was for the Op.25 set published only one year earlier.

Such historical considerations and contentions do not arise in the consideration of the Two Serenades for Violin and Orchestra, Op.69 a/b.

The first Serenade (Op.69a) was written in 1912; it is scored for double woodwind, 4 horns, timpani, strings, and Violin solo. The key is D major and the work is cast in a large binary form (the first section from

Bar 1 to Letter L, the second section Letter F - al fine; the bars between Letters L - F are a very short linking passage).

The first section is mainly concerned with the tonal tension (and evolution) that arises from the presence of the flat 7th (C-natural) within the first orchestral theme, A1, (Ex.274.a) and its counterbalance by the augmented fourth (G-sharp); the initial phrase for Violin solo, A2, (Ex.275) includes the augmented fourth only. The A1 theme is presented exclusivcly by the orchestra, while the A2 theme is mostly reserved for the solo though it is occasionally taken over by the orchestra (at Letter B, for example).

However the influence of the augmented fourth is such that, by the end of the solo's second phrase, there is a hint that it will itself disturb the D major tonality - and here it leans towards F-sharp minor. But this tension is smoothed over, and the opening sentences finish in the tonic key at Letter A.

The following 7 bars (to Letter B) effect a clear modulation to B (minor), and this change of key is then confirmed by the simple semi-quaver 'bravura' sequence for violin solo which reaches its climax in the key of B major (p.7) - in which key both the A1 and A2 themes reappear.

The presence of the tritone again causes a certain tonal uneasiness, but it is vehemently answered here by a powerful move to the subdominant (E major) and, after a pause at Letter D, the main A1 melody is restated in B major. The first section is then closed with 12 bars of severely cadential material - mostly a tonic/dominant re-iteration.

Subsequently the passage between Letters E - F provides a convenient linking of the two main sections of the work: this linking is effected by a simple chromatic movement for divided strings (flautato), later steadied by a short timpano roll on A-natural, and working back to D major (two bars after Letter F). The material for this short passage is derived from a subsidiary phrase that first appeared between Letters A - B, - but its

purpose here is no more than a convenient way of working back to the tonic (and without making it a significant 'event') and introducing a new accompanying texture.

The second section of this binary design begins (two bars after Letter F) with the restatement of A2 in D major over the chromatically moving accompaniment, and it is clear from the re-entry of the violin solo that this second section will be largely concerned with some sort of 'restatement' of the principal theme(s) within D major and an uncomplicated working up to a final climax. This is effected by changing the end of the second phrase for violin solo so that it now easily accommodate the previous leaning to F-sharp minor and gives rise to a short sequential passage that leads to the establishment of a dominant (A-natural) pedal.

Shortly after Letter I the work rises to its (pseudo) 'passionate' climax - the solo is directed 'con tutte forza' - but it is the final 8 bars that reveals the presence of Sibelius, (Ex.27b) note the easy absorbtion of the C-natural (by the diminished 7th on D-sharp), the last characteristic reference to the theme which opened the work, and the simple, unaffected ending (- unaffected in both material and orchestration).

This first Serenade is a pleasant work which easily fulfils the simple promise of its title, and the restraint of its solo part is a feature of its success.

The second Serenade, Op.69b, was written in 1913.[1] It is in the key of G minor and it is cast in the simple pattern of A B A B A, though it avoids the more conventional 'rondo' qualities such a scheme would appear to suggest.

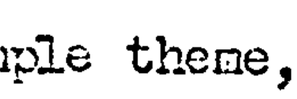
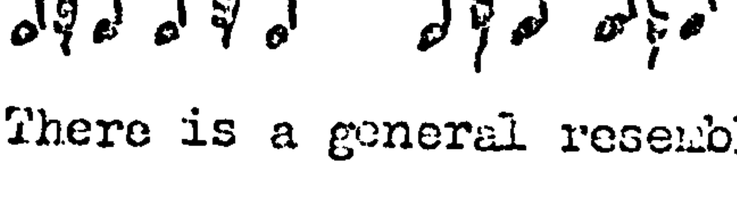
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1. It is scored for double woodwind, 4 horns, 3 timpani, triangle, strings and Violin solo.

The first (A) section of this design is headed 'Lento assai' and it consists of 5 phrases (in 6/4) of easily flowing cantabile melody for Violin solo - marked 'dolce'. The 'grave charm' of this Violin solo is enhanced by the sustained chords of the accompanying strings (which are muted throughout the work and rarely rise above 'mf'). The first phrase, A1, (Ex.276) is characterised by F-natural, and this is countered in the second phrase (for violin solo 'sul G') by the introduction of the augmented 4th C-sharp; but this C-sharp is taken up (by timpani and contra-basses) at the end of the phrase and impinges on the G minor cadence.

The third phrase (which begins at Letter A) centres on the dominant chord, (where the C-sharp momentarily pulls the tonality towards D minor) before it finishes on the tonic, where once again the C-sharp (in timpani and contra-basses) encroaches on the (G minor) cadence.

The subsequent phrases (which begin 6 bars before Letter B) move first to a half close (on a D minor chord) and then lead through a sequence of passing modulations (to E-flat, D-flat, C) to the conclusion of the first section; 3 bars of G minor tonic chord rounds off the first A section and introduces the contrasting (B) section.

This second section is also in G minor; but the time signature is changed to 2/4 (crotchet = crotchet) in which the accompanying strings maintain a constant  pattern, while the solo is almost exclusively concerned with a simple theme, B1 (Ex.277) in the persistent rhythm of  marked 'energico'.

There is a general resemblance of harmonic syructure between the first and second sections, and they share the characteristic features of the flat-7th and augmented 4th: in fact this B section now parallels the procedures of the first two phrases of the A section - i.e.the C-sharp

appears first as a counterbalance to F-natural, and then remains to impinge on the G minor cadence, though of course these parallel procedures are now carried by a contrasting theme and rhythm.

At Letter E a pause effects a simple return to the restatement of part of the A section, but after only 9 bars it returns directly to the contrasting 2/4 section.

This time the appearances of the augmented fourth exert a stronger influence and actually pull the tonality towards D-flat (C-sharp) minor (and making a characteristic leaning to F minor). This tonal 'argument' takes place between Letters F - H of the full score, and the solo part makes its point with some force although the accompaniment rarely rises above 'mp' and is frequently directed 'ppp'.

However from Letter H onwards the G minor tonality remains undisturbed and the straightforward repetition of the last two phrases of the A section closes the movement - though with a chord of G major.

Although the basic creative idea of this second Serenade seems simple enough - the use of the augmented fourth first to establish the key and to counterbalance the flat 7th,[1] then to disturb (quietly) the G minor cadence, and eventually to suggest the 'key' of D-flat in direct opposition to G minor - this idea does not seem to have been carried out as effectively as it might: the persistent rhythm of the solo (in the 2/4 sections) is apt to lose its impetus very quickly, while the sectional framework of this piece almost seems at odds with the continuing tonal evolution and developing tonal disruption.

Both these Violin Serenades are pleasant and enjoyable music, though they are overshadowed by the 6 Humoresques for Violin and Orchestra that Sibelius was to write four years later.

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1. It shares these features, and tonal tension, with the first Serenade.

Apart from the composition of the second Violin Serenade in 1913, Sibelius also wrote the music for a 'tragic pantomime' called 'Scaramouche' (by Poul Knudsen and Mikael Trepka Bloch.[1]

The (thin) story concerns Blondelaine - the young wife of Leilon - who is first bewitched and later seduced by the deformed Scaramouche - a violinist! Scaramouche is later killed by Blondelaine, who goes mad, and dances until she falls dead in the arms of Leilon. The music follows closely the details of the story, even making use of some 'themes of reminiscence', and although described as a 'pantomime' this work also contains a considerable amount of spoken dialogue.

'Scaramouche' Op.71 is not important in the assessment of Sibelius's compositions, and its dramatic dependance on the details of the pantomime virtually excludes it from the 'orchestral' music as such. It was Sibelius's intention, in 1921, to revise the score as a concert suite, and had he done this something of the order of, say, 'Belshazzar's Feast' might have emerged - the charm of the G-flat episode (between figures 113-9) for example, would have made a delightful miniature (- Elegie, Nocturne?).

The opening bars (Ex.278) proclaim Sibelius's authorship, though for what this lacks in poetry or inspiration it is only necessary to recall the opening bars of 'Kakastava'. Stylistically the work is something of a mixture, recalling at times the incidental music to 'King Christian II', (and using the harmonic formula of Ex.71-2) as well as the Second Symphony, complete with its Wagnerian undertones. At the same time Sibelius is not afraid to make full use of the opportunities presented by the dramatic situation (Exs.279 a, b) and he is also able to evoke such delightful orchestral moments as the G-flat episode (Ex.280) mentioned earlier.

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1. Johnson states (op.cit., p.132) that Sibelius composed this music at the request of his Danish publisher, W.Hansen; the score was not published (as Op.71) until 5 years later, and the premiere did not take place until 1922.

As a whole this work is less than the sum of its parts: the many changes of texture, tempo, and thematic material are probably all effective when accompanying the stage action, but they do not coalesce to make the larger impact of opera, while its very continuity and dramatic stage development rob it of the effective contrast of a suite of separate and finite numbers.

CHAPTER 17

THE BARD

THE OCEANIDES

2 Pieces for Violin and Orchestra

CHAPTER 17

Of all the unjustly neglected tone poems of Sibelius perhaps none more deserves championing than 'The Bard', Op.64, which was written in 1913 - the same year as the second Violin Serenade, Scaramouche, and that other neglected and remarkable tone poem (for voice and orchestra) 'Luonnatar', Op.70.

'The Bard' is comparatively short (running to only 19 pages of miniature score) and its form is frequently described simply as 'in two parts'[1] but this description is less than accurate when applied to such a totally unified work: for the second part may be seen as a function (and consequence) of the first. Moreover although this composition is concise, it has a remarkable freedom and achieves a considerable musical size.

This tone poem makes no direct reference to the 'diabolus in musica' that appears to have dominated much of Sibelius's creative thinking in the years 1910-1913: nevertheless 'The Bard' appears to share one particular process with (the third movement of) the Fourth Symphony, while there is also the possibility that a part of its creative essence may have devolved from the Fourth Symphony (and other works using the augmented fourth) 'per contra', as it were.

'The Bard' is scored for full orchestra[2] with some notable additions, including an important part for Solo Harp, and it should be noted that both cellos and violas are 'divisi' for most of the work.

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1. Layton qualified such a description by remarking "but the change of mood between them might well be compared to the shift in emphasis in the second part of a sonnet" (op.cit., p.74) - a persuasive comment.

2. It is scored for double woodwind, plus Bass Clarinet, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, Gran-cassa, harp, strings - and tam-tam in one bar only.

The first section of this work (under the direction 'Lento assai') consists of 7 quiet and leisurely sentences, and it begins with the simplest and most direct statement (by clarinets) of its overall tonality of E-flat minor. The harp enters immediately and in four chords rises to the subdominant seventh, after which this first phrase is completed by the supertonic chromatic chord. Following this a chain of seventh chords leads to a momentary pause on the chord of A-flat minor (over a timpani roll on C-flat) and the succeeding bars lead quietly back to the tonic chord of E-flat minor (at Letter A).

This first sentence (Ex.281) contains three features which together constitute a large part of the basic material of this composition - a fourth feature of some importance appears later; these three features are :-

1. the gentle swing from the tonic to the subdominant chord and back again;
2. the subdominant-supertonic chromatic progression, and the important G-flat - F note relationship to which it gives rise; and
3. the semiquaver 'figure' for violas which first appears in bars 3-4; later appearances of this figure frequently present the two parts in contrary motion, in which case it is the 'texture' that appears as the more important characteristic.

Apart from introducing the main features it may be suggested that this first sentence is a virtual miniature of the entire work, for, in its swing away from the tonic towards A-flat minor then back again, it clearly outlines the essence of this first section, and reflects the brooding, ruminating, character of the work.

The second sentence supports this suggestion, for it begins as though intending to confirm the tonic key by moving to the dominant chord; but it arrives at a dominant minor chord, and this is followed by a chromatic sequence (Ex.282) - the fourth feature - which passes through the tonic chord and arrives at a distinct cadence in B-flat minor (3 bars before Letter B).

This B-flat minor cadence is almost immediately contradicted, and the 4-bar phrase beginning at Letter B clearly moves to the key of A-flat minor. But this key of A-flat is at once shown to be within the boundary of the tonic (E-flat) minor, and to which it then returns. At this point the (last 2 bars p.5) the 're-statement' of the E-flat minor tonality is followed by the subdominant - supertonic chromatic progression, which once more leads towards the sustained chord of A-flat minor (- still over a timpani roll on C-flat).

At Letter C an enharmonic change (of C-flat to B-natural) introduces a new (shimmering) string texture which quickly works towards F-sharp major. This too is taken enharmonically, and, with the direction 'a tempo', a new phrase begins its statement as though in the key of G-flat major: it closes with an interrupted cadence, followed by a bar-line pause. This interrupted cadence conveniently reintroduces the tonic chord of E-flat minor, and at Letter D the chromatic sequence reappears and this time it leads to a simple cadence in the tonic (E-flat minor) key.

Subsequently the last two sentences confirm this establishment of the tonic minor key and round off the design of this first section: the penultimate sentence is a literal repeat of the 7 bars which first appeared at Letter A and led to the dominant minor chord: here the viola figure/ texture is extended and gently emphasises the chord of B-flat major, i.e.this penultimate sentence now moves to a normal half-close. The final sentence (Letters F - G) is a simple presentation of the previous chromatic sequence, though it is now broken by some significant pauses (first by an empty bar in the harp part, then by a bar-line pause) before it makes a simple cadence in E-flat minor - taking 'en passant' the chord of A-flat minor.

The second section begins at Letter G -'Largamente'. It opens with a (characteristically) syncopated figure for strings supported by an A-flat pedal-rhythm on timpani and Gran cassa (and lower strings). At Letter H a 'new' theme (Ex.283) is introduced over this pedal, and at first this theme swings the tonality towards A-flat: indeed the horns anticipate a cadence in that key (last bar, p.13). But at Letter I this new theme reaches its climax on the supertonic chord of E-flat and the slight extension of this phrase (at Letter K) stresses the supertonic before it finally moves to the dominant chord. Subsequently the climax of this work is realised by the reaffirmation (in strings and brass) of the E-flat tonality in an intense tonic discord (with dynamic markings of fff > p < fff, complete with low flutes acting as additional brass instruments). This is followed by a strong cadential progression (typically marked by the anticipatory entry of the timpani) and includes the solitary note for tam-tam - on the tonic major chord. Six bars of 'codetta' close the movement with a descending phrase of four chords for solo harp leading to a simple perfect cadence.

This outline of the structure of this composition suggests that 'The Bard' is concerned with the exploration of the vagaries of tonality and the brooding, introspective quality that arises from it. To this end both the choice of E-flat minor and the fact that the essence of the composition would seem to centre on the attraction to the subdominant (and its continual return to the tonic) are particularly interesting.

The choice of E-flat minor is noteworthy in that it seems to combine the expansive freedom normally associated (in Sibelius) with the key of E-flat major, while the minor mode seems to give it the richness and warmth found in such keys as G-flat or G-sharp minor[1]. The darker, intense, quality

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1. Compare 'Lovesong' - Scènes historiques II, or Canzonetta Op.62a.

of 'The Bard' seems to result partly from the minor mode, but more significantly perhaps from the fact that its internal tonal attraction is to the key of the subdmoninant.

This subdominant attraction is all the more interesting since, not only is it a rare relationship in Sibelius's orchestral compositions, but it follows a period of creative activity that centred on the explorations of the tensions caused by the augmented fourth (both within and between keys); here the use of the diatonic fourth creates the opportunity for this dark (subdued) emotional quality and for the achievement of a design which combines succinctness with both strength and expansiveness.

This achievement of a large design within a comparatively short span of time recalls the third movement of the Fourth Symphony: for, in that movement the gradual unfolding of rhapsody was shown either to release a further discrete amount of the main theme or to reinforce the establishment of its C-sharp minor tonality. The size of that third movement was the result of the interplay of (i) a slow but determined progress towards the final achievement of a main theme in an established tonality, and (ii) the suggestion of a number of possible tonal openings and thematic possibilities arising from the rhapsodic unfolding. This resulted in a complex musical 'pace' that was slow yet active, and which created the illusion of a large - though paradoxically concise- design.

In 'The Bard' there is a further application of this (same) principle of construction, though it is now applied to entirely different creative (and emotional) purposes; the differences which may be observed (between 'The Bard' and the third movement of the Fourth Symphony) again serve to illustrate one of the main reasons for the avoidance of 'empty mannerisms' in Sibelius's works - even though those works constantly reveal his reliance on a comparatively small number of constructive principles.

In 'The Bard' the tonic key is established from the outset, but the appearance of a chromatic chord suggests the possibility of a tonal movement away from A-flat minor: this movement is most usually towards the sub-dominant. But each movement away from the tonic key is shown to be merely a tonal detour and the 'return' to A-flat minor follows shortly; perhaps the best example of this procedure is seen in the passage between Letters B - D.

In these two sentences the attraction towards, and cadence in A-flat minor is quickly shown to be within the range of B-flat minor; but the confirmation of this tonic key once again allows the pull to A-flat minor to take effect. And following this the introduction of a new texture (at Letter C) suggests that it is about to take up the opportunities created by this movement away from the tonic (and the enharmonic change). But this tonal opportunity - with a new texture and a new 'theme' - is shown to be in G-flat major, and that key is itself quickly found to be pointing towards B-flat minor, and indeed a cadence in the tonic minor is quickly effected. (Compare the similar procedures in the third movement of the Fourth Symphony, between Letters A - B).

The third movement of the Fourth Symphony marked its progress - clearly - with either the growth of its main theme or the addition of conventional tonal 'references'; here the progress of the argument is marked - to a certain extent - by the three appearances of the chromatic sequence. These three appearances could be summed up as :-

(i) an initial appearance (which passes through the tonic chord and arrives at a cadence in B-flat minor),

(ii) a second appearance which leads to the achievement of a simple cadence in B-flat minor, and

(iii) a final appearance - broken with significant pauses - which effects a conclusive cadence, and resolves the 'capriciousness' of the tonality.

Further, as in the Fourth Symphony, this creation of the illusion of a large design is also dependant on (and greatly enhanced by) the rhapsodic qualities of the work. In 'The Bard' there are a number of factors contributing to this rhapsodic quality, and perhaps the most important is the avoidance of clear-cut themes: instead there is the use of textures (and orchestral colours) as a directly creative and vital force. Three examples from the first section will illustrate this use of textures.

Firstly, the semiquaver figure/texture for violas and cellos is used throughout the work to decorate the chord structure, to suggest a degree of 'movement' in this slow tempo, and by its movement, to shape and point the individual phrases: this is most clearly illustrated in the passage which consists of the last 4 bars of p.3 and the first 4 bars of p.4.

Secondly, the change of a texture may be used to suggest the taking up of possibilities created by the movement away from the tonic key and the arrival at the subdominant chord - as, for example at Letter C where the sudden change to a shimmering string texture is in direct and striking contrast to the previously sustained textures.

The third example may be seen in the passage between Letters E - F where the approach to the final 'establishment' of E-flat minor needs some preparation: and in the 6 bars before Letter F the violas subtly emphasize the chord of B-flat major (sustained only by a horn pedal) and their pre-eminence at this point serves to point their tonal function.

In contrast, although there is a general avoidance of clear-cut themes, it is interesting to note the relationship that appears to exist between the melodic outlines of the string texture at Letter C and the new theme of the second section: in both cases the phrase-ending is marked by a downward step followed by a falling-fifth, and an upwards sequence ensues.

This adds weight to the argument that the second section is largely a continuing function (and consequence) of the first: this new theme appears to release and exploit some of the previous 'thematic' suggestions, and thus presents the tonal tensions in a more dramatic form - and which moves with increased power to the climax and resolution of the work.

Three other features also contribute to the rhapsodic quality of this composition. Firstly there is the particular quality of the orchestration whose main characteristics could be listed briefly as

(i) a prominent part for solo harp (- an instrument of reflection),

(ii) the richness of the scoring for divided violas and cellos,

(iii) the general low register of the first section - the highest string note is E-natural, and

(iv) the avoidance of bright colours: even at the climax (two bars before Letter L) it is the flutes - and not the trumpets - which have the highest part of this chord.

This rhapsodic quality is also heightened by the use and function of certain orchestral entries and colours - as for example in the horn entries of p.4 - 5. Here horns 3 and 4 move in steps from B-flat up to E-flat (the dominant of A-flat minor) and thus help to make a point of the cadence in A-flat minor: meanwhile horns 1 and 2 merely sustain E-flat; but this sustained E-flat becomes significant when itis continued into the return of the key of E-flat minor - in which function it is aided and accompanied by the timpani, and the 6 successive minim entries (on E-flat) by oboe solo. The timbre of these oboe entries ensures that the E-flat will penetrate the texture, and it thus acts (- as the timpani have previously been shown to do on other occasions -) like a perfect pitch 'memory'.

Other passages for both horns and timpani are noticeable for their 'anticipatory' entries (e.g. Horns 1 and 2 at Letter F, 4 horns on p.13 and

timpani 4 bars before Letter L...al fine) while mention must also be made of the solitary note for tam-tam on the first significant E-flat major chord of the work.[1]

Finally there is also the fact that the sentences of the first section are simply dovetailed together; this too has been previously observed, but here its effect is more marked since some of the dovetails (in the fourth bar after Letter B, for example) challenge the establishment of a new 'key' or intrude upon a barely completed cadence.

These features - the avoidance of clear-cut themes, the function of textures and orchestral colours, the dovetailing of sentences (which is frequently effected by the G-flat - F note relationship[2]) - these features combine to produce a rhapsodic quality that is ideally suited to the creation and reflection of a sombre, brooding, character, and a composition which centres on the tonal tension caused (for once) by the diatonic fourth. The counterbalancing of these rhapsodic qualities with the slow yet determined achievement of an undisturbed (E-flat minor) tonality gives rise to a complex musical 'pace' that creates the illusion of a large design within a short span of time.

'The Bard' is an undeservedly neglected composition, though its brooding introspection (and relaxed intensity) demands a searching performance - with just the right degree of tension - if it is to succeed in the concert hall.

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1. There are only another 3 notes for tam-tam in all of Sibelius's published orchestral music.
2. Apart from bars 3 - 4, see also
   (i) p.2 bars 6 - 8
   (ii) p.5 bars 5 - 7
   (iii) p.7 bars 1 - 2
   (iv) p.7 bars 5 - 6
   (v) p.8 bars 5 - 7
   (vi) p.10 bars 4 - 5

Following the composition of 'The Bard', the only other significant orchestral composition of Sibelius completed prior to the Fifth Symphony was 'The Oceanides', a tone poem for large orchestra Op.73.[1, 2] This was written in response to the invitation to compose and then conduct conduct a (choral) work for a music festival in Norfolk (U.S.A.). This tone-poem was completed early in 1914, though it is worth noting that Sibelius wrote two quite different versions - of which the first remains in manuscript.

The neglect of 'The Oceanides' is unfortunate since several critical appraisals concentrate on the so-called 'exceptional' characteristics of its orchestration and then fail to remark on the work's essential (Sibelian) qualities - which are the source of its strength and character. Equally the neglect of both 'The Bard' and 'The Oceanides' produces a sort of creative hiatus between the Fourth Symphony and the Fifth Symphony, and thus appears to highlight the apparent 'isolation' of the Fourth and dramatises the return to large- scale designs as seen in the Fifth. In fact the two tone poems (Op.64 and Op.73) present a clear line of development that reaches from the Fourth Symphony of 1911 to the Fifth of 1915-9; moreover both Op.64 and Op.73 offer persuasive evidence that they are more truly Sibelian than some other 'representative' works.

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1. The title of this work is also given as "Aallottaret" and Ringbom quotes Sibelius as stating that "the title has reference to Homeric mythology and not to characters in the Kalevala. The Finnish title of the work "Aallottaret" (Daughters of the Waves) is merely a translation." (Ringbom p.126).

2. It is scored for triple woodwind, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, 2 pairs of timpani, Stahlstäbe, triangle, 2 harps, and strings. (The orchestral requirements of the first version differs only in lacking the 3rd trumpet, and it lists the numbers of strings as : 16, 16, 12, 10, 8).

The most remarkable feature of 'The Oceanides' is the expansive quality of its large-scale design, and the paradoxical fact that it achieves its design without creating a work of huge dimensions. In this respect it could be seen as a complementary design to 'The Bard', for whereas 'The Bard' achieved the illusion of a large design within a small time-span, 'The Oceanides' demonstrates the reality of its large-scale design within a comparatively modest time-span. The design of Op.73 is frequently described as a 'free rondo' (and it fulfils the formula A B A. B A) though this convenient title is perhaps less than accurate: on the other hand there is some justification for describing this work as a "symphonic rondo" - in D major.

In the printed score this composition occupies 144 bars, and it opens with a leisurely and impressive paragraph of considerable size, taking up the first 28 bars: the size of this paragraph is of some importance in the scheme of things, and while it is convenient to measure it in terms of 28 bars, it is truly large-size in musical terms.

Three features of the opening bars are to be noted :

(i) the overlapping timpani rolls on B and A (V1. - V in D major),

(ii) the overlapping phrases for violins I and II (which centre round B and A)[1] (Ex.284), and

(iii) the extended and gradually unfolding theme for flutes (which lasts until Letter B). (Ex.285).

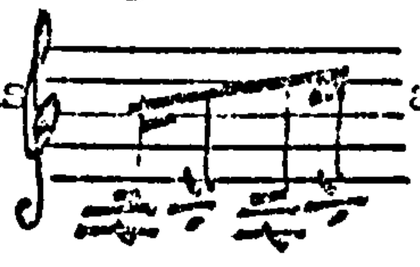
These three features combine to establish the tonic key, to suggest (through the undulating harmonic motion so prevalent in large-scale Sibelius) the size of the design, and to present the basis of a typical tonal argument which will arise from the tonal 'commentary' on a

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1. The shape and overlapping characteristics of these phrases could easily be a programmatic interpretation of 'The Sea'.

note-relationship suggested here. Further the size of this opening paragraph is embodied in the extended flute melody[1] that introduces a host of thematic ideas, works its way round to the dominant of the dominant (- a fact that is gently emphasized by the entry of both harps on p.5) and then moves easily towards a full close.

But (at Letter B) the expected perfect cadence is postponed, and the return (in contra-basses) of the B - A note-relationship now supports the undulation of supertonic - chromatic and tonic chords. This takes up (and makes explicit) the implications of the very opening bars,[2] and in this it is supported by the subsequent violin entries of bars 19 - 20 and 23 - 24 (which recall the opening string phrases) and the flute phrase of bar 24. In addition the accompanying 'texture' of bars 18 - 21 subtly introduces a melodic outline (Ex.286) that is later to become important.

This first paragraph is finally rounded off with a perfect cadence at bar 25 (p.8) but although the timpani reinforce this D-major cadence, the continuing influence of the B - A undulation is maintained after the cadence by the syncopated string alternations: indeed the alternations are thickened out in fourths  and gently emphasized by the harp harmonics.

Although the first paragraph is (to use Tovey's phrase) a 'complete lyric stanza' and comes to a full close, the G-sharp entry of the contra-basses provides an easy dovetail into the first episode.

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1. The phrase endings of this extended melody are consistently marked by short, rising notes, off the beat.

2. It is perhaps pertinent to recall that the first movement of the Fourth Symphony is marked by the undulation of F-sharp - E (VI - V, in A minor).

The first episode is mostly concerned with the move away from the tonic key, and it is effected by a new theme B1; (Ex.287) - in dialogue between oboe and clarinet[1] - and its close derivative B2 (Ex.288) (which appears as a sort of diminution of B1). This B2 theme at first hovers ambiguously between B minor and D-major, but (on p.10) it is sequentially repeated in D minor where it then accompanies a phrase (for flute Ex.289) derived from the opening rondo theme - and which is clearly in F-major.

But this tonal ambiguity is not immediately or easily resolved, and although there is no doubt of the (ultimate) movement towards F major, it is at first held in check by the insistence of a D minor chord. (From p.10 onwards it is interesting to observe the continuing undulation - in fourths - in strings and harps: the very presence of this 'texture' is itself an indication of the tonal tension of this passage. In this respect this fourths-texture is a further point of relationship with 'The Bard').

The unresolved tonal tension leads to the presentation of a (second) complete paragraph (beginning at Letter E and lasting until letter I on p.17) which falls into two main parts. In its first part the opening of the rondo theme is situated on the dominant of F major, accompanied by an energetic string figure, and supported by simultaneous timpani rolls on C and B-flat. This dominant preparation for the key of F major reaches its climax (at Letter F) where the woodwind phrases - and in particular the oboe entry of bars 53 - 54 - present the tonal tension in its most acute form. However, after this, the second part of this paragraph presents the restatement of the entire rondo theme in an undisputed F major.

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1. The facts that this theme is (i) presented in dialogue, (ii) in 3/4 and (iii) as a sort of diminution, heightens its increased rhythmic impetus and strengthens the urgency of the demand for a change of key.

This rondo restatement is a quite literal transposition and necessarily includes both the movement to the dominant of the dominant, and (at Letter H) the cadential extension and undulation between the supertonic chromatic and tonic chords. But this time the disturbance arising from this undulation is smoothed out by the appearance of a 'new' theme (Ex.290) presented, at Letter I, in a 5-bar phrase for Stahlstäbe (supported by solo clarinet and harp harmonics): this new theme (quietly prominent as a result of its orchestral colour) is an augmented version of the melody first presented in the accompanying texture of bars 18 - 9 (and repeated in bars 62 - 3), and it completes the rondo restatement.

But a 'redundant' entry of the opening flute theme moves momentarily to the subdominant of F-major (at Letter J) and initiates a rocking harmonic motion which gradually overcomes the reluctance to leave F-major. It leads to a slow chromatic progression (accompanied by harp glissandi and chromatic phrases for contra-basses) that reaches the ambiguous tonal area of B-flat and G minor which reintroduces the B1 theme (bar 82). The sequential repetition of this theme (beginning at Letter L) is similarly poised between C minor and E-flat and leads to the reappearance of B2 - accompanied as before by the undulating fourths-texture in strings.

The following passage (from Letter M - N) is essentially a repeat of the first episode; in the first episode the move from B minor/D major was towards F-major (D minor) and this is now paralleled by the move from C minor/E-flat towards G-flat major (E-flat minor), and, as before, there is no immediate resolution of this tonal tension.

However, this symmetrical restatement not only provides a balance to the design as a whole but allows its large-size and expansive design to be 'contained' in a modest time-scale. For, as in the first episode the tonal movement towards F major was 'interrupted' (just before Letter E) and required

an extended dominant preparation to establish F major, so, here, the lack of tonal resolution between G-flat and E-flat minor provides the opportunity for an extended (and climactic) dominant preparation for the return of the tonic key of D major.

This extended preparation (beginning p.28, with a 4/2 on A-natural)[1] reintroduces the undulating fourths-texture in strings, introduces a slow-moving brass progression which is characterised by a chromatically rising trumpet figure and works towards the establishment of a dominant (A-natural) pedal. In fact a dominant pedal is established at bar 113 (first bar p.30) and remains until bar 131. It supports two short sequences (each 5 bars) and a slightly larger final phrase and together these effect a powerful approach to the climax of the work which is finally achieved with the release of the main rondo theme in D major - 'fff' - at Tempo Primo (p.34). However, this final appearance of the rondo theme is severely curtailed and the closing bars of the work are largely concerned with a quiet emphasis of the flat side of the key. This shortened version of the main theme is nevertheless entirely adequate: it balances and completes the design, and illustrates both its strength and its ability to combine expansive freedom with a modest time-scale.

The expansive quality of the design of 'The Oceanides' is a fact of musical construction that can be demonstrated: the work begins with a suggestion of tonal 'fluidity' which only (gradually) becomes obviously apparen at the end of a complete lyric stanza. The resulting tonal tension is then reflected in the first episode itself (sometimes acutely expressed) and creates the need for a considerable dominant preparation for the establishment of the new key. The symmetry of this design then provides the opportunity for a massive preparation for the tonic key itself.

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1. The timpani A-natural which intrudes upon the E-flat minor chord in bar 100 is a direct allusion to the beginning of the first episode (where it was G-sharp against a D major chord); and again it provides a convenient dovetail between the main paragraphs of this composition. This device was observed previously in the 'Funeral March' Op.59.

This preparation is effective and achieves a considerable climax; its success rests on the following facts :-

(i) although there is an extended dominant pedal-point, the dominant chord is avoided for a considerable time;

(ii) the dominant chord (bar 131) is finally approached through the supertonic chromatic chord (at bar 130 - where the dominant pedal is broken for the only time: thus changing the simultaneous timpani rolls on B and A into a momentary undulation);

(iii) the whole of these 19 bars have been accompanied by an undulating string figure which gradually unleashes a (simple) chromatic figure which rises to a considerable climax;

(iv) the strength of this preparation then enables the tonic key to be so firmly re-established (and its tonal tension satisfactorily resolved) that a greatly abbreviated version of the rondo theme is sufficient to complete the whole design: i.e.a complete restatement is now unnecessary (not merely avoided), and

(v) the very brevity of the final appearance of the rondo theme seems to present a neat balance to the short Stahlstäbe melody that was used to 'confirm' the F major tonality.

Thus the initial tonal 'commentary' and its ensuing evolution results in a large scale design which moves in a leisurely fashion yet avoids the necessity of having the 'heroic' proportions its first paragraph would seem to imply. In its expansiveness 'The Oceanides' represents a further progression from the conception and realization of 'The Bard' (itself a progression from the Fourth Symphony) and looks towards the creation of the Fifth Symphony. Indeed it provides the final link in a chain of creative thought that stretches back to the "process of reduction"

first observed in the Third Symphony (and absorbs the experience of concentrated designs) and moves towards the conception of large designs which have great freedom but avoid becoming grandiose or loose-limbed.

The orchestration of 'The Oceanides' is frequently singled out (in critical writings) for special comment, largely on the grounds of what has been called its 'pointilliste' and 'impressionistic' character. But while such descriptions have a superficial appeal, they are less important than the recognition that the orchestral colours and textures of 'The Oceanides' are as integral a part of its original conception as those of 'The Bard'; i.e.the orchestral colours cannot be disassociated from the themes and tonal tensions they carry. The use of two pairs of timpani,[1] for example, is perhaps an extreme development of the (quite typical) usage of the timpani as a tonal weapon, while the frequent presentation of the fourths-texture in harps and strings offers a subtle way of maintaining the presence of the tonal tension without making it overtly dramatic, and which is not present in the main theme itself - the musical 'point' of this fourths-texture is clearly apparent at its first appearance in bar 25. And the exotic tone colour of the 'stahlstabe' is as functionally (and quietly) effective as that of the tam-tam in 'The Bard': both make a musical point.

Equally it cannot be denied that the orchestral colours (and their themes) will respond to the stimulus of the 'poetic idea' of the tone-poem; a simple programmatic interpretation of the opening bars has already been suggested - but this is only another measure of Sibelius's genius, since

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1. It is interesting to note that the overlapping timpani rolls are a constant feature of the first version.

the actual manner of its presentation is founded on a clearly recognisable and previously established procedure peculiar to Sibelius: again it is to be remarked that Sibelius works on a few large principles of construction, thus the diverse applications of orchestral colours may be reflected in such widely different compositions as 'The Bard' and 'The Oceanides'.

'The Oceanides' belongs in the first rank of Sibelius's tone-poems: only 'The Bard' and 'Tapiola' are its equals and neither is its peer.

The remaining orchestral compositions of 1914 are the Two Pieces for Violin (or Cello) and Orchestra, Op.77.[1] These two pieces are nowhere as interesting as the Six Humoresques (Op.87 and Op.89) that Sibelius was to write in 1917, and do not quite measure up to the imaginative standard of the Two Serenades Op.69: but neither are they to be dismissed too lightly.

The first piece in E-flat major (Op.77i) is titled 'Laetare anima mea',[2] and it is scored for 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 horns, 4 timpani, harp, strings, and violin solo. It falls into 3 clear sections of which the second is in the tonic minor and the third largely a literal repeat of the first. For the most part there is a steady flow of deliberate, even, melody (Ex.291) that just occasionally - especially in the syncopation of the solo (Ex.292) - seems to anticipate some of the splendidly flowing and unfolding melody of the Seventh Symphony.

The steadiness and deliberation of this composition are heightened by its scoring: the horns and woodwind are in their lower registers throughout, while of the four timpani at least two are nearly always sounded simultaneously. The use of the harp, together with a certain 'expansive'

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1. Also known as 'Two Serious Melodies'.
2. It is frequently referred to as 'Cantique' though it is not so called on the title page of the full score.

feeling, seems to suggest some slight connection with 'The Bard': this feeling is supported by the shared qualities of deliberate movement, dark orchestral colours, choice of key[1] ('The Bard' was b-flat minor), stability of key, and of course use of the harp, though it lacks the most essential ingredient of 'The Bard' - a brooding introspection.

The second piece (Op.77b) is titled 'Devotion' (Ab imo pectare) and it is in the key of D minor: it is scored for 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trombones, violin solo and strings (no timpani or percussion).

This work is dominated by the solo part and its main theme, which is introduced over a simple rocking quaver accompaniment. This main theme is marked by a frequent syncopation, and syncopation is also found between the solo and accompaniment, and within the accompaniment itself - and this would (perhaps) suggest some sort of tenuous connection with 'The Bard' (and the Fourth Symphony).

The structure of this main theme (Ex.293) is interesting since it is clearly fashioned by the form it seeks to create. The first part of the theme may be divided into two phrases, A1a, A1b, both concerned only with the tonic key though the cadential second phrase (A1b) acts as a tonal sign-post - a role usually taken by the timpani. After its initial statement this A1b phrase occurs only after the convincing re-establishment of the tonic key: moreover the rhythm of its last 3 notes enhances its tonal (and cadential) function.

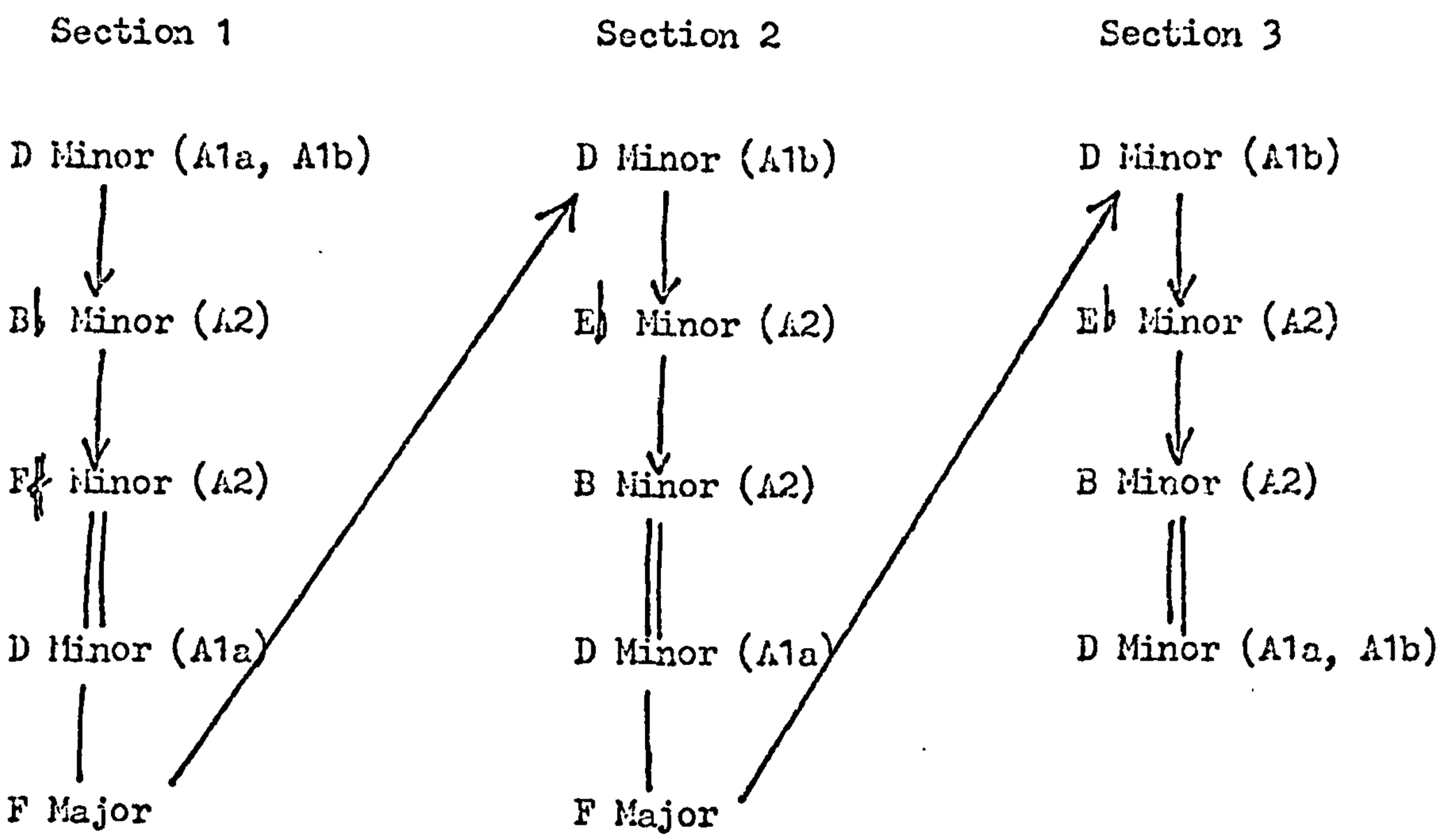
The second part of the main theme, A2, never occurs in the tonic key and is used exclusively for modulation. In this respect its tonal restlessness is reinforced by its syncopated cadences - in contrast to the measured movement of A1b

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1. It is increasingly interesting to note the amount of evidence which supports this linking of an 'expansive' quality to the key of E-flat (major or minor), and the equally constant use of A minor as its diametric tonal pole.

The entire structure of this piece flows naturally from the construction of this main theme. Thus after the initial D minor statement of A1a and A1b, phrase A2 modulates first to B-flat minor, then to F-sharp minor from which it returns (with considerable brusqueness) to D minor (A1a); in its re-establishment this D minor encompasses the key of F major, after which the cadential A1b returns.

The tonal and thematic 'picture' of this short piece of 57 bars could be sketched as follows :-



It is unfortunate that in spite of this detailed construction this piece fails to convince, possibly because the almost literal repeat of section 3 (literal apart from some octave transposition and a strengthened orchestration) seems to suggest a lack of purpose. It thus lacks in conviction what 'Lactare anima mea' seems to lack in poetry: both works just fail to attain a convincing creative necessity.

CHAPTER 18

SYMPHONY No. 5

CHAPTER 18

After the compact concentration and emotional depths of the Fourth Symphony, a certain expansive quality becomes increasingly discernible in the two tone-poems Op.64 and Op.73, and this quality achieves a particular prominence in the easily approachable and heroically extrovert FIFTH SYMPHONY Op.82.[1] But the writing of the Fifth Symphony was not without some complications, and the history of its composition is not without bearing on a critical assessment of the work itself.

According to Ekman, the ideas for the Fifth Symphony "had begun to shape themselves in Sibelius's mind" by the end of September 1914. The Symphony was completed in 1915 and first performed on Sibelius's fiftieth birthday, and although some alterations were made during the final rehearsal (for the first performance) there is no doubt or argument that at this time the work was written as four separate movements.

Sibelius first revised this Fifth Symphony in 1916 and the revised version was performed in December of that year. It was then revised again and reached its final form (in which it is published as Op.82) only in 1919. The historical facts can be tabulated thus :

Original composition	1915
First Revised version	1916
Second Revised version (Op.82)	1919

However, in 1916 Sibelius wrote a private letter (dated 20th May) which has since become famous - or infamous - for its remarks concerning

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1. Scored for: double woodwind, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.

the Fifth Symphony; Ekman quotes it[1] as follows :-

> "My new works - partly sketched and planned.
> The Vth Symphony in a new form - practically composed anew - I work at daily. Movement I entirely new, movement II reminiscent of the old, movement III reminiscent of the end of the I movement of the old. Movement IV the old motifs, but stronger in revision. The whole, if I may say so, a vital climax to the end. Triumphal.
>
> The VIth Symphony is wild and impassioned in character. Sombre, with pastoral contrasts. Probably in 4 movements, with the end rising to a sombre roaring of the orchestra, in which the main theme is drowned.
>
> The VIIth Symphony, Joy of life and vitality, with appassionato passages. In 3 movements - the last a 'Hellenic rondo'.
>
> All this with due reservation....It looks as if I was to come out with all these three symphonies at the same time....
>
> With regard to symphonies VI and VII the plans may possibly be altered according to the development of the musical ideas. As usual, I am a slave to my themes and submit to their demands."

It is perhaps worth restating here that information conveyed in private letters must not necessarily be accepted as literal truth, nor indeed from inhibiting the composer from changing his mind at a later date; thus Johnson's remark: "The curious thing about this letter is that the composer obviously regarded his symphony as consisting of four movements at that time" need not necessarily cause surprise. Equally Parmet's statement -[2]

> "However neither Furuhjelm nor myself (we were both present at the first performance in December 1915 and at the first performance of the second version in 1916) can remember that the original version of 1915 differed radically from the later versions. This new version included the addition of a discreet bridge between the first and second movements, thus joining them together (this had already taken place in the first revised version), and - if our memories are to be relied on - the third movement had undergone certain important changes and the finale contained the greatly revised, majestic conclusion so much admired today."

- is at odds with the letter that states that the work was 'practically composed anew' and the first movement 'entirely new'.

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1. Ekman, op.cit., p.254-6.
2. Parmet, op.cit., p.70.

These discrepancies and apparent contradictions become more significant in the consideration of the first movement: debate centres on whether it is really one movement, or little more than a convenient joining-together of two separate movements, e.g. a first movement and a scherzo - and Cecil Gray pointed out the simple fact that in the printed score the rehearsal letters begin again (at Letter A) after the Allegro moderato (p.30) on p.30 (- the second part of the movement).

This situation is further confused since Sibelius himself is quoted as having said that the second half of the movement has 'the character of a scherzo' - though even this statement is challenged by Parmet (on rather curious grounds)[1] who comes to the conclusion that "The most adequate description of the movement (part II) is that it is a toccata...The first movement (part I and Part II) consists, then of an introduction in sonata form followed by a toccata." [2]

It is therefore obvious that the historical fact that this composition was originally written in four movements gives rise to considerable argument amongst critics: but much of the 'evidence' so far considered has been of an extra-musical nature, and the main reason for accepting this movement as something more than just a clever welding together of two separate movements is to be found in the internal evidence which the music itself presents: and it is on this evidence alone that the movement must be judged.

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1. Parmet's argument centres on the following statement (N.B.C.- the underlining is mine): "It completely lacks the distinguishing formal features of such a movement, and furthermore, its very nature is not that of a scherzo. It plumbs depths and rises to heights that a scherzo should avoid if it is to remain faithful to its nature and fulfil its task of introducing an element of playfulness into a more serious whole."
2. Parmet, op.cit., p.71.

The opening ten bars of this first movement present an undulating tonic-supertonic (seventh) progression, and over this an 'introductory' horn-call, A1, pausing on the supertonic chord, is answered by a woodwind phrase which returns to the tonic (bars 1 - 4) and in the following bars, these introductory phrases are gently elaborated and extended (Ex.294). At bar 10 (3 bars after Letter A) the supertonic chord changes to dominant, but the expected cadence is interrupted and a change to the minor mode introduces a subsidiary theme, A2, (in woodwind) (Ex.295) which is supported by another undulating progression. This subsidiary A2 theme would appear to be essentially dominant-based, but its supporting diminished-seventh chord (on E-natural) is taken as the opportunity for an enharmonic modulation to G-major - where a second subject group is presented.

This second group introduces two main themes, B1,[1] B2, (Exs.296, 297) and two cadential phrases, B3, B4 (Exs.298, 299) while the G major tonality is carefully and elaborately established: thus while B1 and B2 are announced by woodwind, the accompanying (string) figure climbs through an octave and a half to reach the tonic before the strings are allowed to become thematically articulate (at Letter D - where the full orchestra is used for cadential emphasis).

From the musical procedures so far presented it is possible to obtain certain 'clues' which may lead to a clearer understanding of this first movement. The opening bars (and bars 1 - 10 in particular) are worthy of considerable examination, for the initial undulating harmonic progression suggests that this is to be a large-scale design - it is (after all) one of the most typical and frequent of Sibelius's ways of beginning large designs, and it is accompanied by a leisurely harmonic rhythm. And this suggestion of a large design is to some extent confirmed by the quick and emphatic

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1. B1 is, more accurately, a transition theme.

establishment of G major, for the idea of a later return to a convincing E-flat major would itself seem to imply the necessity of such a large scale design. Further the character and impression of the opening is that it is (not so much an introduction of main themes as) the typical presentation of a musical comment or proposition. In this case the opening harmonic progression, with its horn-call and woodwind elaboration, seems to be moving slowly towards some more clearly defined idea when it is itself taken up symphonically and accepted as both the main thematic idea and main tonality: the opening proposition is accepted without any of the more usual symphonic rhetoric. And by bar 18, therefore, the key of G major (and the second subject group) has been reached.

The result of this quick change of tonality is that by the end of the exposition - only 35 bars - the second subject group has been established with more (tonal) emphasis than the first, and while the harmonic rhythm has been slow, yet the establishment of the new key centre has been accomplished easily and quickly. It is worth commenting that in these 35 bars Sibelius has repeated a process very similar to that in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony: the most important and enlightening difference being that whereas the Fourth Symphony started with a dramatic comment/proposition that was NOT immediately taken up, the Fifth begins with a most undramatic proposition that is (almost) immediately taken up symphonically.[1]

However, at the end of the exposition the return of the first main theme A1 (at Letter E) at first in G then moving quietly to B-flat, suggests that this is the beginning of a development section. But the reappearance of A2 (on the dominant of B-flat minor), followed by the establishment of a

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1. Again it may be remarked that these two works illustrate the varied applications of a few basic principles of construction, and that the observed differences between these two works are complementary rather than contradictory.

G-natural pedal (at Letter G) and the return of B1 and B2 over a chromatically decorated version of their original string accompaniment leads to the clear establishment of E-flat and the re-presentation (at Letter I) of the clamorous cadence themes, B3 and B4. Two details of this passage are worth noting: (i) the occasional C-sharps (D-flats) which accompany the G-natural pedal, and (ii) the clear tonal function of the timpani - which is particularly marked at letter I where a dominant pedal is established for just two bars (after which it returns to G-natural.[1]

So far then the movement has gone through the motions of a sonata form without a development section, since, to all intents and purposes, the section between Letters E - J has been a recapitulation, though some scholars take the view that it is a counter-exposition. To this latter view the objection may be raised that it does not immediately lead to a change in tonal direction: it is a complete restatement of the main themes - and cadences in the tonic key. Equally it must be remarked that this restatement is occasionally disturbed by (i) the G - C-sharp pedal, and (ii) the chromatic string accompaniment which 'obscures' the tonality, although the purpose of these features is not immediately obvious at this moment.

What follows sounds, at first, somewhat like a coda; at Letter J the horns again announce B1, which then quickens by diminution and is developed (by clarinet and bassoon) against (what Tovey has aptly described as) a 'chromatic cloud'. This development - or (tonal and thematic) disintegration - culminates at Letter L where the E-flat tonality again emerges, though it is again questioned - even more obviously - by trumpets and trombones; for the moment though E-flat remains, and the strings in octaves present B2.

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1. The function (and entries) of the timpani from p.14 to p.21 is worthy of some study. At all the crucial tonal moments the timpani ensure that the dominant (of E-flat) is heard: note how the timpani anticipate the G-natural pedal at Letter G with a short roll on B-flat, and again sound the dominant on p.15, bottom line, bar 1; p.17 bar1; and p.28 bar 1.

The striking feature of this section (letters J - M) is that the E-flat tonality remains unchanged: and it could conveniently be referred to either as a 'coda', or an E-flat 'continuum'.

But, just as the beginning of the development/restatement section was itself ambiguous, so this partial confirmation of E-flat proves to be an ambiguous function and, at Letter M, it is taken as the opportunity for a change of tonal direction, and only 8 bars later (i.e. four bars before Letter N) the key of B major is reached: this new key (the enharmonic of C-flat) is an exact tonal balance to the earlier G-major. But it is not until the Allegro moderato (ma poco a poco stretto) (p.30) is reached that reference to the A1 main theme is fully taken up and recast. This new version of A1 (AA1, Ex.300),. although obviously derived, now has a new character and a greater degree of rhythmic impetus: it does indeed have an 'allegro' quality about it - a fact that is enhanced by the rising counterpoint in horns. This new theme is carefully presented and accompanied by some features that later become important: these features are :-

(i) the pizz.phrase for cellos at Letter A(p.32) - a development of the horn counterpoint at the Allegro moderato,

(ii) the pizz.phrase for contra-basses which begins four bars after (i) above, and

(iii) the B-natural pedal for horns (p.33) which supports the more sequential treatment of the 'new' Allegro theme.

At Letter B (p.34) the tonality slips back to E-flat and a further new theme[1] (with AA1 as its accompaniment) is presented in woodwind. This new theme is a convenient figure for reinforcing (the return to) the E-flat tonality and it also acts as a simple foil to A1; and (from Letter C onwards) the movement appears to settle down in E-flat with A1 and this new theme in combination.

Eight bars before Letter D however, the contra-basses entry again disturbs the prevailing 4-bar harmonic rhythm,[2] and (at Letter D) a further new theme, BB1, (Lx.301) is presented by trumpets (and its rhythm under-lined by timpani).[3] The initial statement of this theme is made in E-flat, but the tonality then suddenly swings to B major - in which key this BB1 theme is restated by horns, after which it is taken up by woodwind, and the cadence marked by cross-rhythm (just before Letter F).

This woodwind version of BB1 is briefly presented in imitation, and leads to the establishment of a G-natural pedal and a short rising sequence (pp.44-5) that culminates in an intense 'ppp' discord for strings which resolves simply on (the first inversion of) the tonic chord of E-flat - though it is worth noticing the G - C-sharp undulation of timpani and clarinets (recalling the previous questioning of E-flat - in approximately the same place in the design of the second half as it originally occurred in the first half!)

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1. It is in fact the pizz. phrase for cellos presented only a few bars earlier, but its solo presentation here allows it to assume the function of a new theme.
2. See also (ii) above.
3. Although it is true that this BB1 theme has rhythmic affinities with A1, the phrase marked 'x' is remarkably similar to B2.

Following the resolution of this discord a further undulating progression (Ib - IIb) is established, and 10 bars later (last bar p.46) another version of B2, ~~is~~ BB2 (Ex.302), is presented by strings. But the rhythmic rewriting[1] of this version, (in the oboe entry, 8 bars before Letter J) quickly leads to the 'disintegration' of this theme and the establishment of markedly contrapuntal section (beginning at Letter K). This is, in fact, a highly energetic development section, and it works up to a climax and the final re-establishment of the tonic key.

The restatement is heralded by the announcement of the original version of A1 (in trumpets, nine bars after Letter N), followed (at Letter O) by the cadence theme B3 (on horns). This cadence theme is taken up by the full orchestra at Letter P, and a few bars later (p.59) the strings present an altered version of the B4 cadence theme against an 'fff' presentation of A1 by trombones - and over a tonic pedal. In turn this is followed by a 'presto' and 'più presto' sections in which A1 makes its final appearance and closes the movement in great triumph.

The workings of the second half of this movement (i.e.from the Allegro moderato onwards,) provide the justification and fulfilment of the unorthodoxy of the first half: and the impact and success of this design rests on its overall tonal argument, together with the direct and deliberate control of its pace and speed.

But the essential point of this (complete) first movement is that it is ONE COMPLETE DESIGN, i.e.not until both halves are put together can the movement actually function and achieve its particular creative purpose; moreover it cannot be accurately assessed until the relationship of the two halves is considered in the light of their respective contribution to the whole design.

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1. i.e.the sustained (and legato) notes for violins are now replaced by repeated (and staccatto) notes.

The discrepancies that have arisen in the (previous) assessments of this movement come not only from the historical facts concerning the composition and revision of this symphony, but, more importantly, from the 'failure' to recognise that two quite different (though inter-dependant) functions take place in the section between Letter M and the Allegro Moderato (p.30). Once these two functions have been distinguished then the overall design of this (unique) movement falls into perspective.

The distinction of the two functions may be more easily seen if - for the moment - the movement is considered in two separate halves.

In the first half (i.e.bar I to Letter M) a leisurely and undramatic proposition in E-flat is taken up and is quickly followed by a move to G major; this impressive (though quiet) tonal progression is balanced by a 'developmental' restatement and the subsequent addition of an area of E-flat tonality (- a coda). The formal and tonal scheme of this half (bar I to Letter M) - which presents an abridged sonata design wherein there is an ambiguous functioning of certain moments of the design (e.g. at the beginning of the development/restatement; the coda/bridge passage) - could be tabulated as follows :-

Exposition		Recapitulation	
A1	E-flat		
A2	E-flat minor	A1	G-major (- B-flat)
B1	G major	A2	B-flat minor
B2	"	B1	E-flat
B3	"	B2	"
B4	"	B3	"
		B4	"
		B1	E-flat coda
		B2	E-flat "

The design of the second half (N - 4.....al fine) could be briefly sketched thus :

Exposition:	AA1	B-major	Development Letter K to N + 8
	"	E-flat	
	BB1	E-flat	Recapitulation (N + 9 al fine)
	"	B-major	A1 (orig) E-flat
	BB2	E-flat	B2 E-flat
			B4 (+ A1) E-flat

It is however vitally important to realise that THE DESIGN OF THE SECOND HALF PRESENTS A DIRECTLY PARALLEL DESIGN TO THAT OF THE FIRST HALF: and five features in particular are worthy of note :

(i) there is a tonal movement from C-flat (B-natural) to E-flat (which is EXACTLY parallel to that of E-flat to G),

(ii) that the movement from B to E-flat follows quickly upon the initial establishment of B major itself (just as the move to G followed quickly upon the initial establishment of E-flat).

(iii) that this tonal movement is accomplished (at Letter B, p.34) with a lack of rhetoric and emotional heat (as with the parallel tonal movement in the first half),

(iv) that no other key centre (apart from B and E-flat) is established in the second half (- again no key centres other than G and E-flat were established in the first half), and

(v) that these tonal relationships are paralleled by some striking thematic relationships in particular :-

A1 - AA1

B2 - (BB1
(BB2

These two critical functions that take place between Letter M and the Allegro moderato may now be distinguished; they are

1. the fact that an impressive tonal movement (from E-flat to B) is undertaken in order to arrive at a position from which the

second half of the movement may commence its design and function: i.e. at this point the tonal design of the entire movement should be represented as -

E-flat to G...to E-flat; then ...C-flat to E-flat

and NOT

E-flat to G....E-flat to C-flat...to E-flat
⊢-----x----⊣

The tonal argument here is not the relationship between E-flat and B (at point x) but rather the relationship between B and E-flat[1] as a counterbalance to that of E-flat to G;

2. the fact that the energy required to move away from E-flat to B is so immense[2] (and the move so long delayed) that

(a) it establishes a momentum that cannot be denied, and so results in the parallel procedures of the second half taking place (and being worked out) at an increased pace - thus allowing the second half to include a fully worked out development section - which was not possible in (the time scale of) the first half, while

(b) the release of energy at the achievement of B major results in a gradual - though far-reaching and progressive - increase in sheer speed. And this increasing speed is itself enhanced and emphasized by both the deliberate control (over an extended period) of the harmonic rhythm, and the specific function of a number of orchestral details.

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1. It is precisely for this reason that although the initial appearance of BB1 is in E-flat, it MUST return to B major since its purpose as a transition theme (parallel to B1) is to effect the tonal movement from B major to E-flat!

2. The energy required is immense since :-
   a) it has to overcome the 'weight' of the previous E-flat recapitulation and coda, and
   b) it has to make a satisfactory preparation for what is to come.

In brief the second half of this movement could be considered as a 'mirror' reflection - and consequence - of the first half, though it is necessarily accomplished at a different pace, and enhanced by the progressively increasing speed released by the energy required to start the second half in a new key; the tonal design of the movement as a whole could be reduced to the simple statement :

E-flat to G...E-flat; C-flat to E-flat.... Devel.....E-flat

This unique design is quite clearly one movement which can only achieve its creative purpose when the two halves are allowed their consequential interaction.[1]

The most striking feature of the second half of this movement is that the pace is clearly faster than that of the first half,[2] although its impact is largely effected through the increase in speed, together with the deliberate control of the harmonic rhythm, and the particular function of some orchestral details.

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1. If one were to attempt the not impossible task of merely rounding of the first half (c.Letter M) to make it a separate first movement, it would result in an unavoidable feeling of anti-climax. Equally the second half of the movement could be made into a separate 'scherzo' movement, though it would largely be a 're-hash' of the first movement without the quality of continuing the line of thought (as, for example in the slow movement of the 1st symphony) or approaching the same idea from a new viewpoint (as in the 2nd movement of the fourth Symphony).

2. The evidence for this statement may been seen in the following facts :
   (1) the movement from B to E-flat takes slightly less time than the comparable movement from E-flat to G,
   (2) the exposition of the second half includes a repetition of the tonal movement B to E-flat, i.e.whereas the first half of the movement contains only a single movement for E-flat to G, the second half contains the movement B to E-flat, then B to E-flat again.
   (3) the second half also contains a development section.

The increase in speed of this second half is clearly shown in in David Chemiavskys account of Sibelius's Tempo Corrections, which quotes the following MM markings for this movement :

Tempo molto moderate	Page 3	♩. = 66	1st half of movement
Largamente	" 25	♩. = 63	
Allegro moderato	" 30	♩. = 80	2nd half of Movement
Letter D	" 39	♩. = 96	
Letter K	" 49	♩. =104	
Letter M	" 52	♩. =112	
Letter N	" 54	♩. =126	
Presto	" 60	♩. =138	

But perhaps the most important and fascinating feature of this increase of speed (and the faster pace it enhances) is to be seen in the control of the harmonic rhythm: and in addition to this there is the rhetorical effect of progressively shorter phrase lengths together with some vitally functional changes in orchestral texture.

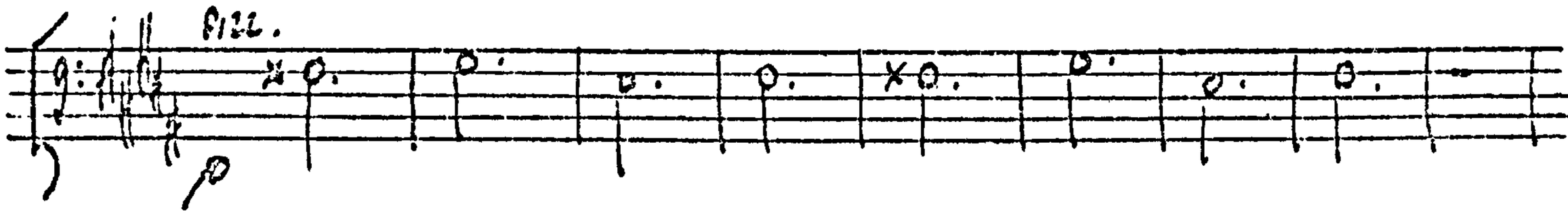
To deal with the harmonic rhythm first, the first point of interest occurs at the change of time-signature from 12/8 to 3/4 at the Allegro Moderato (p.30). At this point the established harmonic rhythm is not disturbed since the previous dotted crotchet is now replaced by a dotted minim (and the previous harmonic rhythm of 1 in a bar, is replaced by that of a change once every 4 bars).

But this new barring is not just a technical convenience, for it gives the previously unaccented second and fourth beats a natural first beat accent, i.e.each bar now begins with an accent. This enhances the Allegro quality of the theme is supports, and although the harmonic pace itself is to remain unchanged until p.46, certain features occur which gently emphasize the increased speed (and pace) of this second half, as well as emphasizing the desire for an accompanying increase in the rate of the harmonic rhythm.

The first of these features has been aptly described by Tovey (in another context) as "a flexing of the muscles": in these movements two such moments occur :

(i) the contra-bass entry 5 bars after Letter A p.32,

Ex.303



this introduces the sequential treatment of A1 and leads directly to the sudden change of key to L-flat - after which the movement again settles down in 4-bar periods, and

(ii) the 8 bars before Letter D, p.38,

Ex.304



which introduces the new trumpet version of BB1 and leads to the (second) tonal change to B major.

The effect of these 2 contra-bass entries is essentially rhetorical in that they create the expenctancy of some event or change: in this case they anticipate either the introduction of a new theme or a change of key.

But these entries are only the beginning of a whole process, and in isolation their impact is almost negligible: they are important because they appear to initiate the desire for change in the harmonic rhythm.

The change of the 4-bar harmonic rhythm does not occur until p.46 where it is replaced by a 2-bar harmonic rhythm; but in the intervening

period (from Letter E to p.46) a number of significant features make their first appearance: these features become increasingly obvious and exert a more direct influence on the harmonic rhythm.

The first of these features is the cross-rhythm that occurs at the end of the woodwind phrases between Letters E and G: initially the effect is only slight (and occasional) but it is heightened after Letter F where it is accompanied by a greater frequency of 2-bar harmonic rhythm. In turn the disturbance of the prevailing 4-bar harmonic rhythm leads to a passage (between Letters G and H) which avoids any obvious harmonic rhythm: instead there is the presentation of a rising sequential figure that culminates in the 'ppp' discord for strings, after which a 2-bar harmonic rhythm is clearly established.[1]

Once established these 2-bar harmonic periods are marked by

(i) the presentation of some apparently 'disjointed' violin phrases (BB2, p.47)

(ii) the staccato quality of the oboe phrases on p.48-9, which is startlingly new in this movement so far, and

(iii) the persistent cross-rhythm of the phrase endings from the bottom line of p.48 onwards,

- and these all coalesce to lead to a further increase in harmonic rhythm (to 1 in a bar) in the section which begins at Letter K.

At Letter K the speed of the movement is increased still further (♩. = 104) while the change to the new harmonic rhythm of 1 in a bar is itself enhanced by the following orchestral details: there is

(i) a general lack of harmonic support,

(ii) a prevalence of (thin) contrapuntal texture, mostly 2- and 3-part,

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1. The 2-bar harmonic rhythm (from p.46 onwards) could possibly be regarded as sub-divisions of a 4-bar phrase; but the pizz entries for contra-basses and the persistent accent which marks every other woodwind bar stresses the 2-bar characteristic.

(iii) the cessation of the undulating string pedal - for the first time in over 200 bars (!)

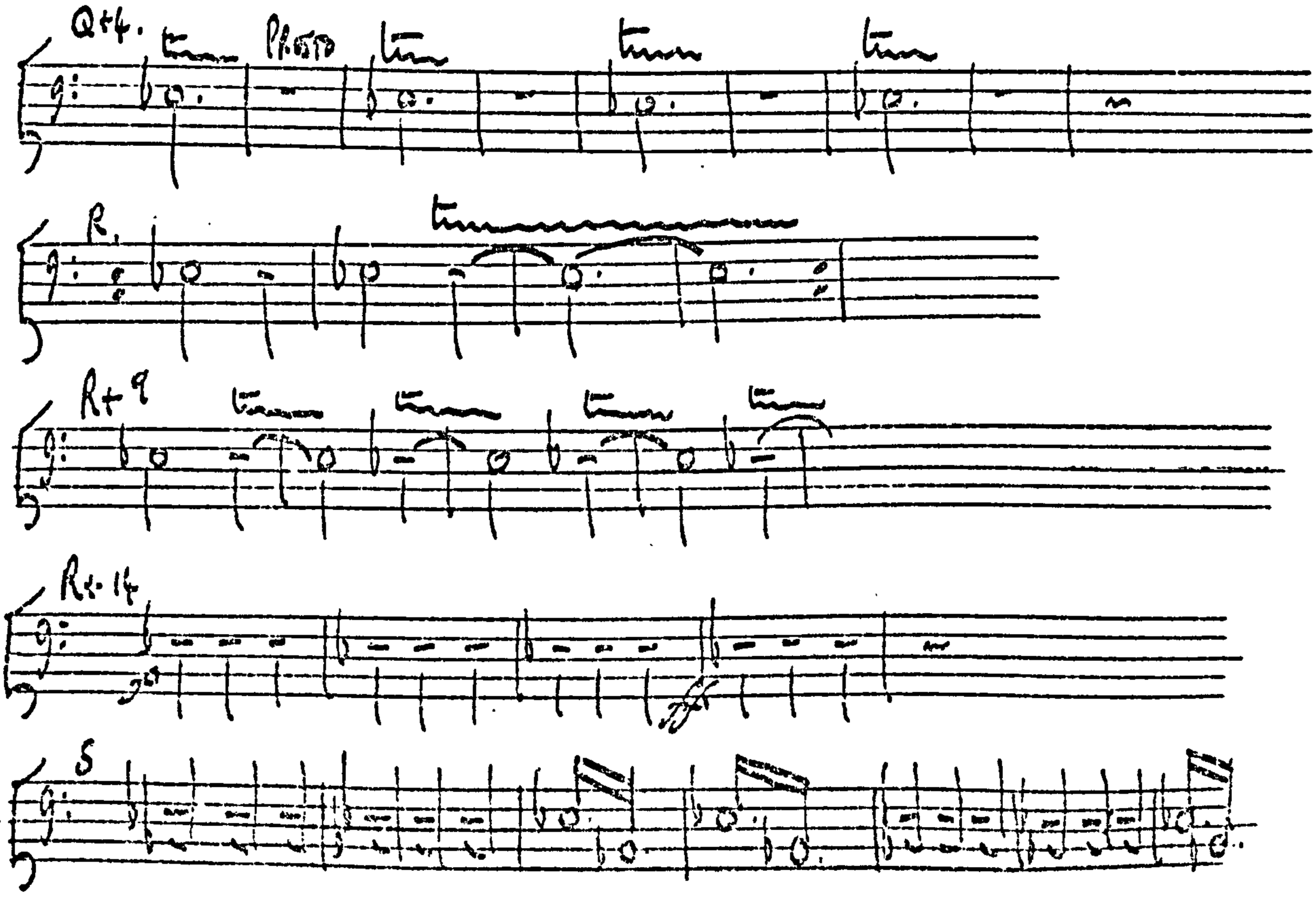
(iv) the avoidance of any clearly recognisable key centre, and

(v) the antiphonal orchestration - initially of very short phrases.

Note too the remarkable fact of the sudden and coincidental appearance of several of these features at (or shortly after) Letter K.

Two final facts should be noted: firstly that the return of A1 (on p.55) is dovetailed into the prevailing texture, and that this takes place before the tonic key is unquestionably re-established - thus helping to maintain the impression of an increasing speed - while secondly, the return of the B3 cadence theme (at Letters P and O) creates the opportunity for suggesting that the harmonic rhythm has been increased to 2 in a bar; secondly, that the timpani entries from 'presto'...al fine, are constantly urging an even greater increase in speed: they show the following progressive patterns :-

Ex.305



In this movement the use of a 'progressive' increase in speed (together with its concommitant features of harmonic rhythm and certain orchestral details) dramatically characterises the increased pace of the second half - and this increased pace is the result of the powerful tonal change needed to balance, fulfil, and work out the tonal tensions created in the first half.

The result is one totally unified and convincing movement: a unique design of huge simplicity that encompasses a wealth of subtleties, and presents them in an increasingly dramatic and exciting manner.

The subtleties arise from the interplay and evolution of a number of separate features which have been detailed above; the extent of the subtleties may also be seen in the careful and deliberate way in which a simultaneous increase in speed and a change of key are consistently avoided (after p.30) - though the two events are usually only separated by a few bars, and could easily have occurred simultaneously.[1]

This first movement has nothing in common with the mere joining together of two separate movements: it is a grand, and single, design.

The second movement is frequently dismissed lightly as a set of simple variations, although there is no complete agreement amongst scholars as to whether the foundation of these variations is a theme or just a rhythm. But while the movement has a charm and delicacy that recalls the middle movement of the Third Symphony, it is worthy of an even closer examination: indeed its charm and simplicity could conceal a larger intention which may eventually be seen as something of an achievement.

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1. Sibelius's reason for avoiding this simultaneous occurrence is (surely) not difficult to surmise: if both events occurred simultaneously the design would appear suddenly to leap forwards, whereas by introducing the two events in succession the design moves smoothly - and the effect is thereby enhanced.

To begin with the basic theme deserves some comment for while the first paragraph lasts from bar 1 to Letter B - some 40 bars - and while the rhythm remains almost unaltered, it is possible to isolate four separate melodic strands, A1, A2, A3, A4 (Ex.306). Certain phrases are common to at least two of these strands, and although the differences between the first three strands are small, they subtly sustain interest while helping to preserve the illusion of the utmost simplicity - and constantly bemuse the ear with their similarities. The last melodic stand, A4, is more obviously dominant-based than any of the others: it acts as a cadence theme and usually only appears at the end of a paragraph.

The harmonic support for this first paragraph is restricted to the most basic progressions and indeed the nonchalance and simplicity of the theme are (deliberately) reflected in these basic harmonies and static tonality.

As the first paragraph comes to an end the woodwind begin an accompaniment (8 bars before Letter B) that is to feature throughout the second paragraph (Letters B - C) and again illustrates Sibelius's fondness for dovetailing the sections of a movement and naturally makes for continuity. Some comment has been made of this woodwind figure (Ex.307)[1] with one writer describing it as[2]

> "decidedly harsh....this undogmatic (fördomsfria) encounter of the notes C, C-sharp, D and E...."

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1. The degree of harshness of this encounter is perhaps a matter for discussion and dispute: certainly in a carefully balanced performance the effect of the actual harshness will be minimised; the scoring is masterly - the coolness of the flute C-sharp contrasts with the more acid bite of the oboe C-natural which is then immediately resolved - and it ensures that the harmonic clash will be easily and clearly heard without unduly intruding on the variations it accompanies.

2. Kingbon, op.cit., p.138.

The second paragraph (beginning at Letter B) presents the main melodic strands in a simple quaver decoration over a tonic pedal in horns, and accompanied by the persistent woodwind figure mentioned above. At bar 61 (first bar p.74) a dominant pedal is established and this supports the reappearance of the cadence strand, A4.

Following a decorated repetition of this cadence phrase, the woodwind and lower strings momentarily suggest the minor key (in the two bars before Letter C) - a pathetic touch - after which the cadence is completed in a short closing section 'poco tranquillo'.

Six bars after Letter C what appears to be a third section begins with the direction 'a tempo'[1] but shortly afterwards the reappearance of the 'pathetic' minor phrase in woodwind (two bars before Letter E) is taken as the opportunity to turn the tonality quickly to E-flat.

The most interesting feature of this change of key is seen in the bar immediately before Letter E (Ex.308) for this shows the div.violas and cellos beginning their phrase in E-flat while, simultaneously, the woodwind complete theirs in G minor. This deliberate change of key occurs at a somewhat surprising moment: for the previous appearance of the minor woodwind phrase (i.e.the two bars before Letter C) was followed by the 'poco tranquillo' closing section and the completion of the long awaited perfect cadence. Here, at Letter E, the cellos and violas introduce the same 'tranquillo' passage, but in E-flat - almost as though nothing significant had taken place, and at the very moment of the G major cadence. The manner of this overlapping of keys, together with the lack of any preparation for a tonal change, as well as the avoidance of more normal key rhetoric, deliberately minimises the dramatic impact of this event.

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1. The contra-bass entry beginning on the third bar of p.77 should be noted: it will be discussed later (see p.322).

However, (on p.82) with the direction 'poco a poco a tempo' and a return of the main melodic strands, it is interesting to observe that whereas the G major paragraphs had been both harmonically limited and slow moving this E-flat section now moves briskly towards its dominant key.

Thus this key of E-flat is established with some (quiet) emphasis, and the section then begins a sequential movement (from the last bar p.83) which although hovering around the key of E-flat soon provides the opportunity for a simple and easy return to G major (at Letter F, where the E-flat horn pedal slips back to D-natural).

Further simple variations follow in the tonic key of G major. These are at first marked by some simple chromatic harmonies and lead to the momentary establishment of D major (emphasizing the G major 'return'); the timpani, of course insist that this D major is nothing more than a heightened dominant and persist with G-and D-naturals throughout the (D major) cadence. After this the rest of the section is largely concerned with major/minor alternations that are eventually resolved by the perfect cadence three bars after Letter G.

Shortly after this (p.92) the end of the movement appears imminent with the 'loss' of the melody and only its rhythmic outline on reiterated E-naturals. Suprisingly these are taken up and explored almost as if there had been a change of key; but the process is forcefully interrupted before it becomes established, after which it is sequentially repeated, starting on F-natural. This too is similarly interrupted at Letter H.

Here after a bar-line pause, a short passage - which momentarily takes up F-sharp - reintroduces the familiar melodic outline and leads to a very simple statement of A3 (on solo oboe) over essentially subdominant harmonies, and the design of the movement is then rounded off by (i) the

reappearance of the woodwind figure of Ex.307, (ii) a short codetta, which recalls the previous 'poco tranquillo' closing sections, and (iii) a simple woodwind cadence.

The character of this movement is intriguing and its elegantly deceptive simplicity conceals a symphonic subtlety. The point of the movement is NOT to present interesting variations: the variations are reduced to the utmost simplicity, and this simplicity is part of the essence of the movement.

At the same time this very simplicity combines with an insistence on the G major tonality to give the movement a 'monumental' aspect: and several features contribute to this intriguing blend.

Firstly the main theme - with its shared elements, its repetitive rhythm and static harmonies - is designed to carry and enhance this movements particular characteristic: the melody itself is the size of a symphonic movement, for it continually turns round on itself: it does not present a continual unfolding but constantly reorganizes (and decorates) its constituent elements.

This flow of melody is supported by a particular insistence on the G major tonality: this is itself enhanced by both the slow swing of harmonies, as outlined by the horn and brass pedals, and by the C/C-sharp clash at Letter B.

The horn and brass pedals are an important characteristic of this movement, and their quiet insistence on the dominant and tonic adds to the fundamental simplicity of the movement and helps to create its monumental aspect.[1] In the first paragraph (up to Letter C) for example, the first sentence is frequently supported by a dominant pedal, while the

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1. By making the dominant and tonic pedals, as it were, 'larger than life', Sibelius exemplifies a basic characteristic of any 'monumental' object or achievement.

Interestingly enough it has been suggested to me that perhaps this quality reflects the endless expanse of Finnish forests.

second sentence, beginning at Letter B, is firmly supported by a tonic pedal (that actually begins 7 bars earlier) and which is so phrased as to ensure a continuous sound; the last sentence is supported by a 'pppp' dominant seventh on trumpets and trombones and accompanied by a C - D undulation (in minims) on timpani.

The C/C-sharp clash that occurs at Letter B also contributes to the monumental aspect of this movement, for it presents two different outlooks simultaneously: thus the C-natural fulfils a conventional dominant seventh function, while the C-sharp - D progression emphasises its pro-dominant qualities. Moreover, this clash takes place over the continuous G-natural horn pedal.

In addition to these characteristics, the unique blend of this movement is subtly emphasized by a number of casual 'diversions' and details.

To begin with there are such details as the 'delayed' entry of the contra-basses and timpani (in bar 7) to make a root position tonic chord while, on p.78, the subsequent entry of the violins is equally casual and climbs through a complete octave before taking up the melody; similarly both the entry of the violas and the deliberate simplicity of the lower of of the two strin; parts (on p.78) contributes to this 'air' of studied casualness.

Perhaps more importantly, there is also the change of key which occurs at Letter E. This change of key actually takes place at a rather surprising moment, and the casual nature of this diversion is further reflected in the easy manner of its return to G major at Letter F. But this element of tonal change (together with the slightly less important move from E-flat to its dominant) supports the main key, and gives it a depth while avoiding more normal key rhetoric.

Other equally casual diversions and features are to be seen in the passage of major/minor alternations (pp.87-91) which follows the E-flat episode, and the taking up of the E- and F-naturals in the passage before Letter H (pp.93-4; as well as the momentary acceptance of F-sharp itself at Letter H et seq.).

In contrast the 'insouciance' of the characteristic ending nicely points the deceptive simplicity of the movement.

The unique character of this movement is carried and enhanced, as usual, by its peculiarly appropriate scoring: the main features of the orchestration - the frequent use of woodwind in thirds, the large amount of pizz for strings, the horn and brass pedals, the overlapping of textures which provide an easy flow from one sentence to the next, as well as the refinement and translucence of such textures as that at Letter B for example - these features play an important part in the achievement of the movement.

The movement exemplifies the art of 'staying put', of remaining static but not stagnant; with what appears to be no more than the simplest of materials and procedures Sibelius presents a G major movement characterised by its monumental aspects: it is a special achievement.

One fact remains to be noted, for the harmonic movement of the passages beginning 7 bars after Letter C (p.77) or, more particularly, at Letter F (pp.85-6) is outlined by contra-basses in a phrase that virtually states the 'big tune' of the finale. According to Parmet (p.81) Sibelius himself was unaware of this resemblance; yet the similarities - over 4 bars - are conspicuously matched. However the fact that in the finale Sibelius uses this theme in 3-bar phrases, may help to explain this anomaly; for Sibelius

the difference in their function and phrase-length may well have caused him to overlook their relationship - though to the listener the relationship is clearly obvious.

The third and finale movement of this symphony is a simple design which manages to achieve the emotional impact of a movement of heroic proportions: and it does so with only modest orchestral resources and through straightforward technical means. The sonata outlines of the movement may be sketched as follows :

Exposition: Bar 1 to F + 24 (4th bar p.113) :

A1	E-flat	Bar 5	Ex.309
B1 (A2)	E-flat	D + 1	Ex.310
B2	E-flat	E - 12	Ex.311
B1 + B2	C major	E + 25	

Development: G - 8 to Letter I :

Recapitulation: Letter I al fine:

A1	G-flat	Letter I
B1	G-flat	L + 1
B2	G-flat	L + 12
B1 + B2	E-flat minor	N
B1 + B2	E-flat major	O + 7

The exposition is extremely clear and apparently straightforward, but the character and construction of the opening theme[1] (and the ensuing paragraph) is worth of some closer examination.

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1. This theme has, in fact, given rise to totally opposed statements: Abraham describes it (p.30-1) as "a sort of 'moto perpetuo' effect for strings'" adding later that "such incessant non-thematic, or barely thematic passages have always been a feature of Sibelius's music"; per contra, Parmet states (p.82) "they (the violas) above all introduce the theme. Sibelius has chosen to emphasize this fact by marking the viola part 'mf' as opposed to the 'mp' in the second violin part. Performed properly in accordance with the composers' instructions, the theme cannot fail to make the intended effect."

This main theme, A1 - some 23 bars long - has a distinctive shape and structure: it is clearly more than a 'moto perpetuo' figure and yet at the same time it gives rise to a similarly mesmeric effect. And this perpetuo effect is heightened by the simple fact the opening paragraph of this exposition consists of almost nothing more than the (literal) repetitions of this one theme.[1]

The interest of this opening paragraph is maintained not only by the inherent fascination of the theme itself, but also by its constant emergence in different string registers. Further the 'perpetuo' impression is heightened by the continuous octave tremolos and the increasing strength and fullness of the orchestral texture. In this context the character of the main theme continually points forward to a subsequent climax IN THE SAME KEY (i.e. it may be suggested that this tonic paragraph needs something akin to the rising trumpet phrase, C - D - E, which rounds off the first paragraph or the first movement of the Third Symphony.

Confirmation of this suggestion, that the first subject is a theme characterised by perpetuo elements, is to be found in subsequent events. For the most apparently unconventional feature of this exposition is that the second subject (B1) is first introduced in the tonic key. This is an

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1. The exact details of the first 105 bars (i.e.until D + 1: the bar before the entry the second subject) are as follows :-

Bars 3 - 26	A1 complete,
23 - 46	A1 with last 4 bars changed,
47 - 54	a simple extension phrase,
55 - 62	extension phrase repeated,
62 - 77	the last 16 bars of A1,
78 - 99	the first 19 bars of A1 (with three bars repeated),
99 - 105	a simple extension to allow the semiquaver figure to cadence in E-flat.

Finally, note the 'anticipatory' dovetail effected by cellos and contra-basses (5 bars before Letter D).

important feature of the design, for the retention of the tonic key marks this new B1 theme as both the second motive (of the first subject group) AND the second subject: and it is a direct consequence of the character of the oepning A1 theme. The idea is elegantly simple and imaginatively logical.[1]

There can be no doubt that this new B1 horn theme is also the second subject; and the fact is later confirmed by the magnificant swing to C major (p.109). Indeed the vital necessity for this confirmation dictates the choice of this particular key; for the lack of an impressive preparation - which could have delayed the impetus of this exposition and robbed the change of key of its impact, as it actually stands - needs to be countered by a tonal change that makes its point with unmistakable clarity. A consideration of some other possible keys - C minor, G-major, even B-natural (= C-flat) suggests that none would have the same impact as C major; moreover C major has been consistently avoided (throughout the symphony) until this moment.

It is both interesting (and not without bearing on the present argument) to speculate on what Sibelius might have done. For instance, if this second subject had been introduced in C major without first making an appearance in E-flat (and without any modulatory preparation) then he would probably have had to introduce at least one additional theme in order to make this new key 'tell': indeed it would then have taken on the tonal and thematic pattern of the first movement of the Violin Concerto. In contrast, therefore, the present movement illustrates the greater simplicity and effectiveness of its own design.

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1. It may be suggested that the antecedents of this imaginative idea are to be seen in (i) the first movement of the Fourth Symphony - where the opening dramatic comment reappears later as the second subject or (ii) (more recently) in the first movement of this Fifth Symphony - where the 'transition theme' of the second half, BB1 is first presented (at Letter I) in E-flat before moving to its 'correct' key of B major.

However having made its mark as the second subject, this B1 theme remains in C major until the end of the exposition: but one further feature remains to be noted. This new theme lacks none of the impetus of the previous 'perpetuo' figure, and indeed there is no lessening of the forward movement: in fact quite the reverse would seem to be true. The reason for this rests on the facts that (i) this theme itself has a 'perpetuo' character and, (ii) it moves in 3-bar phrases - a feature that is consistently emphasized by the outlining of the 3-bar structure by contra-basses and bassoons (using the main theme in canon by augmentation, Ex.312). The contra-bass entry is not completed until p.108 and its importance in stressing the 3-bar structure in the overall design of the movement has been (previously) overlooked.

The essential point to be noted here is the 3-bar structure,[1] for this seems to give this 'big tune' a larger sweep of phrase without interrupting its forward flow; moreover at the change of key (to C major) this 3-bar structure is further emphasized by the group of 4 'attacca' semiquavers for contra-basses - on the down bow!

The development section (beginning 8 bars before Letter G) is short, simple in construction, and exclusively concerned with material taken from A1. The first 8 bars move to a clear cadence in E-flat, but they hint at C minor and this possible ambiguity is taken up at Letter G where three statements of a 4-bar phrase hover between E-flat and C minor - a procedure that is characteristically supported by an internal G-natural pedal. This

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1. This 3-bar structure is in contradistinction to the structure of A1 - which largely avoids any regular metrical construction.

4-bar phrase[1] then moves towards a cadence in C minor, but it is interrupted and the tonality is suddenly turned towards G-flat - where a similar tonal ambiguity (between G-flat and E-flat minor) is developed. This too is supported by a mediant/dominant (B-flat) pedal though the 4-bar phrase structure is no longer in evidence. Again the expected cadence (though now in E-flat minor) is interrupted, and it initiates a short sequential passage which moves through E major, and F major, to arrive at G-flat and the beginning of the recapitulation at Letter I.

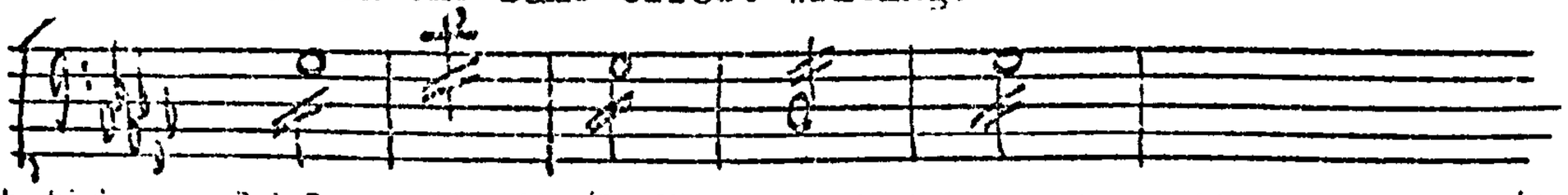
Here the strings are marked 'con sord' under the general direction 'misterioso', and the dark quality of the G-flat tonality provides a nice balance to the bright C major of the latter part of the exposition - and, for the moment, it enables the recapitulation to function in formal rather than emotional terms.

The first part of the recapitulation is, in essence, a repeat of the opening paragraph of the exposition, though there is the addition of two short 'marcato' phrases (at 9 bars after Letter J, and 11 bars after Letter K) which are more important for their 3-bar structure than their thematic reference.[2] and this 3-bar structure is shortly taken up again (at Letter L) with the reappearance of the second subject B1 - still in G-flat - as a subdued (and staccato) accompaniment for B2.

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1. It is interesting to compare this phrase with the two contra-bass entries from the first movement (see p.313); a similar phrase also occurs in the Seventh Symphony.

2. This particularly applies to the second 'marcato' entry; Sibelius could almost have achieved the same effect writing:



- but this would lose the F-/G-flat clash in bar 4 as it actually stands as well as the subtlety of the thematic 'hint'.

At Letter N the time signature is changed to 3/2 and the tonality swings easily to E-flat minor where B1 and B2 are presented simultaneously, though the emphasis at this point is still on B2 - the B1 melody is shared between the 2 oboes.

The change of time signature is not without significance, and it is a careful preparation for the crucial change of harmonic rhythm that is to follow later. What it does do - immediately - is to give these second subject melodies a much broader sweep between (first-beat) accents, and the impact on the listener is of a larger sense of melody (- it suggests a considerable expansion). This impression is enhanced by the presentation of B2 in octaves in strings (without contra-basses) and the introduction of sustained harmonic support (in horns and, later, trombones).

The restoration of the tonic major key occurs 7 bars after Letter O, and it is marked with a restraint that in no way diminishes its impressive power, and its impact is emphasized by the appearance of two particular features at this point.

The first of these is the reduction of the harmonic rhythm to one change every two bars (i.e.it is effectively made to move only half as fast as it did previously): a fact that appears to be the climax of a process that began with

(i) the outlining of the 3-bar structure of the second subject (in 2/4), and

was then furthered by

(ii) the change to 3/2 - where the harmonic rhythm was one harmony per bar, and the process is now completed by

(iii) the final reduction of the harmonic rhythm to one harmony every two bars, at 'Largamente assai' (p.129)

This is a simple though logical process and it has a powerful effect; it has been enhanced by such details as the octave presentation of B2

(at Letter N), the change in the accompanying texture between Letters L and N, and it now strengthens the return of E-flat major.

The second feature occurs simultaneously with the achievement of E-flat major and the reduction of the harmonic rhythm: it is the presentation of the B1 theme by the 3 trumpets - 'mp e nobile'; the effect of this simple change of tone colour is considerable, since it has clearly been reserved for this moment: the only previous use of the trumpets in this movement was in a sustained chord (two bars after Letter H) and before that their appearances in the second movement were limited in length and dynamics.

A short coda begins at Letter P: it leads to the climax of the movement which is mainly effected by a searing harmonic distortion of the second subject melody. The reduced rate of harmonic rhythm is now no longer rigidly maintained, though the syncopated D-flat for contra-basses (and cellos) effectively inhibits any sense of an increasing harmonic rhythm. As the climax approaches, the syncopation is taken up by all the strings and this enables the climactic tension of the closing bars (p.135 et seq.) to be maintained - hence the direction 'un ponchettino stretto' - without degenerating into the 'rall' that the cadence would appear to need.

The forward-moving impetus of this climax demands a tremendous orchestral weight to halt its progress, and conventional cadential rhetoric would either be too weak, or demand too much time: for this reason therefore the unconventional ending of 6 chords, widely spaced in time, is vitally necessary. By spacing the chords - and the rests need to be given full value - the movement is brought to a full close without becoming platitudinous or extended.

The design (and realisation) of this finale is impressive in its emotional impact: the more so since it is achieved within a modest time-scale without any feeling of compression. The movement is based on the

forward-moving character of the first subject which is then 'completed' by a second motive that is elegantly shown - by a powerful change of key - to be the second subject: note too the 'perpetuo' character and structure of the B1 theme itself.[1] The design is completed - simply - by a parallel tonal movement in the recapitulation and the gradual fulfilment of the expansive character of the second subject theme and its 3-bar structure.

The Fifth Symphony is an immensely enjoyable work with an 'open' and immediately approachable emotional character: and its success rests on purely musical factors. In the first movement some of the most frequent and characteristic elements of Sibelius's creative musical imagination are combined with a far-reaching (and progressive) increase in pace and speed to effect a huge and exciciting design which has not always been fully appreciated by scholars; the second movement is a subtle symphonic achievement, while the finale presents a majestic conclusion with admirable succinctness.

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1. The fact that the second subject paragraph of the exposition does not come to a full close, but is gently abandoned, is perhaps - in this particular movement - not only a convenient dovetail that makes for continuity, but again reflects the perpetuo and forward-looking character of the main themes themselves.

CHAPTER 19

HUMORESQUES

Valse lyrique

Suite mignonne

Suite champêtre

CHAPTER 19

The two sets of Humoresques for Violin Solo and Orchestra, Op.87[1] and 89, were both composed in 1917. They have been undeservedly neglected in the concert hall though Sibelius once wrote of them (in a private letter quoted by Ekman,)[2] "I like them very much. They are 'large-size'". At first sight this description is somewhat surprising since none of the 6 pieces runs to any great length and it would be an exaggeration to describe them as vitally significant compositions. Obviously, then, Sibelius had something else in mind when he so described these 'seriously written miniatures' (as Johnson calls them) - and eventually it may be seen that Sibelius's description was not inaccurate. Moreover the choice of 'humoresque' as their title accords well with their character and musical essence.

The first Humoresque is in D minor; it is scored for double woodwind, 2 horns, timpani, strings, and Violin solo, and falls into two main sections. The essence of this composition, and the source of its energy, is to be found in the opening sentences. The first 8 bars, A1 (Ex.313) clearly proclaim D major, but the entry of the solo with A2 (Ex.314) in bar 8 introduces a 'surprising' F-natural - though B-natural remains. The second sentence (A3, beginning at letter B) maintains this uncertain tonal mode but the tonality is stabilised by an extended augmented-sixth chord (on the flat supertonic) after which the first paragraph is completed by a simple rising

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1. With regard to Op.87 some discrepancies arise in the various lists of Sibelius's compositions; the following information should be noted :
   1) Ekman refers to only FIVE Humoresques (both in the text, p.244, and the list of works p.287); he lists Op.87a as 'Impromptu for orchestra'.
   2. Abraham (p.181) lists Op.87a as 'Impromptu (1917)' but makes no further reference to it.
   3) Layton refers to an "Andante lirico for strings. Mss" dated 1894 which he describes in a footnote (p.171) as "probably the same as 'Impromptu' for strings (often cited as Op.87a)."
   4) Solantera's chronological list of works shows only the Humoresques under Op.87 (and 89) but the alphabetical list includes a number of entries under 'Impromptu' - including Op.87a !
2. Ekman, op.cit.p.244.

sequence[1] (over a chromatic bass-line) that leads to a brief reference to A1 - and a D major chord.

But then, in spite of four bars of tonic major chord, the tonality suddenly swings over to B-flat and a new thematic idea, B1 (Ex.315), is presented in woodwind. This B1 idea is then taken up by the solo, but its repetition is accompanied by a change of harmony that immediately brings it back to the threshold of D minor (complete with a reference to A1). Nevertheless the tonal argument is not at once resolved and the key of B-flat continues to exert some degree of influence until the first section of this Humoresque is completed (p.7, bar 9) with a subdued cadence in D minor.

The second half of this composition is a natural consequence of the first, and it begins with a restatement of A3 that attempts to re-establish D minor convincingly, though both the contradictory elements (F - and B-natural) are still present. At Letter D therefore this A3 phrase is extended, and leads to the establishment of a dominant pedal (which is strengthened by the appearance of a number of D-sharps, i.e.the augmented fourth of the dominant 'key') after which the movement moves to D major for the 'restatement' of B1. The tonal point (and importance) of this D major restatement is emphasized by the momentary tonal swing to F-sharp minor.

Subsequently the design of this composition is rounded off by the complete restatement of A3 (with its extended augmented-sixth chord) and the effective, though largely conventional, closing bars. The cross-rhythm of these closing bars is a useful device for maintaining climactic excitement, and is a convenient example of Sibelius's characteristic attention to detail.

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1. The G-sharps (bars 3 - 6, p.3) are a further tonal reinforcement.

The essence of this first Humoresque is the internal tonal tension that arises from the presence of contradictory elements (F- and B-natural) in the key of D (-or more simply from the avoidance of F-sharp). The ensuing tonal evolution - clearly descended from very similar tonal propositions found in the symphonic and large-scale compositions - is the justification for Sibelius's description quoted above.

Similar creative exploitations of the vagaries of tonality are found in the remaining Humoresques, and the title is itself an apt reflection of the gently wayward and capricious nature of their tonal basis.

The second Humoresque, in D major, is immediately attractive. It is scored for 2 horns, timpani, strings, and Violin solo, has a ternary form construction, and (like its predecessor) draws its energy from the conflict of major and minor elements - in this case largely characterised by the persistent use of either the flat supertonic or diminished supertonic chords.

As in the first Humoresque the ground plan of the work is simple, though full of characteristic and quite subtle touches. The first section (Bar 1 to Letter E) is entirely taken up with the two main tonic themes: the first of which, A1, (Ex.316) is melodically characterised by a frequent E-flat (and an occasional C-natural) and the second A2, (Ex.317) presenting alternate major and minor statements of the same melody. The closing bars of the first tonic paragraph (i.e.last 2 bars p.19 - to Letter B) present the basic tonal major/minor uncertainty in its most acute, though subdued, form.

In the following tonic paragraph (Letter B - Letter E) the two main themes are repeated, but during the subsequent extension of A2 the diminished supertonic chord creates an increasing tension. The tonality is then more markedly disturbed (3 bars after Letter D) by a sustained

C-natural roll for timpani (later strengthened by contra-basses). However, this is not allowed to disrupt the tonality at this point, and the tension is simply left to evaporate. But the reappearance of this C-natural (bottom line p.24) leads to a sudden turning of the tonality to B-flat (at Letter L) and the second section of the ternary form.

This middle section (Letter L - Letter P) is entirely taken up with the simple (and almost non-thematic) characterisation (Ex.318) of the key of B-flat - and its hint of G minor.

After Letter P the 'modulation' to B-flat is shown to be nothing more than a detour to (the extended presentation of) the submediant chord brought about by the internal tonal ambiguity of the key of D major. The third and final section presents a decorated restatement of A1 and the composition is completed by a short coda in which a descending bass-line leads to a sudden swerve to F major - a counterbalance to B-flat - before the final, droll cadence.

This second Humoresque is rather more witty than its predecessor, while its bustling semiquaver activity, its effective cross-rhythm, and increased solo display make it immensely enjoyable.

The publication (in the same year) of these two sets of Humoresques under separate Opus numbers would seem a little surprising, especially as they are numbered 1 - 2, and then 3 - 6. The possible reason for this is illustrated by the key relationship of each set: thus Nos.1 and 2 (Op.87) are concerned with the conflict of major/minor tonal identities and the two compositions are in D minor and D major respectively. In Nos.3 - 6 (Op.89)[1] three of the compositions are in G minor, while the remaining Humoresque in B-flat begins with four bars of an unambiguous G minor chord

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1. It is also strange to note that although the title page of Op.89 describes the work as 'Humoresques III - VI for violin solo with string accompaniment' the last two numbers both include essential wind parts.

which points to a clear tonal relationship between the numbers.

The third Humoresque, in G minor, is directed 'Alla Gavotta' and it is scored for strings only.[1] Although this Gavotte is (as H.Wood says) "very far from a conventional specimen of that Dance" it shows clear traces of its ancestry. The stately (French) Gavotte was distinguished by being in a moderate 4/4 time, beginning on the half bar (as indeed did all the phrases) and was frequently followed by either another Gavotte or a Musette (which was itself distinguished by a drone bass). In the particulars of beginning the phrases of the half bar, and following the Gavotte with a Musette, Sibelius is exact in letter if not in spirit! The overall form of this composition then, is ternary: Gavotte, Musette, Gavotte.

The first Gavotte consists of a 'verse' (A1) in G minor followed by a refrain (A2 beginning at Letter A) first in the minor and then repeated in the major: the end of the refrain (bars 3 - 6 after Letter B) is marked by an undulation between major and minor. The subsequent second verse (beginning at the return of the minor key signature, p.7) is now in the major key - with the exception of the 'sul G' cadence phrase on p.9. A decorated version of the refrain follows though having begun in the major key it later turns to the minor where the cadence continues with the major/minor oscillation.

The A1 melody then returns as if for a third verse, but it breaks off abruptly (3 bars before Letter A) and is followed by the Musette which consists of a very simple triplet figuration for solo violin over a tonic-pedal-drone (also played by the soloist!).

The unambiguous G major tonality of the Musette is its most important feature and its 'r'aison d'etre' (hence the thinness of its musical invention);

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1. The strings are listed thus: 6 Violino I div.a.3, 6 Violino II div.a.3, 4 Viola div (a.2), 4 Violincello div.(a.2), 2 Basso.

and for this reason the accompaniment is largely confined to basic harmonic progressions while the plainness of the texture makes a striking - almost rustic - contrast to the Gavotte.

The design of this Third Humoresque is completed by the return of the Gavotte: the decorated verse is now followed by the refrain (in G minor) and the closing bars make an effective reference to the major key - in harmonics (6 bars after Letter H) - before the composition is closed with a tonic minor chord.

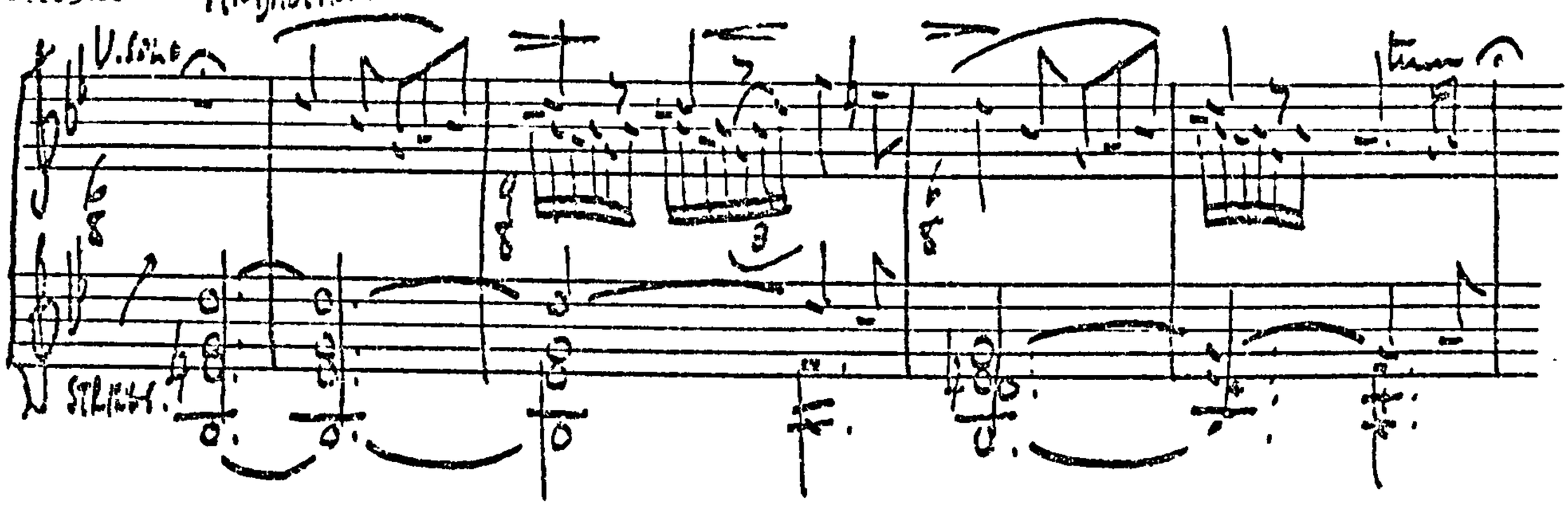
While this Humoresque is effective enough, it cannot match the level of 'inspiration' of the first two. Once again the source of energy is seen at the outset where the 'introductory' bars (Ex.319) present elements of both major and minor modes of the key of G: the ensuing tonal ambiguity is largely pursued by the contrast of alternate sentences in major and minor. The G major/minor tonality is stabilised, to a certain extent, at cadence points by the frequent use of the augmented fourth (C-sharp), and this combines with the major/minor oscillations to give the piece a 'Zigeuner-like' feeling (- Magyar perhaps ?) which is in startling contrast to the other Humoresques.

The simple fact that the internal tonal ambivalence of this third Humoresque is NOT allowed to affect the overall tonality is counterbalanced by its formal structure, but prevents it from attaining the achievement of the first Two Humoresques.

The fourth Humoresque is again in G minor, scored for strings only, and is perhaps the most restrained and poetic of the six. It falls into a ternary form in which the short middle section acts as a kind of simple development. The first section consists of an 'introduction' (p.27, miniature score) followed by a sentence in the tonic minor, repeated in the major, and rounded off by the reappearance of the opening 'introductory' chords.

The 'introduction' consists largely of an ambiguous harmonic undulation above which the solo is largely restricted to outlining the tonic chord of G minor:

Ex.320



- and it is only the insistence of the solo on the tonic minor chord (and nothing else for 8 bars) that keeps G minor in view. In the 9th bar the ambiguous submediant seventh chord turns towards the dominant (of G minor) and, after a comma, the first sentence (beginning at Letter A) clearly establishes G minor and moves to a half close. This sentence is then repeated in the major and the return of the opening melodic phrase (first in the major, then the minor) completes the first section.

But the final cadence of the first section (bars 2 - 3, p.29) is again interrupted and it initiates a short quasi-development second section, that moves sequentially through a variety of key-centres until (with hints of A1) it comes to a momentary pause on the dominant of B minor, from where it moves sequentially to reach the familiar submediant seventh chord (in G minor) and the beginning of the last section (at Letter D).

Here the third section presents quite literal repeat of the first, though this time the 5 final bars maintain the tonic major chord.

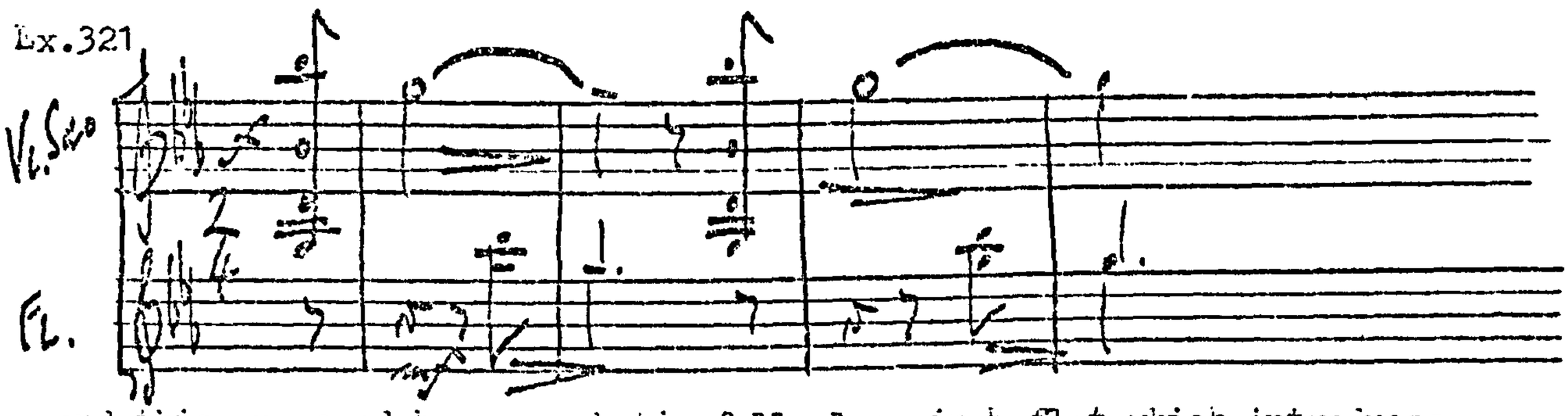
In some ways this Fourth Humoresque recalls the 'The Bard', Op.64, and it has something of the same leisurely and rhapsodic flow; although its smaller dimensions prevent it from making a larger impact. The initial,

ambiguous, tonal hovering - and especially the tension that arises from the subdued 'conflict' of the simultaneous suggestion of the keys of F major (or B-flat) and G minor (in the opening 8 bars) - is symphonic in its essence though it is not allowed to effect any tonal changes later in the composition; this restraint is balanced by the poetic refinement and delicate arabesques of the solo part. The fourth Humoresque is an exquisite miniature, full of strength and beauty.

The Fifth Humoresque is scored for 2 flutes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, strings and violin solo. It is cast in the simple pattern A B A B A, in 2/4, and the key of E-flat ('Commodo'), and it seems to share some of the 'classical' quality frequently remarked upon in previous 2/4 compositions in E-flat.

However, in spite of the E-flat tonality the opening four bars present an unambiguous G minor chord (suggesting some sort of continuation from the previous number perhaps) that is characterised by the following motive :

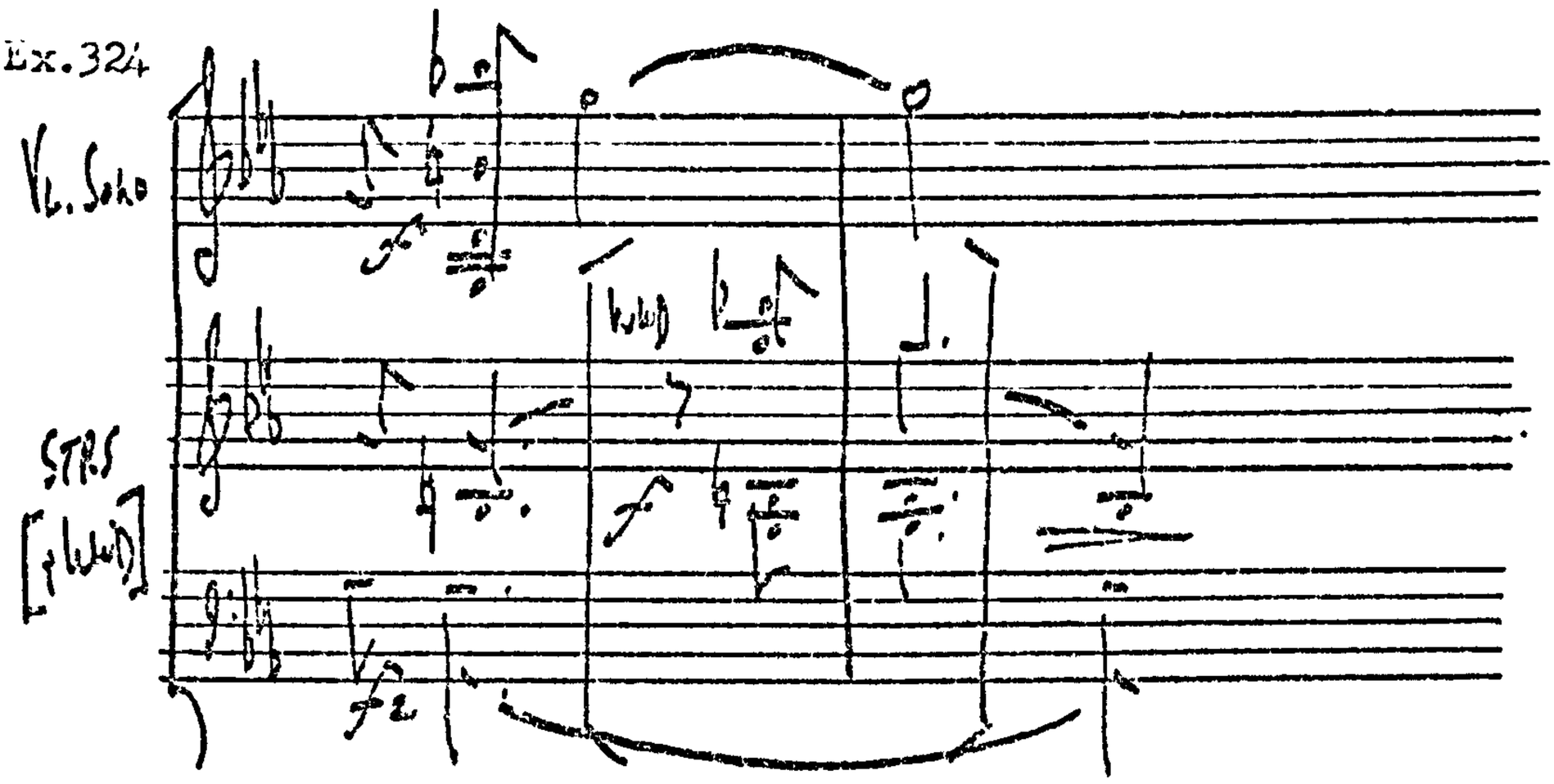
Ex.321



- and this answered by an emphatic full close in E-flat which introduces the accompaniment for the first main (solo) theme, A1 (Ex.322). This main melody has an attractive lilt and it is immediately memorable in spite of its rather conventional shape. The first sentence (which is completed at the 4th bar p.34) is repeated, and, at Letter A, moves towards its cadence; but the slight extension of this cadence breaks off abruptly (at the comma) after which the movement is resumed with a new theme B1 (Ex.323) on the dominant of C minor.

The C minor tonal centre of this first episode (second subject) is strengthened by a movement towards its dominant key, but this is resisted by this resisted by the following harmonic clash:

Ex.324



Then, after a repeat of B1, the return to the E-flat is effected through the sustained chord of the leading seventh.

At Letter B the first (rondo) restatement of A1 is presented - in harmonics; this time the extended cadence point breaks off abruptly at the comma and is followed by the reappearance of B1 in E-flat minor. This is a literal restatement of B1, and includes the harmonic clash, after which the return to the tonic major is effected by the diminished supertonic (seventh) chord.

The final (slightly decorated) statement of A1 (beginning at Letter D) is again literal, and the extended cadence point is once more momentarily interrupted before the work is completed by a short, simple, perfect cadence.

The simple structure of this Fifth Humoresque is enlivened by its tonal relationships and, in particular, the clash quoted in Ex.324 above. Although this actual clash has not been observed previously in Sibelius's compositions, its tonal function is a reflection of the very essence of Sibelius's thought. The clash arises from the lack of preparation for the move to C minor (as a structural change of key). This would normally

be explained (in the 8th bar after the comma) by allowing the movement to slip back to E-flat - thus showing C minor to be a tonal digression and not a structural change of tonality. In this present instance the disputing elements of B-flat and B-natural show an acute awareness of this procedure, for the B-flat would indicate the desire to return to E-flat, while conversely, the B-natural insists on continuing the C minor 'key'. The subtelty of this device is enhanced by making it motivic (and an allusion to the openin bars where it has already been shown to be concerned with tonal ambiguity) and by allowing the (drawn-out) 'return' to E-flat to be effected by an equally ambivalent chord.

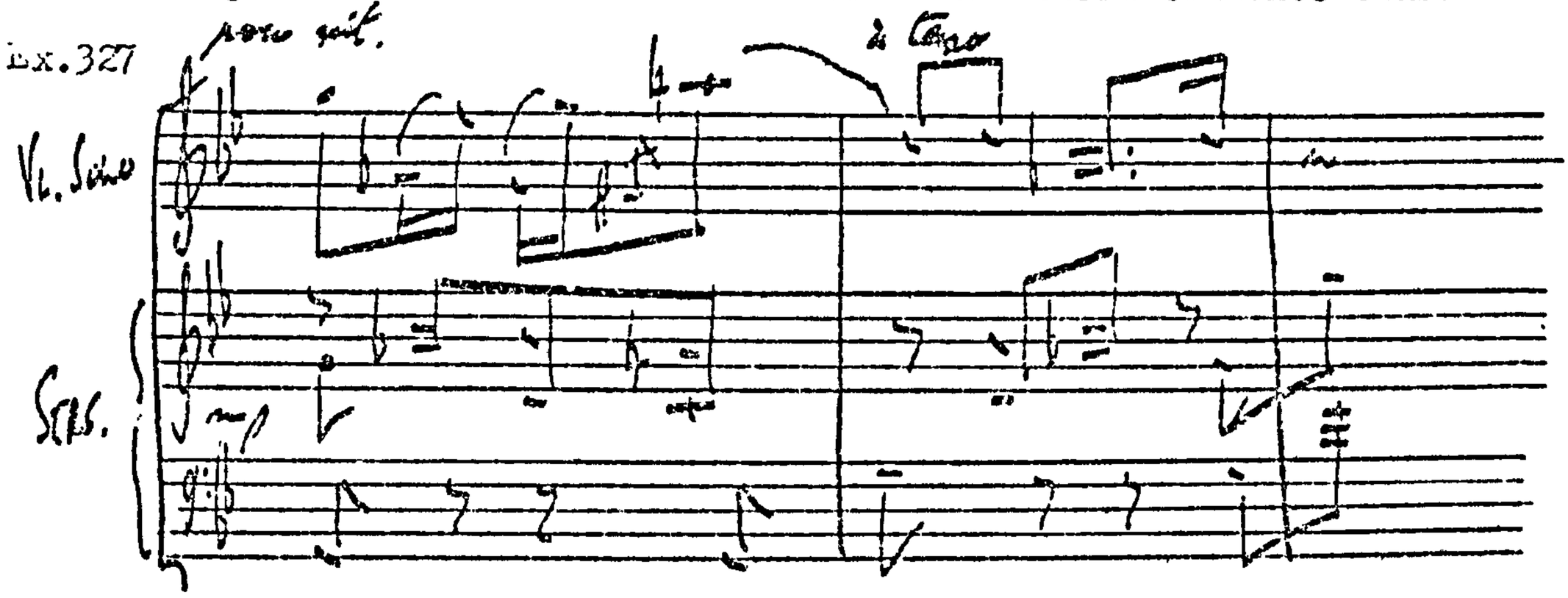
With the possible exception of the Second Humoresque, this Fifth number is the most immediately attractive and appealing, and its musical strength is aided by its easy charm.

The final Humoresque falls into two sections, and once again the key is G minor. The first section is constructed of a sentence in the tonic, A1, (Ex.325) that is marked by the persistent use of A-flat and F-natural, followed by a second sentence A2, still in G minor (Ex.326) that instead uses only A-naturals (though F-natural remains) and completed by a II^7 - 1 cadence. After this there is a brief reference to A1 before the tonality swings over to E-flat (at Letter B).

The source of energy for this first tonic paragraph (and indeed of the whole composition) arises from the 'unusual' A-flat (ex Neapolitan sixth) and F-natural which together disturb the tonality: the matter is

first brought to a climax at the cadence of the first sentence thus:

Ex.327



The change to the key of B-flat introduces a new theme (B1) though it moves quickly to E-flat minor and creates the opportunity for a return to G minor - and this is effected in the passage beginning at Letter C. Following this the second section repeats A2, and then A1 which this time then moves to the key of G major (at Letter E) passes through the minor, and leads easily back (at Letter F) to the repeat of A2 and a short closing section that makes a point of illustrating the 'correct' (and conventional) employment of the Neapolitan sixth (and A-flat).

Together with the Violin Concerto and the Two Serenades, these six Humoresques constitute the largest and most important part of Sibelius's composition for solo instrument and orchestra.

The Humoresques are probably descended from the Serenades but they are superior in every way: in the cogency of their musical argument and its realisation, and in the subtelty of the presentation of their tonal ambivalence and internal tensions. Equally the new title of 'Humoresque' is both apt and less limiting (than 'Serenade') and this allows these six compositions to illustrate a greater range of mood, presentation, and emotional experience; they are also 'large-size' in essence if not in dimension. Moreover a large part of their success stems from the simple fact that they are written for a solo instrument and orchestra and not simply orchestra alone: and the evidence for this suggestion may be seen in Sibelius's subsequent small-scale works.

It is unfortunate that the creative imagination of the 'humoresques' is not in evidence in the orchestral works that Sibelius wrote prior to the completion of the Sixth Symphony (in 1923): these works are :

Op.96a	Valse lyrique	1920
b	Autrefois - scene pastorale	1920[1].
c	Valse chevaleresque	1920
Op.98a	Suite mignonne	1921
b	Suite champêtre	1921

The two Valses of Op.96 add nothing to the musical stature of Sibelius, although it has been suggested that they were written as a kind of 'hommage à J.Strauss'. The main ideas of both works are thin and commonplace and rarely distinguished by any typical (Sibelian) features. Melodically, rhythmically, and harmonically both works are straightforward. The scoring is likewise 'dutiful' and even the timpani are used in a sterile manner: the 'wooden' aspect of the printed full scores recalls 'Wärsäng', Op.16, and it becomes increasingly difficult to ignore Johnsons remark: "Undoubtedly he hoped that one of these trifles might achieve the popularity of his 'Valse Triste'"[2]

The Suite mignonne, Op.98a is scored for two flutes and strings and consists of three short pieces: Petite Scene, Polka and Epilogue.

The Petite Scene in G minor is a simple construction that contains some characteristic procedures that do not function to characteristic effect. The movement consists of an (extended) introduction followed by the main theme, first in B-flat, then moving slowly - almost reluctantly - to G minor for a literal repeat; the 'design' is then completed by the addition of 6 closing bars.

The second movement, Polka, is a short ternary form in E-flat. The first section (just three sentences) begins on the secondary seventh on A-natural and the main theme moves first towards G minor before it is

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1. It has not yet proved possible to obtain the score of this work.
2. Johnson, op.cit., p.154.

slowly pulled to the 'correct' key of E-flat. The second section continues the tonal ambivalance of the first, though now between the keys of G-sharp minor and B major, after which the third section presents an abbreviated (and tonally adjusted) version of the first.

The Epilogue is in G major (thus completing the tonal 'design' of the Suite as a whole) and its Rondo construction consists of :

(i) a main theme (A1) in G major,

(ii) a first episode in E-flat - using similar material to A1,

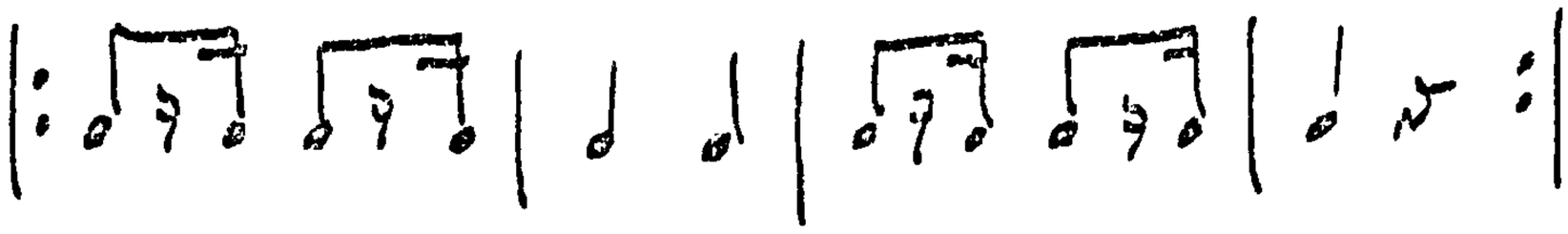
(iii) the rondo theme in G major,

(iv) a second episode - Largamente - beginning in E minor but working round to G major, and

(v) a final, truncated statement of A1.

In some ways the Suite mignonne recalls the Six Humoresques - and the opening of the Polka for example shares a common basis with the opening of the Fourth Humoresque (and both illustrate a typically Sibelian tonal proposition). But the essential distinction here is that the three pieces of the Suite are not allowed to evolve, and they therefore remain merely conventional. They are miniatures which are deliberately contained by their dimensions (and character) - and if they were not so contained they could have become 'large-size'. Moreover it is perhaps significant that the miniature dimensions of the Humoresques are counter-balanced by the use of a solo instrument: and this makes them quite the most successful of Sibelius's smaller compositions. Certainly the lack of a solo instrument, the deliberate containment, and lack of any sort of poetic imagination makes the Suite mignonne quite devoid of character.

The Suite champêtre, Op.98b, is scored for strings only. The first number 'Piece caractéristique' is almost entirely concerned with one main theme, (Ex.328), which is composed of two phrases of 4 and 6 bars respectively, and its repetition in different textures. The essence of this short composition would seem to be the tension that arises between D minor and F major: certainly the opening bars (with a peculiarly Sibelian spacing of contra-basses and cellos) Ex.329, suggest F major rather more than D minor, and it is this fact that necessitates the 6-bar phrase - only the last two bars pull the tonality to D minor. However this metrical structure tends to make the piece somewhat stilted since the basic rhythmic structure of the main theme is :



There is also the sudden and unexpected outburst (p.4 bottom line) on the chord of E-flat minor; this acts as a climactic release of the energy built up by the repetitive structure and constant pull between the keys of D minor and F major. But after this surprising outburst the movement is quickly restored to its former (rather subdued) state. Characteristically the minute closing section (beginning at 'tempo I', p.5) makes a simple point of the F major/D minor tension - note the dominant minor chord (in line 2) - but it also quietly ensures that this same tension will not be allowed to achieve any large-scale effects: the tension is deliberately contained.

The second piece of this Suite 'Mélodie élégiaque' is also concerned with one main theme, (Ex.330); it is however rather more rhythmically supple, more Scandinavian in feeling, and recalls Grieg. Its languid melody and simple repetitions are strengthened - to some extent - by the note of menace introduced (once again) by the chord of E-flat minor. But the (tutti) quaver rest that follows every appearance of this chord shows that it will not be allowed to do more than hint; again there seems to be

a deliberate containment of the movement.

The opening bars (Ex.331) of the final number, Danse, recalls the 'Humoresques', and indeed the main theme is introduced by violin solo. But the promise of the opening 12 bars is not fulfilled and the subsequent ideas are pleasant but undistinguished.

It does seem necessary to remark (again) that, with the exception of works derived from music for theatrical productions, Sibelius's creative imagination seems to have been remarkably cramped in works of small dimensions - even when (as in the Suite champetre, for example) they can be shown to share some tonal tensions or propositions with large scale works; conversely it would appear that this constricting feature could be successfully overcome by the use of a solo instrument (violin). Certainly it would be difficult to refute the suggestion that the most significant and enjoyable small scale works of Sibelius[1] (which are also 'large-size' in Sibelius's definition) are the 'Humoresques' for Violin Solo and Orchestra.

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1. Some readers might immediately ask: "and what of 'Rakastava?'"; ah yes, but remember that its last movement - the crux of the composition - begins with a violin solo, and the three movements in fact function rather like three sections of one movement.

CHAPTER 20

SYMPHONY No. 6

CHAPTER 20

Although Sibelius had briefly mentioned some ideas for the Sixth Symphony, Op.104,[1] as early as 1918 (in the famous May letter) the work was not completed until 1923.

The success of the symphony (which is in four movements) has been limited in that although scholars are unanimous in their assessment of this composition as one of Sibelius's most characteristic and creatively imaginative and valuable works, it has been comparatively neglected in the concert hall; and further, that scholars and analysts have been unable to demonstrate convincingly the reasons for their conclusions: the analysis of the first movement, for example, appears to highlight this 'failure'. This situation has been summed up by Layton who, having remarked that "In a sense the first movement follows the basic principles of sonata form" then points out "but it is characteristic of Sibelius's originality that, while agreeing on this basic formal outline, no two writers arrive at identical results."[2]

The tonality of the Symphony is not stated on the title page of the (miniature) orchestral score, yet the tonal identity of the work is of crucial importance, and at the same time provides one of the main ingredients for the works enigmatic character.

In discussing the tonality of the first movement Robert Simpson wrote:[3]

> "The D minor tonic is Dorian...(and)... the B-natural has an effect on modern ears that it did not produce in the sixteenth century - it tends to tilt the weight towards C major. Sibelius takes full advantage of this and....there is a fascinating oscillation between a grey Dorian D minor and a sunny C major."

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1. It is scored for double woodwind plus Bass clarinet, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, harp and strings.

2. Layton, op.cit., p.54.
   N.B.C.: the underlining is mine.

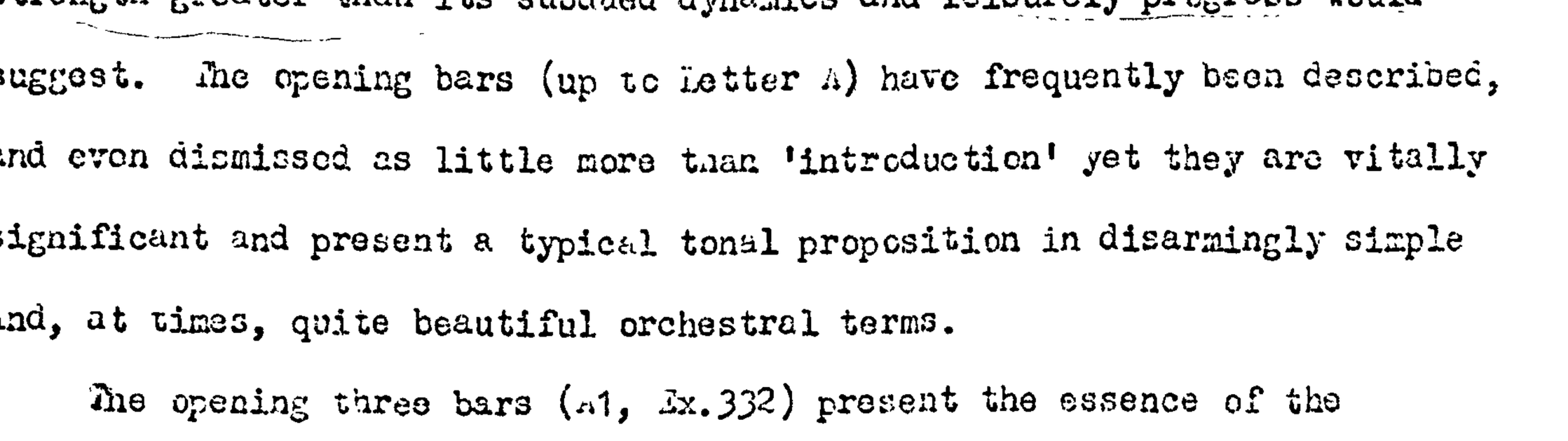
3. Simpson, op.cit., p.30.

But there is the possibility that Sibelius goes even further than Simpson suggests; for while it is quite possible to conceive this movement as being in a modal D minor wherein the major sixth tilts the tonality towards C major, it is equally possible to regard the movement as in the key of C major, though containing a pronounced supertonic chord which itself assumes some of the characteristics of a (modal) key. What Sibelius does is to take up the 'choice' of straight tonality on one hand, and the ability or tendency for certain modes to assume (or fall into) tonal functions on the other. The point that is of crucial importance, and with which Sibelius is concerned here - with great subelty - is the resulting tonal ambivalence: and this tonal ambivalence is at the heart of the whole symphony - and this paramount feature is directly and primarily responsible for the works enigmatic character.

The exposition of the sonata form first movement is straightforward in presentation though it possesses many subtleties and has a strength greater than its subdued dynamics and leisurely progress would suggest. The opening bars (up to letter A) have frequently been described, and even dismissed as little more than 'introduction' yet they are vitally significant and present a typical tonal proposition in disarmingly simple and, at times, quite beautiful orchestral terms.

The opening three bars (A1, Ex.332) present the essence of the movement and are characterised by the gentle syncopation of the violins and, particularly, the low C-natural entry of the violas[1]:

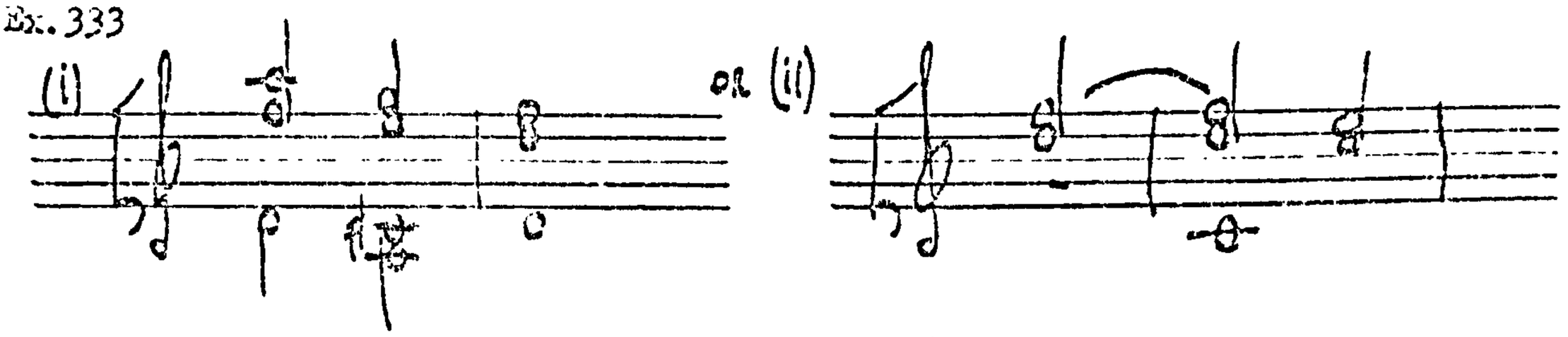
Ex.332.



1. The separation of the violins and violas gives this C-natural (viola) entry a 'fundamental' sounding characteristic.

These bars present, simply, the tonal ambivalence that is the central creative tension of the movement, and they pose the question as to whether the tonal centre is D or C. This proposition may be more acutely expressed if the harmonic implications of these opening bars are suggested alternatively as :

Ex. 333



Sibelius exploits this ambiguity to the full,[1] and in the following phrases (up to the last two bars, p.5) the opening proposition is taken up, leisurely expanded, introduces a theme, a2 (Ex.336)[2] and gradually unfolds a paragraph of easy flowing melody that eventually comes to a momentary rest on the leading-seventh chord of C-sharp (p.5, bars 9 - 12). But just as at this particular point where D minor seems to have been stabilized, an impressive C major chord (on brass and timpani) immediately turns the tonality to C major - in which key the presentation of the second subject paragraph follows.

Before proceeding it is fascinating to note the subtlety with which Sibelius pursues this tonal ambivalence, and it may be briefly traced in 9 steps :

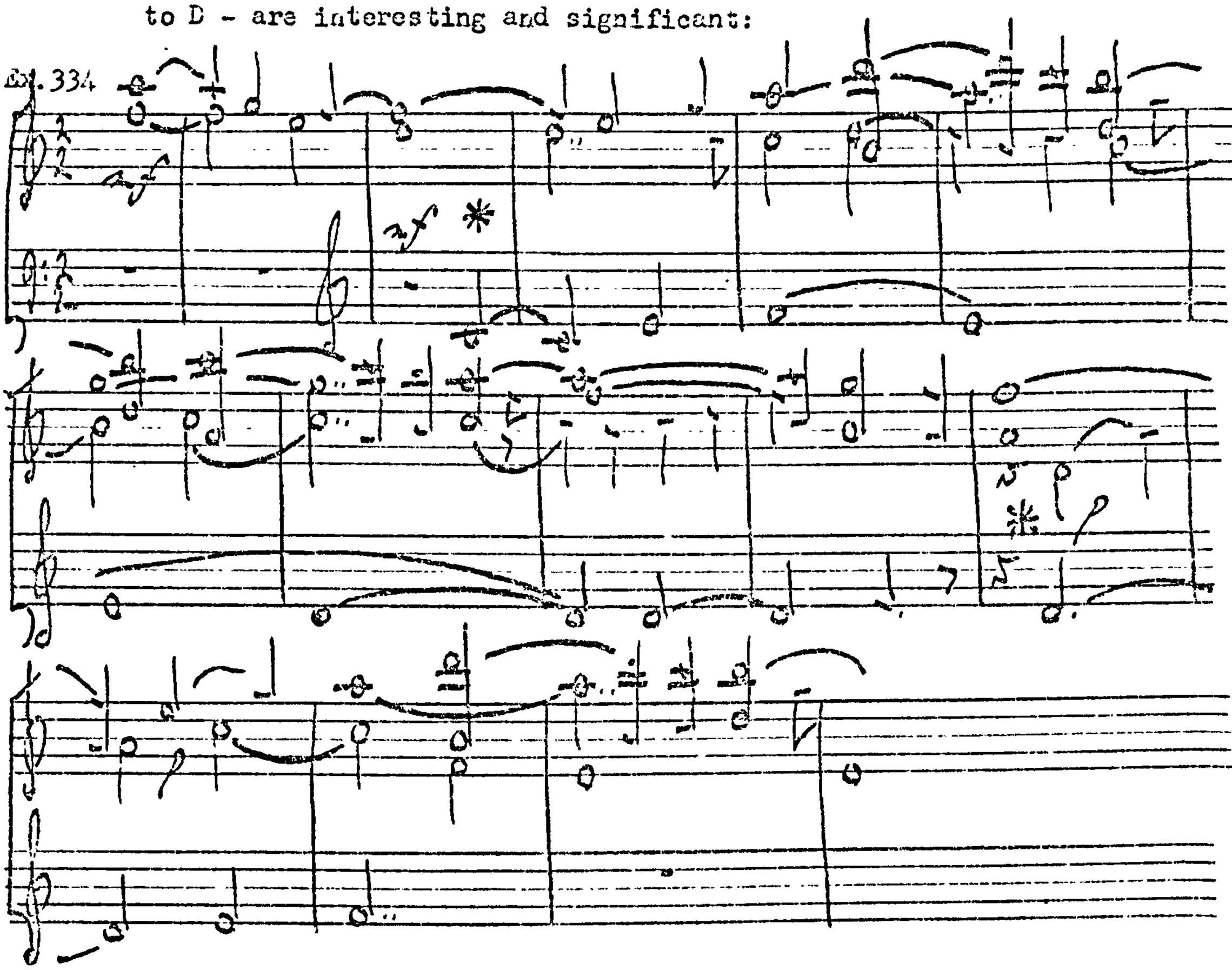
1. the movement opens with an ambivalent tonal proposition which is characterised by the C-natural entry of the violas; the conjunct motion is taken up (by Violins) in a leisurely, almost rhapsodic manner before the phrase comes to rest on the notes F - A (Ex.334)[3];
2. underneath these 2 sustained notes, the violas begin the next phrase on D, and since the 4 subsequent bars are a literal repeat of bars 4 - 2 (of the movement), these viola entries - moving up from C

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1. The very absence of an 'Introduction' - such as that of Symphony 1 - enhances both this ambivalent quality, and the introspective character of the movement.
2. P.350.
3. P.349.

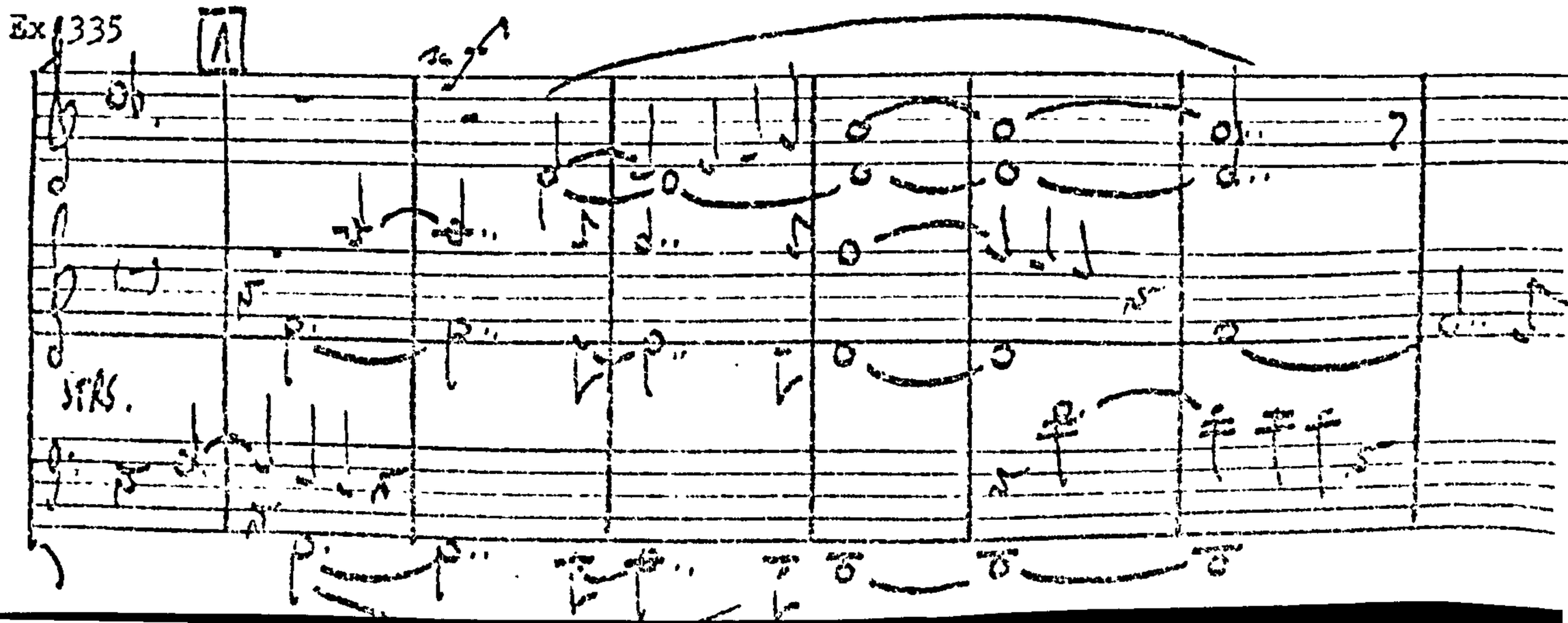
to D - are interesting and significant:

Ex. 334



3. the following phrase is marked first by the appearance (p.4 bar 5) of a (solitary) C-sharp which points (more clearly) towards D minor, while the subsequent phrases finish with the chord A, C-natural, G (p.4, bars 9 and 13); and following this
4. a descending F - E - D motive appears (one bar before Letter A): it is then presented in succession (sometimes overlapping) in violas, cellos and violins (who outline the opening phrase itself) violins, violas, and finally violins again:

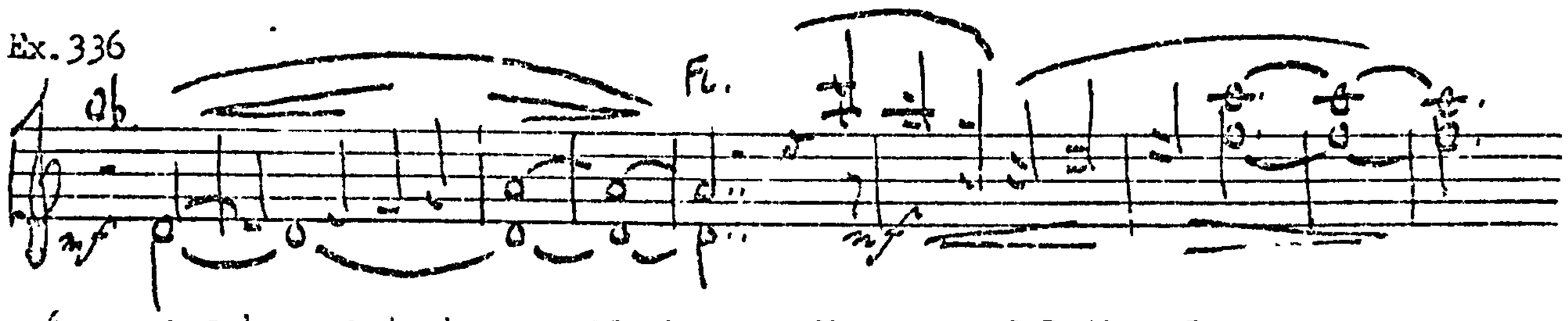
Ex. 335



this accompanies the introduction of

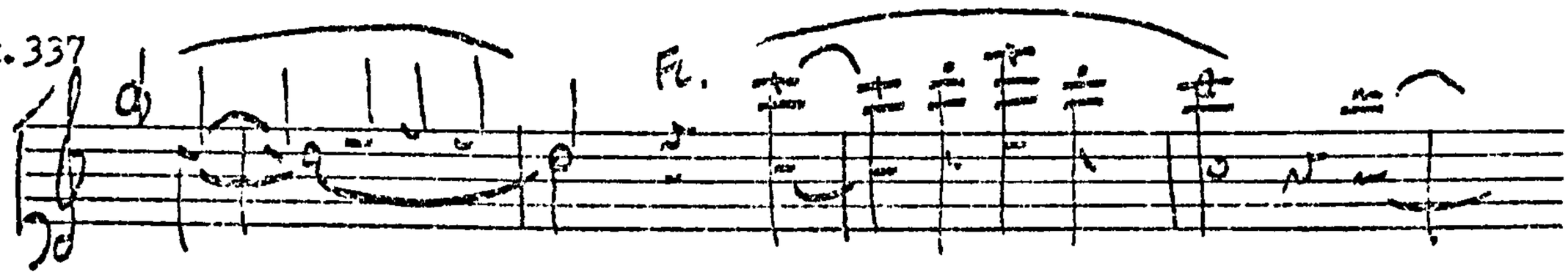
5. a theme, a2 (Ex.336) for flutes and oboes, which appears to accept D as its tonal centre; but the theme as a whole (which is bounded by the notes D - C) suggests a harmonic swing of D - C - D :

Ex.336



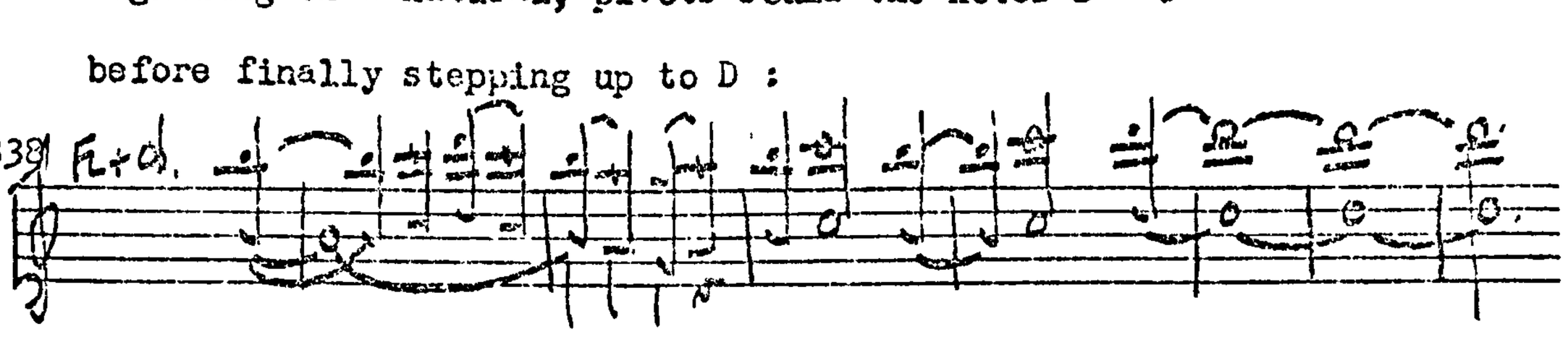
6. a subsequent phrase, A3, hovers first round D then C :

Ex.337



while a further sequential enlargement of the phrase, beginning on B-natural, pivots round the notes B - C before finally stepping up to D :

Ex.338



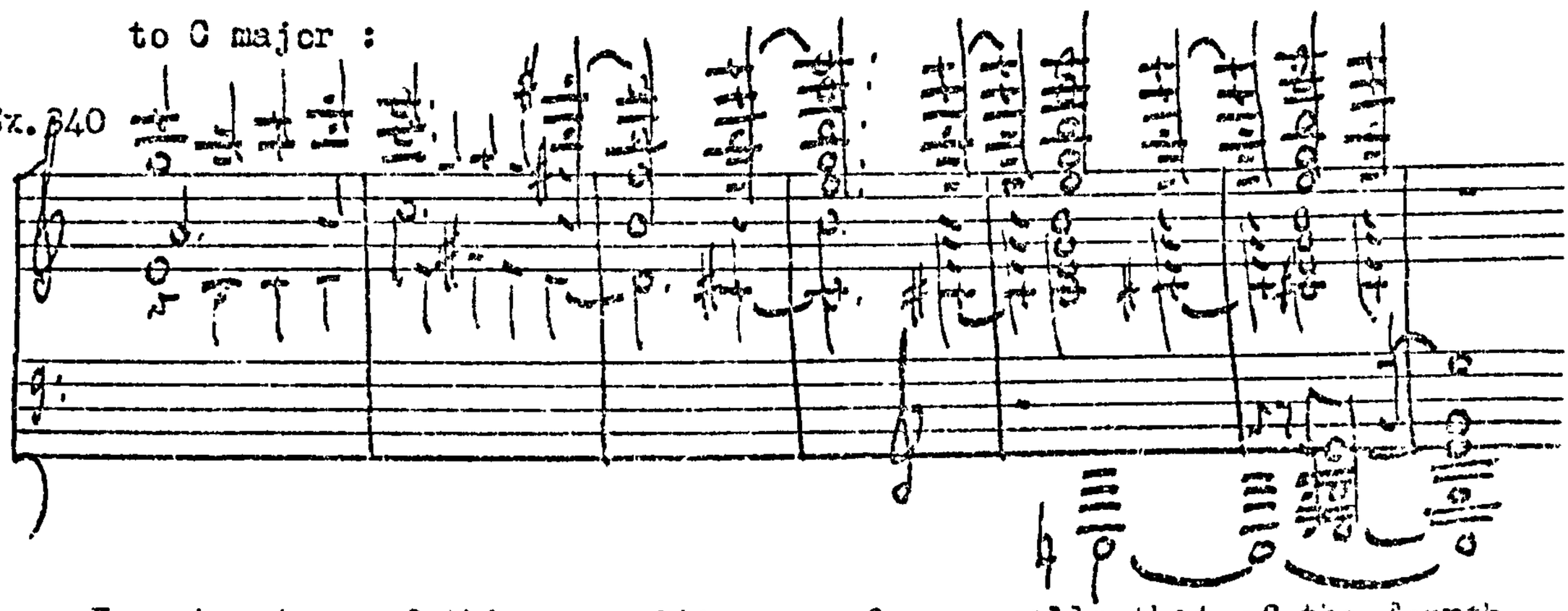
7. At this point the sustained notes F - A (in horns, timpani and strings) support the introduction of a further phrase which at first simply outlines an F major chord; but the repetition of these sustained notes is taken as part of a D minor triad (and the phrase now suggests some derivation from A2):

Ex.339

8. the further (sequential) enlargement of this idea (p.5) looks, at first, as if it is moving towards the dominant of C major, but this move is frustrated and the first paragraph eventually comes to a momentary rest on a seventh chord on C-sharp (Ex.340):

9. this chord (and its tonal implications) are impressively side-stepped by a C major chord which immediately turns the tonality to C major :

Ex.340



The structure of this exposition, so far, recalls that of the Fourth Symphony;[1] both expositions display a somewhat leisurely and rhapsodic progress in their first subject paragraphs, and are characterised by a general lack of emoticnal heat, but whereas the tensicn of the first movement of the Fourth Symphony (though not explicit in the main A2 theme itself) was clearly maintained by the presence of the undulating pedal, this feature is missing in the Sixth Symphony, and its 'omission' is another factor contributing to the works elusive character. Further, the impressive tonal change to C major (in the Sixth Symphony) recalls the powerful, and equally sudden movement to F-sharp major in the Fourth.

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1. Of course if C major is accepted as the tonal centre of the movement then the persistent supertonic (D minor) chord recalls the Second Symphony, especially since, in its first movement, the initial presentations of the A2 theme took place first on the tonic then on the supertonic - a feature that is clearly paralleled here (in the 6th) by the initial C, then D, viola entries. But whereas in the earlier Symphony there was never any doubt as to the D major tonality the tonal ambivalence of the 6th is central to the creative imagination of the Sixth Symphony.

The presentation of the second subject group is concise though it introduces a considerable amount of fresh material in which 4 thematic characters can be distinguished, B1, B2, B3, B4 (Exs.341,2,3,4). The first of these, B1, begins on C but the phrase ends by stepping down to B-flat; the sequential repetition of this phrase maintains the downward movement (B-flat to A-flat) and this feature is continued in the subsequent phrase before working quickly back to C major.

This downward movement of a tone is perhaps one of the more important motives of this movement; its gently emphatic presentation here parallels the D - C implications of the first subject paragraph, and especially the opening bars.

Of the remaining phrases both B2, and B4 (which reflects the subdominant/ added sixth characteristic as well as D - C phrase ending) display marked cadential characters, and ensure that C major is emphatically established.

The second subject paragraph is therefore quickly completed (p.8 bar 3) but the continuation of the quaver string figure, and the extension of the B4 cadence phrase (which now suggests some derivation from both A2 and A3 in its enlargement of the D - C melodic progression, B5, Ex.345) continues the parallel drop of a tone and passes quickly through D, C, B-flat to arrive at A-flat (p.8, bars 3 - 6). Here the first note of the motive is momentarily sustained before the phrase stops down to G-flat; the whole of this short passage (from p.8 bar 3 to the arrival at a G-flat chord) provides an easy dovetail into the development section.

However before leaving this second subject paragraph attention must be drawn to the especial characterisation of C major not only by

(i) the impressive number of separate thematic characters (in contradistinction to the 'D minor' paragraph) but, more importantly,

(ii) by the restless and persistent quaver (and semiquaver) activity, and

(iii) by the overall sense of faster movement - arising partly from

> the quaver movement, but also from the brisk presentation of so many new thematic characters; and this briskness is a nice foil to the leisurly progress of the first subject paragraph.

In fact there is no increase in the 'pace' of the movement as such, though the bustling quaver activity creates the (rhetorical) impression of an increased pace, and it illustrates the greater release of energy that characterises the whole of this second subject paragraph.

The development section (which lasts until 3 bars before Letter H) recalls that of its counterpart in the Third Symphony, especially since the greater part of its workings are carried by an ostinato/spiccato string texture. Moreover the subdued character of this development section - in keeping with the rather restrained nature of the movement generally - is a splendid example of the essential function of the development within Sibelius's symphonic conception. This purpose may be stated simply as (i) the continuation of the tonal argument proposed in the exposition, and (ii) its furtherance and enlargement.

The present development section is remarkably efficient in the way in which it (simultaneously) furthers the tonal argument of the movement and accomplishes a considerable tonal and thematic evolution - and in the absence of any dramatic climaxes. For convenience the section may be seen in 8 distinct stages, though its strength lies partly in its effortless continuity[1]: these 8 stages are :

1. the evolution and establishment of a G-flat major - C major harmonic undulation, which then supports
2. the introduction of a new theme (3 bars after Letter D, Ex.346);

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1. The sense of easy continuity is enhanced by the pervading string texture.

3. this theme is twice repeated a third higher (over a B-flat - E undulation) before the original G-flat - C undulation returns and is shown by horns (3 and 4) to be a b11 - V progression pointing towards F major: but

4. the entry of horns 1 and 2[1] effects an enharmonic change of direction, and the harmonic undulation is now b11 - V of B minor;

5. this tonal suggestion is taken up, and a 'restatement' of A2 (first by bass clarinet[2] then cellos) begins in B minor;

6. this restatement is immediately shown to be a 'fausse reprise' and the contradictory A major/minor 'chord' in woodwind[3] completes a B - A progression that is a direct allusion to the tonal tension of the exposition - though it is here expressed in a more direct form; (note too the B....A pizz entries of contra-basses beginning at Letter F);

7. this harmonic progression establishes a descending sequence,[4] based on B5, (passing through the major chords of G, F E-flat in root position) which then pauses for 5 bars on the chord of C-sharp minor before leading quickly to

8. the direct confrontation, or rather the simultaneous presentation of the characteristics of D minor and C major at the beginning of the recapitulation: horns, timpani and contra-basses clearly cadence in C major while, per contra, strings and wind insist on D minor with the restatement of the A2 theme. (The confrontation here is still quite restrained, but it marks a distinct step forward in the progress of the tonal tension.)

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1. p.11, top line, bar 2
2. Letter F
3. F+4
4. Beginning p.12, bar 2

The continuation of the basic tonal argument within the development section is clear. In addition it is furthered and enlarged by allowing one thematic idea (from the second subject group) to evolve into a 'background' texture - a sort of primeval source of musical energy, as it were - from which a further new theme can emerge and which will itself evolve; this enables the section to achieve an increased sense of development within a modest time-scale - and it gives it considerable strength.

It is also worth remarking that the easy emergence of the recapitulation (which has avoided more normal rhetoric at this point) is due to the 'preparatory' function of the 'fausse reprise': even the tone colours of the two 'restatements' are seen to be complementary.

The recapitulation provides a formal balance to the design and effects the climax and resolution of the tonal conflict. It begins 3 bars before Letter H) with the reappearance of the first main theme, A2, on cellos, underpinned by simultaneous pedals on C and D (and with an internal pedal A on trumpets). But it is important to note that this (D Minor) restatement is accompanied by a restless semiquaver figuration for strings. Thus the progress of the tonal argument is marked by two new features:

(i) the 'D minor' characteristic is now forced to accept a C-natural pedal, and

(ii) the A2 theme has now acquired (or been brought into contact/conflict with) some of the energy that initially characterised only the C major second subject paragraph.

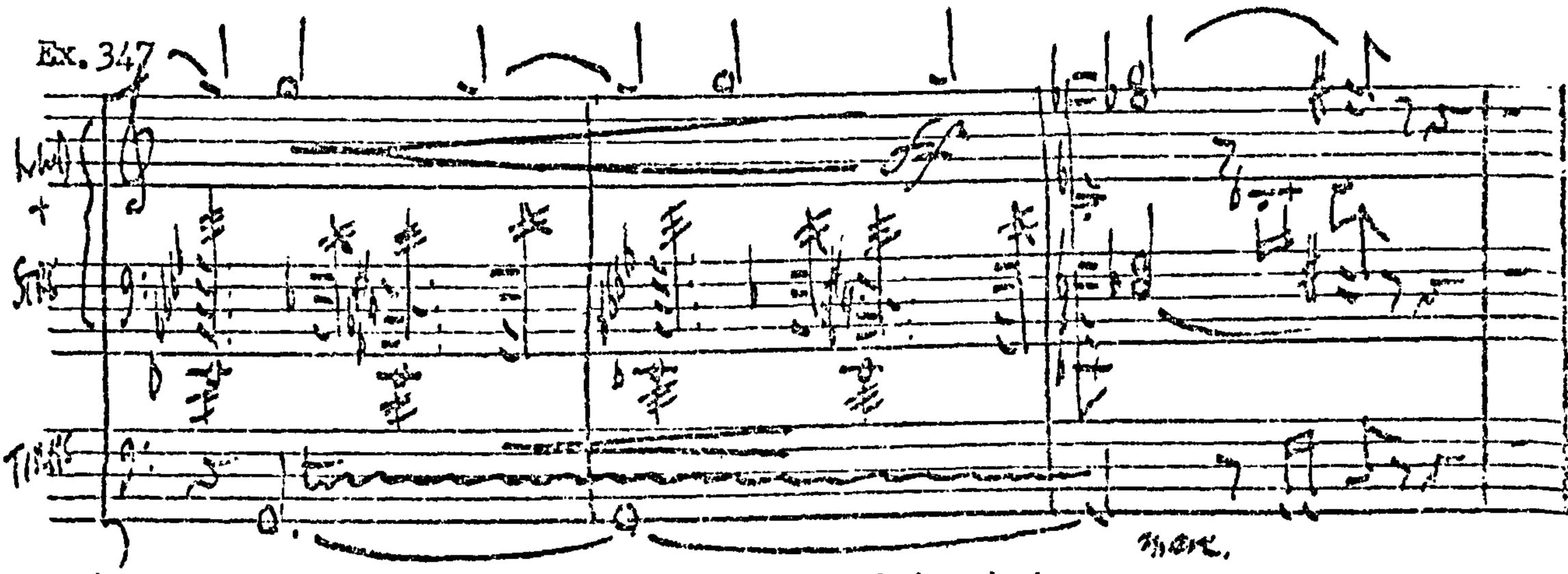
The immediate impact of the semiquaver figuration here is to heighten the impression of some sort of imminent climax - and this occurs at Letter I where the appearance of a new theme in F major (and with a key signature of one flat) replaces the first theme of the second subject group - though some elements of the new theme appear to be derived from the first subject paragraph, and it maintains (p.18, bars 4 - 5) the parallel movement of a tone.

This key of F major, of course, can be taken as either the subdominant of C or the relative major of D minor and it is a typical illustration of Sibelius's ability to utilise the functional moments of a design so that they directly further the musical argument itself.[1]

However this F major then quickly works round to C major where (at Letter J) the restatement of the second subject is resumed (though the order of themes is slightly altered, while the timpani, p.21, sound first A, then G). Subsequently the movement comes to a pause (at Letter K) on the chord of F major (D minor) and the climax of the movement is shortly effected by the presentation of a new phrase (poco allarg...a tempo) that moves first to the dominant of C major and is then repeated sequentially to arrive at the dominant chord of D minor, - though there is a sustained G on trumpets (- V7 of D, or dominant of C?). This new phrase (which appears to refer to both A2 and B3) soon leads to the crux of the movement as it is expressed in the following harmonic clash

(4 bars after Letter L)[2]

Ex. 347



- the crucial tonal function of the timpani is obvious.

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1. As the Fifth Symphony has already shown.

2. Note the empty bar which follows this climactic moment of crisis.

A short coda of four sentences completes this movement and (momentarily) resolves its tonal argument: these sentences are :

1. the presentation of a scale (for wind and strings in octaves) that displays both D minor and C (minor) characteristics, comes to rest on F-sharp, and is then transposed up a third;
2. a simple undulation then takes up the G-flat (F-sharp) characteristic from where
3. a determined scale leads directly to a C major chord which is climaxed by trumpets rising C - D - E, 'fff'; and finally, after a bar-line pause,
4. an unheated and subdued 'cadence' which closes the movement on a D minor chord, though perhaps in the key of C major.

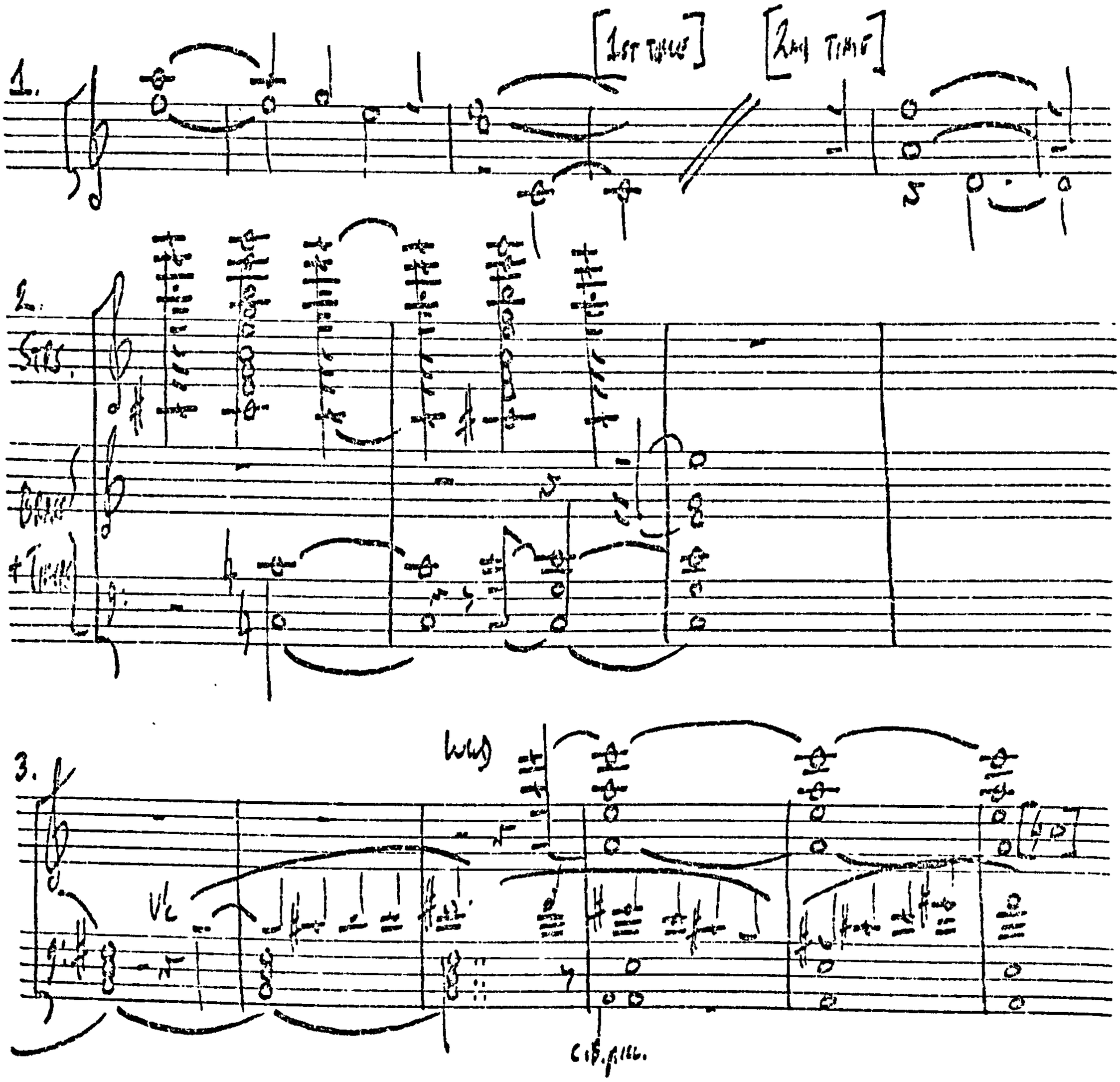
The essence of this movement arises from the ambivalence of the tonality wherein C major is characterised by the presence of a supertonic chord that assumes some of the functions and characteristics of a rather modal key in its own right (and therefore) introduces a 'choice' between C major and a modal D minor).

From the initial presentation the tonal argument of this movement is worked out in generally subdued terms and fully exploits the ambiguous (tonal, harmonic, and thematic) characteristics. Further the character of the movement is is enhanced by the quiet, though positive development section (which is concerned with the essence of the movement and not just the themes which frequently carry it) and the use of contrasting speeds as a characteristic distinction between the two opposing 'tonalities'. Moreover the restraint of the movement in both emotional and orchestral terms, is a further reason for its elusive character and an illustration of Sibelius's total conception of a work.

The tonal evolution of this movement is marked by the critical progression of the juxtaposition (and confrontation) of the D minor and

C major characteristics, though it is perhaps pertinent to remark that the C always sounds more fundamental and underpins the D (minor) throughout the movement; the juxtaposition of these opposing characteristics may be traced - without comment thus (1 - 7):

Ex.348



4.

5.

6.

7.

BEGINNING OF MVT.

As a final comment on this first movement it is interesting to recall Gerald Abraham's remarks; he wrote :[1]

> "The first movement is one of Sibelius's most highly organic compositions, and the work as a whole contains some striking foreshadowings of points in the Seventh Symphony; .....above all, a pronounced strengthening of the tendency, noticeable in much of Sibelius's earlier work (i.e. the finale of No.3 and the first subject in the finale of No.5) for the essence of the music to be embodied less in definite themes than in the harmonic-contrapuntal-instrumental texture as a whole."

He enlarged this statement by continuing thus :

> "The themes seem to be thrown up, as it were, out of the complex musical stream, instead of the stream of thought being evolved from the themes.... This sort of musical thinking really defies analysis. One can only talk about 'themes' and 'motives' yet the real sense of the music does not lie in the themes as such. At the same time, it is mainly through the recurrence of themes that one recognises the formal outline of a piece of music, and it should be the analyst's fundamental object to make the outline clear."

Abraham's statement is essentially correct although his conclusions concerning the possibilities of analysing this form of musical thinking are a matter of opinion; if the functions of Sibelius's most typical procedures are viewed in the light of his fundamental and vital concern with tonality then it is possible to arrive at a more satisfactory analysis - even of such non-thematic works as 'The Bard'. Certainly it will be maintained here that the attempt to analyse something more than thematic evolutions alone, is infinitely more interesting and valuable - and has been shown to be possible.

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1. Abraham, op.cit., p.31-2.

The 'new' analysis of the first movement (presented above) is supported by the character and construction of the second movement in G minor. The key of this second movement has already been mentioned as the second exception (and there are only two) to Sibelius's usual mediant and submediant key relationships between movements, and in view of the unusual but absolutely characteristic and totally convincing construction of the first movement, this 'exceptional' tonality is worthy of some study.

The most obvious reason for the choice of this key is that it is designed to suggest - in restrospect, though the D minor is taken up again by the third movement - a subdominant relationship with the first movement, and thereby to enhance its 'D minor' quality. And both the 'capricious' character and idiosyncratic construction of this G minor movement supports this suggestion: indeed it will shortly be suggested that this movement continues and further the argument (of the first movement) in three particular ways, one of which is its choice of key.

The character and construction of this movement are inseparable, and the essence of the movement is its tenacious insistence on a G minor characteristic; at the same time there is very little 'body' to this G minor tonality and it possesses a certain 'capricious' characteristic that recalls the 'Humoresques'; its indebtedness to Op.87 and 89 is also reflected in the overall form of the movement.

The design may be seen as two verses in G minor (bar 1 to Letter G) followed by a 'middle section' which is rounded off and completes the movement with an extremely brief reference to the opening idea.[1]

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1. The form of this movement is clear if fluid, and the abrupt ending recalls the second movement of the Fourth Symphony. The necessity for stating that the 'middle' section completes the movement will be shown later.

The movement begins[1] with a timpano entry (solo) on F-natural - surely a touch of ironic humour[3] - and a series of syncopated chords for flute and bassoon, A1 (Ex.349).[2] At first this woodwind phrase hovers round the chords of D minor and A minor, while from bar 10 the syncopation disappears and a descending chord-sequence is established. The secondary sevenths of this phrase are marked by some 'strange' accidentals that suggest, perhaps, their derivation from the sharpened sixth of the Dorian mode. Shortly after Letter A however, where a theme, A2 (Ex.350) is introduced by strings, these chords become tonal and move towards G minor. Initially the A2 theme itself is marked by both F- and E-natural, but these are abandoned as the phrase moves towards the dominant (of G minor); the end of the string phrase is characterised (bars 9 - 11 after Letter A) by the drop of a tone in parallel, before it comes to rest on the dominant. Here, supported by a (dominant) horn pedal, the harp gently completes the cadential movement to the tonic, though the reappearance of the descending A1 chord series leads to the presentation of a cadence phrase, A3 (Ex.351) which begins on the dominant.

This cadence phrase is then extended and its (characteristic) sequential movement - again of a drop of a tone in parallel - is taken up enharmonically before it reaches a 'fz' dominant chord (bar2,bottom line, p.28; again a harp entry) that reintroduces the descending chord-series and marks the beginning of the second verse.

The second verse is essentially similar to the first, though certain moments and procedures are slightly enlarged or varied. Thus when the A2 theme reappears, at Letter C, its cadential sequence moves first towards

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1. The movement is headed "Allegretto moderato" but according to Parmet (pp.103-4) Sibelius informed his publisher that this should be changed to 'Andantino'. Cherniavsky's account of Sibelius's tempo corrections suggest a MM marking of crotchet = 80 for this movement.
2. The syncopation is not immediately apparent; it is later shown to be syncopated by the return to normal rhythms after bar 10.
3. Especially since there is the possibility that the chord is F major with a 6th, instead of a 5th.

E-flat (over a B-flat horn pedal) before arriving at the half-close in G minor (p.30, bar 3), though significantly the harps completion of the cadential function does not now appear. Next, the A3 cadence phrase is itself taken up in imitation before reaching the dominant chord (penultimate bar, p.31) while the development of the following sequential movement (in the passage between Letters E - F) moves first towards B-flat before arriving at the dominant chord of G minor (at Letter F). Here the second verse, and the first section of the movement, is completed by a short codetta (Letters F - G).

The codetta emphasizes, and centres on the dominant of G minor; its main phrase is sequentially repeated on the dominant of C minor from where the descending sequence of G - F - E-flat - D (for trumpets, horns, and contra-basses) enhances its dominant characteristic. During this codetta the opportunity arises for the gradual emergence of a new phrase, B1 (Ex,352) for woodwind.

However, in the bar before Letter G, the codetta's expected cadence is surprisingly interrupted and the middle/final section begins. This contrasting section is directed 'poco con moto' and is distinguished by a persistant semiquaver figuration that moves quickly to G major (though B-flat remains in the opening bars), centres on its dominant chord (which is coloured by a passing G-sharp) and supports the presentation of a further woodwind theme, B2, (Ex.353) which is clearly derived from B1.

The minor mode returns at Letter H and the semiquaver figuration then moves towards (the dominant of) B-flat where B2 is again presented. A further mediant progression, to the dominant of E-flat, takes place just before Letter I following which an 'augmented' version of B2 appears: first in quavers on oboes, then in crotchets for harp harmonics. But the movement suddenly loses its impetus and the V7 of D-flat is taken enharmonically to lead back to G minor - via a descending, and parallel,

harmonic sequence (p.38, last bar - p.39, bars 1 - 2).

With the return of Tempo Primo (only four bars from the end of the movement) there is a hint of the A3 cadence phrase figure and the barest outline of the A1 chord sequence to close the movement.

These last four bars have been considered by some writers as constituting a 'return' of the first section. It cannot be denied that they 'round off' the movement and are important for their endorsement of the G minor tonality but - as with the Fourth Symphony - they really only hint at the possibility of a return; they do not themselves constitute an abbreviated return. The design of the movement is completed and fulfilled by the faster second section, and the movement is essentially in 2 sections only: a return to the opening is unnecessary.

The essential features of the character and construction of this movement are as follows :

(i) the movement is characterised by a 'capricious' and disembodied G minor tonality; though

(ii) there is a particular insistence on (the achievement of) this key - for no other key is allowed to become established;

(iii) the movement has a verse-like construction;

(iv) the movement is also characterised by the descending chord sequence (A1) and especially by the harmonic movement of a drop of a tone in parallel;

(v) there is the release of energy that characterises the apparent 'resolution' in the faster G major section, while

(vi) there is the fact that as soon as G major is established a new and more vigorous theme begins to evolve.

The capriciousness of the G minor tonality is mainly due to two reasons. First there is the tendency of the cadence points to be taken up as convenient moments for modulation or sequential extension - which, in this movement is always something more than mere decoration - and are thereby prevented from directly fulfilling their G minor function.

This is clearly seen, for example, at Letter B where the A3 cadence phrase is suddenly taken up enharmonically (p.28 top line) and sequentially enlarged before arriving back at the 'fz' dominant chord again. The restatement of this phrase in the second verse begins in canonic imitation before it reaches the dominant chord (on p.31 bar 5) following which there is quite a passage of 'development' in the section between letters E - F.

Secondly there is the striking fact that very little of the body of the movement actually takes place in G minor. Indeed the G minor characteristic, which emerges only gradually from the opening sentences, is largely maintained by the tenacity of the dominant chord in the first verse (where it is enhanced by such details as the harp entry 4 - 5 bars before Letter B) while in the second verse these G minor characteristics are pushed even further back by the enlargement of the modulatory and sequential moments.

Conversely the codetta helps to stabilise the insistent suggestion of G minor after which the second section, initially swinging over to G major, can make a thorough point of its dominant implications and functions; subsequently the last 4 bars of the movement ensure that the G minor identity of the movement is confirmed.

Like its counterparts in the Third and Fifth Symphonies, this second movement is more musically important than some authorities admit. Moreover, by virtue of the facts ;

(i) that it parallels the ambivalent tonality of the first movement

by its own wayward and disembodied G minor;

(ii) that its two contrasting sections are clearly distinguished by slow-fast characteristics; and

(iii) that there is the possibility that the movement is designed to enhance - in retrospect - the subdominant of D minor, rather than the dominant (minor) of C major,

- this movement clearly echoes the contrasting speeds of the main tonalities of the first movement, while it exactly takes up the fundamental question of tonal identity/ambivalence that is at the creative centre of this Symphony.

The function, construction, and critical reception of the third movement of this symphony again recalls that of the middle movement of the Fifth Symphony; in particular both appear to have been critically dismissed after only little more than cursory examination, yet the fact that Sibelius chose to include them in this particular Symphony should have caused some questioning.

Robert Simpson offers the most interesting comment on this movement when he described it[1] as :

> "A curiously neutral sonata-form scherzo without a trio; it is in D minor, more normally than the first movement, though there is still a frequent B-natural. The odd monotony of this piece is at first baffling but becomes positively fascinating."

- and the fascination is typically Sibelian in its construction and, therefore, depends on a tonal argument.

The formal outlines of the movement are clear and it opens with the first theme, A1 (Ex.354) in strings, which establishes both the tonic D minor and one of those trochaic rhythms that seemed to have a particular interest for Sibelius. This unleashes a second theme, A2, (Ex.355) in

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1. Simpson, op.cit., p.31.

woodwind, and the continuation of the phrase hints at F major though it is completed with a D minor chord (in the bar before Letter A). Indeed throughout this opening paragraph there is a considerable accent on F.[1]

A very short transition effects a move to A minor in which the F-sharp and G-natural exactly balances the B- and C-natural of D minor; moreover this A minor is itself pulled towards C - indeed the second phrase (oboe entry, p.44) clearly suggests the dominant of C, though the phrase finishes by stepping up to an A minor chord - and this A minor/C tension exactly balances that of the first subject paragraph, and, of course, takes up the central 'thesis' of this symphony.

The second subject theme, B1 (Ex.356) is quickly introduced, sequentially repeated, and finishes its phrase with a reference to A1. Following this a key-signature of one flat appears and the trochaic rhythm now characterises an undulating harmonic progression which hovers on the threshold of F major; and three bars later (p.44, bottom line, bar 6) it is shown to be supporting an extended version of A1 - now 12 bars long - and together these remain as a striking ostinato.

At Letter C a new theme for flutes, C1 (Ex.357) appears over the continuing A1 ostinato, and the fascination of which Simpson writes now begins to develop. For this reason: the A1 ostinato is hovering on the threshold of F major, while the flute theme points towards D minor.

The immediate repetition of this theme is undertaken by harp - in harmonics, a delightful orchestral thought - and in canon with flutes: all over the A1 ostinato. This C1 theme is completed 3 bars before Letter D and the ostinato rises quickly to a short climax - finishing on a D minor chord - which is forcibly interrupted by an F-sharp minor chord, 'ffz', for trumpets, trombones, and timpani; this leads to a short, but emphatic cadence that quickly re-establishes D minor and begins the second half of the movement.

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1. A very relevant fact since the accent on F (again) at the beginning of this movement, again suggests the chord of F major with an added 6th.

The second half follows the outlines of the first in nearly all details, though it makes certain important, though usual, tonal alterations. Thus the second subject is presented in D minor and (on p.53) the rhythmic ostinato is seen on the threshold of C major while its contrasting C1 theme (in canon from the outset) now points towards A minor.

Again the completion of this C1 theme is followed by a 'ffz' chord for brass and timpani - this time with a C-sharp minor chord - after which a slightly extended version of the original emphatic cadence completes the movement with a brief reference to A1.

The purpose of this movement is two-fold: firstly, to (re)establish a D minor tonic, and thereby exploit the 'subdominant' G minor of the second movement and, secondly, to redirect attention to the peculiar characteristics of D minor itself. In this scherzo movement the tonal argument is even less dramatically presented than in the first movement, but a symphonic tension is created by the tonal interplay of the A1 ostinato and C1.

The movement is fascinating in its apparent simplicity, but it nevertheless manages to function symphonically both as an independant movement and as an integral part of the whole; moreover it prepares (the listener) for the tonal conflict of the finale.

The last movement of the Sixth Symphony has an unusual design, though it falls into 3 sections which assume the functions of exposition, development and recapitulation, and the announce of the movement is (the

2. But note the opening chord of A minor: C major with an added 6th perhaps !

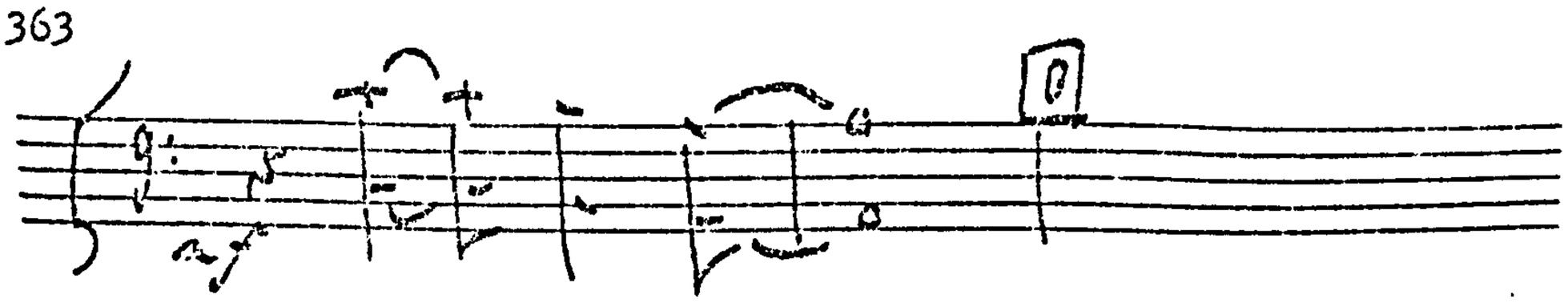
eventual resolution of) the conflict between C major and D minor. The task of this finale is made more difficult since the tonal conflict arises not only from within the finale itself but has affected, or perhaps even dominated, the entire symphony; moreover there is the increasingly insistent thought (and attractive idea) that the opening bars of this movement (up to Letter B) present a mirror reflection of the exposition of the first movement.

The finale opens with the interplay of two main themes, A1 and A2 (Exs.358, 359) which clearly establish C major; and the paragraph up to Letter A is marked by a number of full closes; the third woodwind entry, A3, appears later in the movement to some effect and it is shown in Ex.360.

The last appearance of A2 (at Letter A) completes its phrase on a sustained, octave F-natural, and this is taken by timpani, solo, as the opportunity to suggest D minor.[1] This suggestion is immediately contradicted by the following woodwind phrase, A4 (Ex.361), though it finishes on the chord of A minor; the timpani again suggest D minor - this time more obviously, but this too is rejected, though the phrase still finishes on an A minor chord.

But this A minor chord is marked (p.63, top line, bar 7) with a heavy C for cellos, contra-basses, and horns, anticipated by a short timpani roll. The two subsequent woodwind phrases, now in triplets, (A5, Ex.362) both come to rest on A minor chords, and emphasized by a descending phrase (A6, Ex.363) for horns, violas, bass clarinet, cellos and contra-basses (in the two bar before Letter B):

Ex.363



1. The possibility of a tonal movement towards D minor (largely effected by the timpani) is in some measure due to the diminished 7th that occurs in A2: first on the top line, p.62, bar 5, then in the second bar after Letter A.

These persistent A minor chords act as dominant substitutes and make the D minor characteristic more obvious than in the first movement.

Following this A6 horn phrase, the introduction of a short energetic phrase for strings, B1 (Ex.364), and the subsequent appearance of B-flat, shows the acceptance of the timpani suggestion of D minor, and almost at once a new theme emerges. This new theme, B2 (Ex.365) played by div. strings leads quickly to a climax, and a cadence in D minor (four bars after Letter C).

The cadence then unleashes a powerful motive for horns and strings B3 (Ex.366) that rises from a unison D-natural to a C minor chord; this is clearly a variation of the main (A2) theme of the first movement: a relationship that is confirmed by its subsequent repetition beginning a tone lower. And following this repetition, an energetic semiquaver sequence leads to a strengthened D minor cadence: and this first (D Minor) cadence is reinforced by the appearance of a cadence in the dominant 'key' (bars 3 - 4 after Letter D).[1]

But, just after this cadence point, the reappearance of the A5 triplet phrase, over an emphatic C major chord, causes the A6 horn motive to extend its phrase thus:

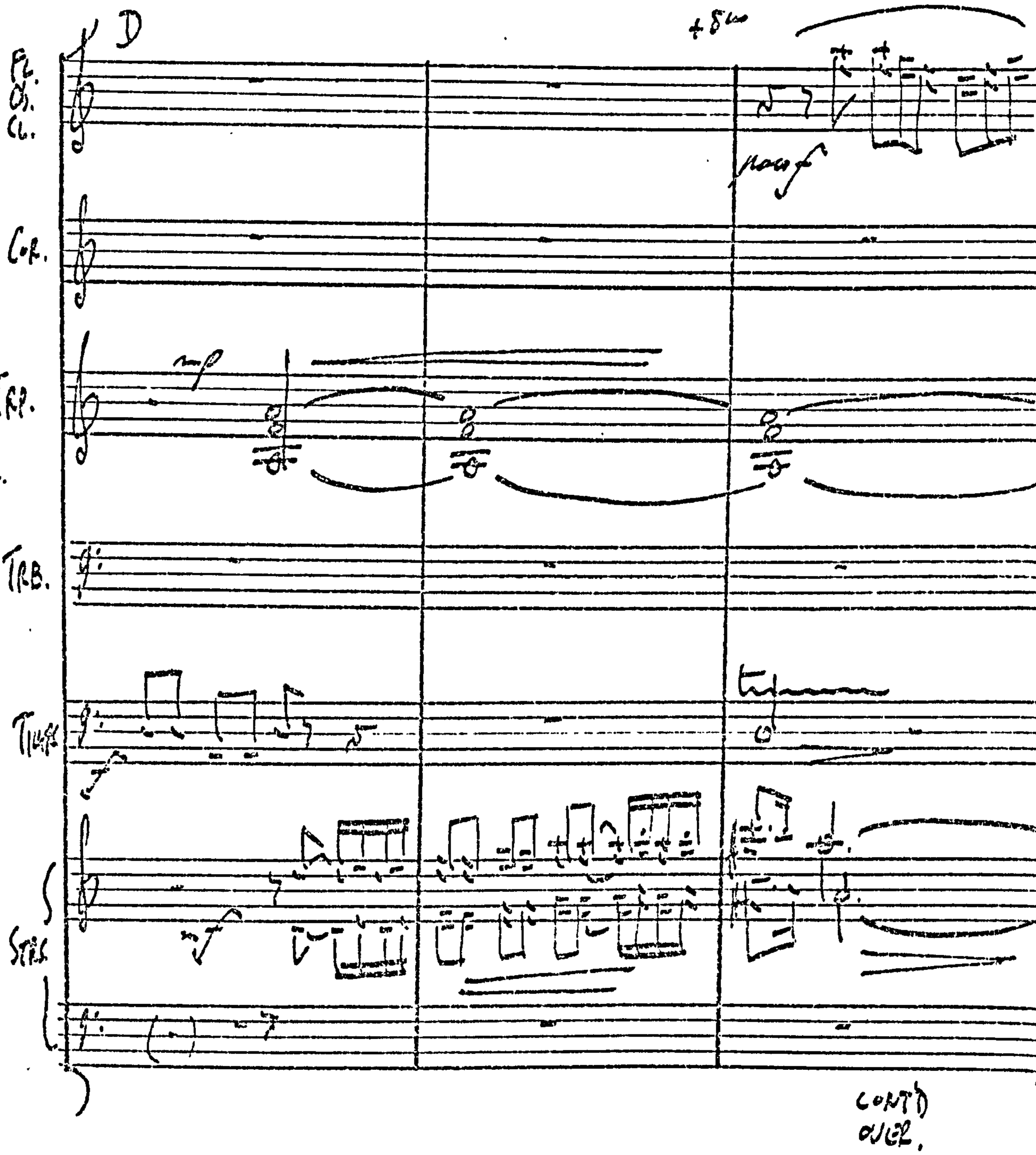
Ex.367

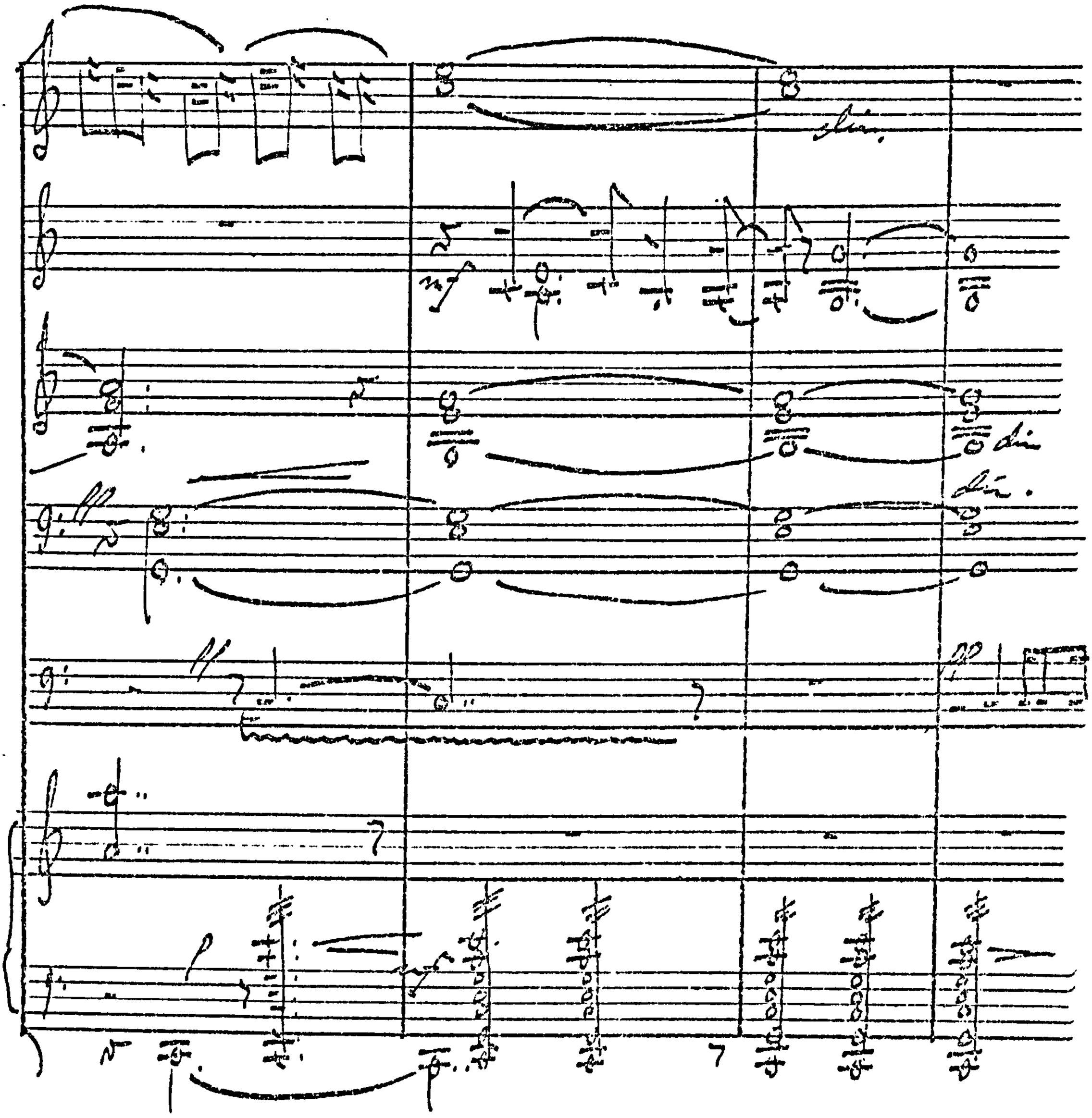


1. The simultaneous presentation of C-natural and C-sharp at this point is typical and functionally important.

and the impact of this extension becomes obvious when the whole of the short passage from Letter D is quoted :

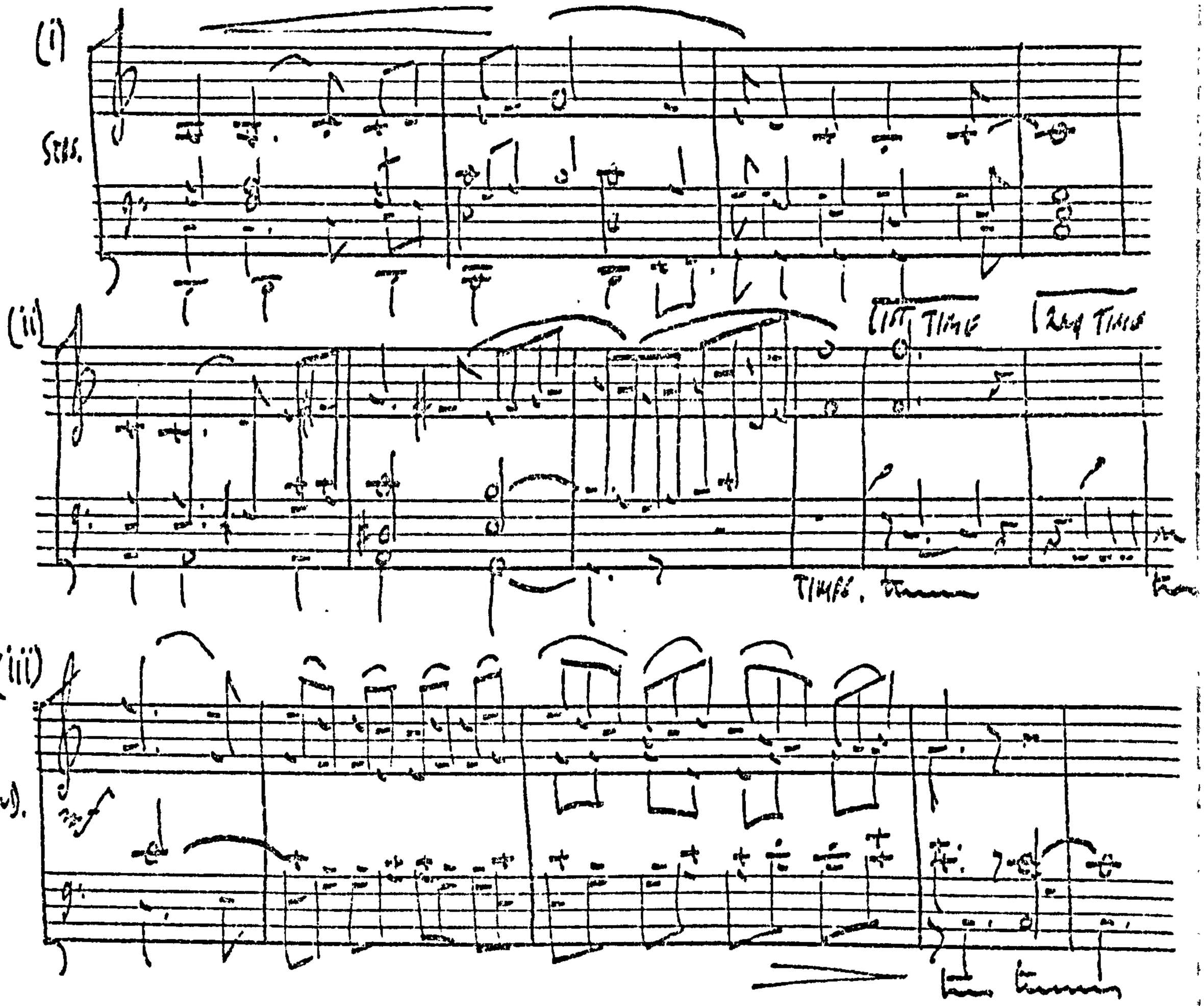
Ex.368

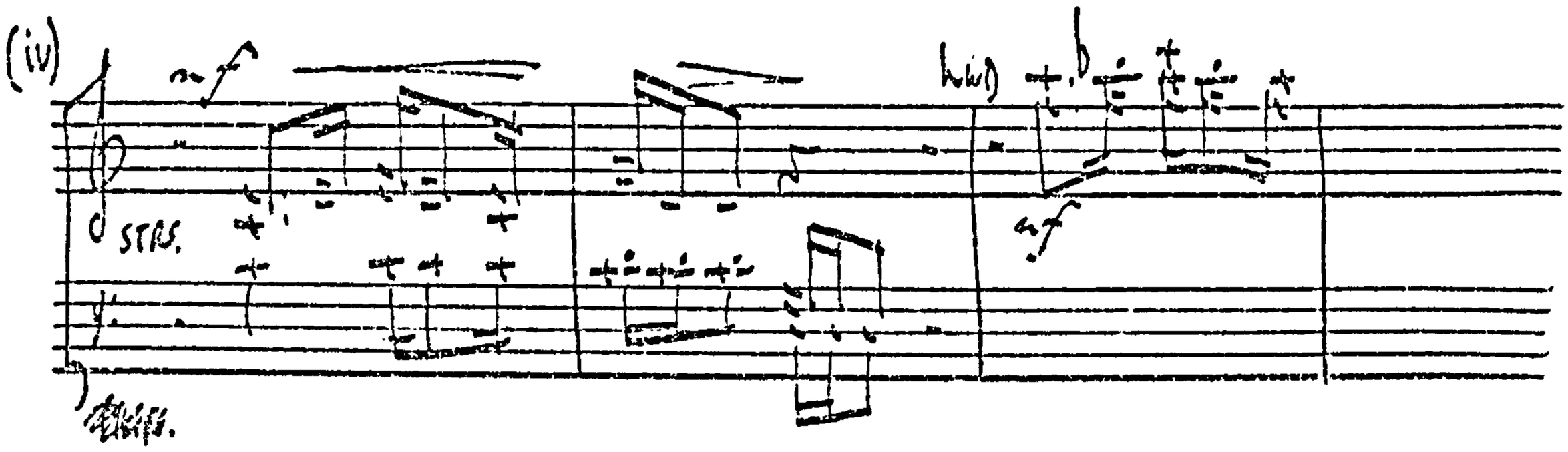




It is now quite clear that the 'exposition' has been drawn back to C major - and in manner that echoes the 'transition' of the first movement - and from this point the whole of the section from Letter B is repeated in a strengthened orchestration. Before continuing however, it may be helpful to summarize the argument of this movement by the following examples:

Ex. 369




(iv)
mf
0 STRS.
(v)
f2.
(vi)
fz
Col

The (written-cut) repeat of this exposition is interesting since it changes no significant detail: it is (until the penultimate bar, p.71) a literal repeat that is orchestrally strengthened: this strengthening, together with the increased dynamics, makes for a more passionate presentation of the argument especially at some of the more important moments (e.g.the end of each phrase of the B3 motive, now in canon, is punctuated by 'ffz' brass chords, while the D minor cadence (p.71) is marked by a syncopated pedal D for cellos and basses.) Even so the A5 triplet figure and its enlarged horn motive (A6) again pull the tonality down to C major: indeed the (in the bar before Letter G) the horns emphasize this point with a short C major arpeggio.

This completes the 'exposition' and the ensuing development section (which lasts until 3 bars after Letter I) begins with the semiquaver motive of B1 leading, as before, to B2, though it is at first accompanied by a D-natural pedal on horns. But (at Letter H) this B2 motive breaks up into smaller phrases that quickly become sequential and lead to a cadence in B-flat minor (p.76, bar 2). Subsequently the harmonic sequence is continued and the movement arrives back at D minor (Letter I p.77) and the release of B3 in horns and strings (accompanied by its own inversion in woodwind).

This time the sequential treatment of this theme (p.77-8) is carried even further (though initially the timpani insist on D and A) while the sequential semiquaver development of this passage from Letter I is supported by a sustained pedal-sequence D - C - B-flat-

A-flat (G-sharp) - F-sharp (for brass) that culminates in an impressive climax and a B major cadence (at Letter J [I]); the cadence itself is immediately extended - to make an allusion to B3 - and it finishes with the notes F - A.

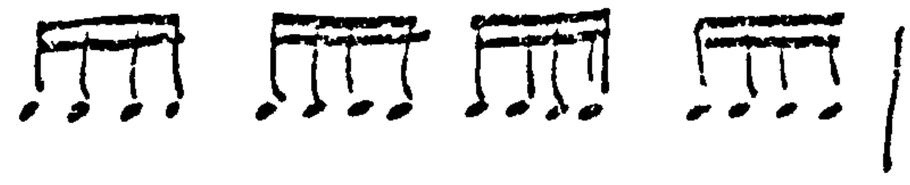
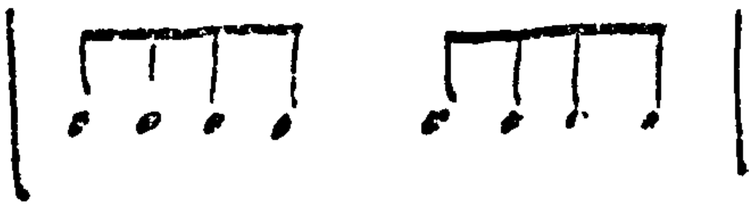
These two notes, which have so often been taken as the upper end of a D minor triad, now provide the opportunity for a return to D minor, though this is only achieved after the intervention of (i) a sequential passage at first over an A-natural pedal, that moves to B-flat and G minor, and (ii) a short sequential passage for flutes and oboes in dialogue that points first to the dominant of C (minor) before stepping up to the dominant of D minor (in the four bars before Letter K).

But D minor is not yet allowed to dominate the movement; for, in the 8 bars between Letters K and L, the movement passes through D minor to arrive at F major (at Allegro assai, Letter L) where a 'new' theme, CI (Ex 369A) appears in strings. The repetitive rhythm that marks the first part of the 16-bar theme recalls AI (the opening theme of the movement) and indeed this CI theme is later shown to be an extended variation of AI.

A slightly extended repetition of this new theme follows at once, and its characteristic passage through C minor and D minor to F major is maintained. Eventually it reaches a full close (four bars after Letter O)

I. To avoid confusion it is necessary to correct the misprint on p.80 of the miniature score : this should read Letter J; Letter I occurs on p. 77

where it is easily dovetailed into the coda.

At this point there is a smooth change of tempo to 'doppio più lento' (effected simply by the substitution of  for ) while the repeated F - A undulation gently subsides. It is followed by an 'espressivo' phrase for strings (based on the inversion of A3, and with A3 as its bass) that suggests a gradual working towards D minor, and includes a reference to the main theme of the first movement (p.86, bar 2 et seq.).

Subsequently the closing phrases of this movement gradually work up to a restrained but impassioned climax, though the tendency towards D minor is still counterbalanced by F major. Four bars after Letter P the immediately previous F major cadence is countered by a very 'sharp' phrase for woodwind and timpani, and although this phrase returns to F major, the following passage for strings rises to the final climax of the movement and comes to rest at 2 pauses - the second of which is taken enharmonically as the (real) dominant chord of D minor.

Finally, after a crotchet rest, a sustained F major chord (directed 'pp') leads to the completion of the movement by a simple phrase, accompanied by a C - D progression for timpani, that eventually absorbs C-natural before the movement dies away on a sustained, and unaccompanied D-natural for violins.

The unusual form of this last movement has caused some comment, and Abraham suggested that (what he called) the 'middle' section

(i.e. Letter B to 2 bars after Letter L) was a 'Bar-form' consisting of two Stollen, (i) Letter B to D + 6, and (ii) D + 6 to Letter G, and an Abgesang.

The idea is interesting though a simpler one may suggest a wider and more rewarding view of the whole movement.

The first three movements of this symphony present clear evidence that Sibelius is here concerned with a musical argument centring on the tonal relationship (and ambivalence) between C major and D minor. That being so it is possible to view this last movement as fulfilling sonata functions in pursuit of its basic tonal evolution.

The first subject paragraph opens the movement and seeks to establish C major in a rather leisurely manner that recalls the D minor opening of the first movement. At Letter B a more urgent rhythmic figure questions this C major and takes up the (timpani) suggestion of D minor; and with the introduction of a new theme the key of D minor is soon achieved and confirmed with a cadence: at which point there is a direct clash between the C major and D minor characteristics.

The comparison of this paragraph with its counterpart in the first movement shows 3 common, though reworked, features :

(i) the first movement contains a tonal movement from D minor to C major: this is closely paralleled, in the finale by C major to D minor;

(ii) the main tonalities (and themes) of the first movement were characterised by their contrasting speeds: in the finale the opening C major is leisurely while D minor is active and rhythmically energetic;

(iii) there is a direct tonal clash at the 'transition' in the first movement: in the finale there is an almost exact allusion to this on p.67 (and again on p.71).

Clearly the opening bars (up to D + 6) are an exposition, and the fact that there is now a literal repeat may be seen as having some foundation in the repeated exposition of 'classical' symphonies (Abraham described this passage as Stollen II). And to the objection which would invalidate this argument by pointing out that the C major first subject is omitted from the repeat, the answer must be that since the D minor second subject is not able to overcome the pull to C major (effected via A5, and the extended version of A6 at D + 6) then this fact is sufficient to establish the presence of C major: the section is therefore repeated with an increased orchestral weight reflecting the increasing passion of the tension and tonal conflict.

The 'Abgesang' of which Abraham remarks, fulfills the function of a development section: it is harmonically active, and explores a wider range of tonalities, before presenting a clear preparation for the transformed restatement of A1 beginning in bars 3-4-5 after Letter J.

The transformation of A.1 is completed at Letter L, where initially the key of the restatement is F major (though it was approached, at Letter K through D minor) since, in spite of the vigorous movement towards D minor in the development section, only F major can destroy the tonal identity of C major as a key in its own right; once F major is established C major will tend to sound like its dominant, and for this reason the recapitulation moves beyond D minor. Moreover the overlapping areas between F major and D minor (and especially the common notes F and A) enables Sibelius to avoid presenting any further juxtaposition of D minor and C major while maintaining (in the coda) the characteristic tonal ambiguity that has marked the whole of this symphony.

The coda returns to something akin to the contemplative feeling of the opening of the Symphony - and both passages are imbued with a memorable poetic quality - indeed there is a clear reference to the main

theme of the first movement, while the final C - D progression for timpani completes the symphony with an allusion to both the opening of the first movement and the creative centre of the symphony as a whole.

It is interesting to view this symphony - and particularly the first and last movements - in the light of Sibelius's oft-quoted conversation with Mahler; the crux of this conversation is Sibelius's statement: "When our conversation touched on the essence of the symphony, I said that I admired its severity and style and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motifs."

Various writers have suggested different interpretations for this statement, though it is often taken as referring to thematic evolutions. In contrast, there is a considerable evidence for suggesting that it refers, directly, to the presence of a tonal evolution.

The whole of the Sixth Symphony shows a creative and imaginative concentration on one basic idea, and the concentration manifests itself in a variety of ways - not merely thematic, but in the harmonic progressions (especially as evidenced by the opening bars with the C then D viola entries, as well as the progressive clash of the D minor and C major characteristics at cadences) in speeds and rhythms (a distinguishing feature of the opposing tonalities in both the first and last movements) in the relationships between movements, and their culminative effect, and even in the use of orchestral colours (where for example, the impact of the timpani sound can be sufficient to establish the presence of one of the main tonalities).

It is the interplay and interpenetrative parallel development of these features that creates 'a profound logic and an inner connection' - hence, in the Sixth Symphony, the strength of its designs, its apparent

unwillingness to reveal its secrets through thematic quotations alone, its subdued and enigmatic character, and above all its poetry.

CHAPTER 21

SYMPHONY No. 7

CHAPTER 21

Symphony No.7. In einem Satze, Op.105[1].

In 1918 (in the private letter quoted earlier)[2] Sibelius had outlined some of his plans for the 5th, 6th and 7th Symphonies; the 7th Symphony was described thus

> "Joy of life and vitality, with appassionato passages. In 3 movements - the last a 'hellenic rondo'"

after which Sibelius added :

> "With regard to Symphonies 6 and 7 the plans may possibly be altered according to the development of the musical ideas."

Several years later Sibelius told Ekman:

> "The reservation in my statement about the two new symphonies.....was fully justified. The Fifth Symphony was not completed in its final form until the autumn of 1919 and a long time was to elapse before its two successors appeared, and then not in the form I had originally intended."

And following this (and bearing in mind the confusion that the 1918 letter appeared to cause with regard to the Fifth Symphony) many writers fear a 'confusion worse confounded' when Ekman later quotes Sibelius thus:

> "On March 2, (1924) as I entered in my diary, I completed 'Fantasia Sinfonica' - that is what I, at first, thought of calling my Seventh Symphony in one movement."

Comment on the 'Fantasia Sinfonica' title has been considerable if inconclusive, and while most writers (though not all) agree on the 'symphonic' quality of this work and its indivisible organic nature, few have illustrated these qualities convincingly; further while its thematic evolutions and derivations have been frequently shown, few writers

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1. It is scored for: double woodwind, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.
2. See p.300.
3. Ekman, op.cit., p.256.

have illuminated its tonal basis or argument.

The essential nature of this work is that it is (indubitably) a one-movement symphony; it is not a collection of separate sections (movements) welded together, but a coherent and imaginative single design - and one which may well be seen to have descended directly from the experiences of the previous symphonies (and in particular the 5th and 6th). It presents a totally integrated tonal and thematic evolution that arises from the presentation of its (typical) opening tonal proposition and which - in its subsequent working out - must NECESSARILY manifest itself in a variety of tempi that are more normally associated with the separate movements found in a conventional symphony.

The opening proposition is largely presented in the opening 22 bars, and although the separate features contained therein are carried in a continuous (and enjoyable) flow of thematic unfolding, they are worthy of close examination: and for convenience these features will be presented individually though in sequence. However, for reasons that will appear later, it is firstly necessary to list the tempi directions as found in the printed (miniature) score together with the suggested Mm markings that David Cherniavsky made known.

Page	Printed direction	Suggested Mm marking
3	Adagio	Crotchet = 76
10	-	Accel al...
12	Un pochett, meno adagio	Minim = 76
13	poco affrett	Minim = 84
19	poco a poco affrett il tempo al....	-
20	(minim = dotted minim)	Dotted minim = 104
23	Vivacissimo	Dotted minim = 152
29	poco rallentando al	-
29	(minim = dotted crotchet)	-
30	Adagio	Minim = 56
35	poco a poco meno lento al	-
36	(minim = dotted minim)	-
40	Allegro molto moderato	Dotted minim = 76
42	Un pochett, affrettando.. Allegro moderato	Dotted minim = 84
59	Vivace	Dotted minim = 126
64	Presto	Dotted minim = 160
66	poco a poco rall al	-
68	Adagio	Minim = 56
73 - 4	Largamente molto	-
76	Tempo primo (last four bars)	-

As regards the overall form of this work there is a considerable amount of evidence that suggests its indebtedness to sonata form - and it will not be inconvenient[1] to use the terms exposition, development, and recapitulation and to view the movement in three large sections thus :

Exposition: first subject paragraph - bar 1 - p.10, Letter D,
transition - Letter D - p.20 6/4,
second subject paragraph - p.20 - p.29
Development: - p.30 - Presto p.64
Recapitulation: - p.64 ...al fine

The unfolding of the first paragraph, and in particular the opening 22 bars, presents the basis of much of the thematic material of this movement, establishes its proportions, and lays the foundation for the subsequent tonal and thematic evolution. The first 22 bars may be considered as follows :-

Bars 1 - 3

a diatonic scale (A1) - beginning on the dominant of C major - comes to a 'foreign' chord of A-flat minor and stops; this progression is marked by

(i) the single G-natural (for timpani, solo) that begins the scale,

(ii) the subsequent presentation of the scale in unison strings (except contra-basses),

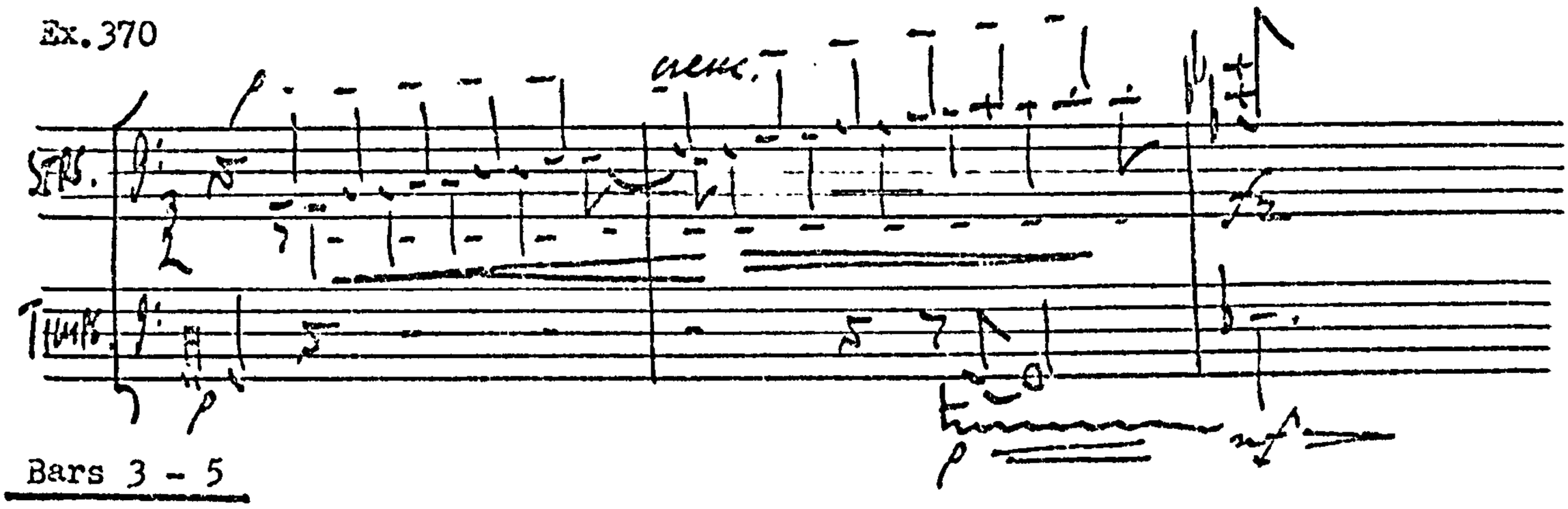
(iii) the syncopation of the contra-basses, and

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1. Perhaps this should be stressed: it will not be inconvenient - no more than this!

(iv) the outlining - by timpani - of the G - E-flat interval that arises from this scale and its progression to the A-flat minor chord:

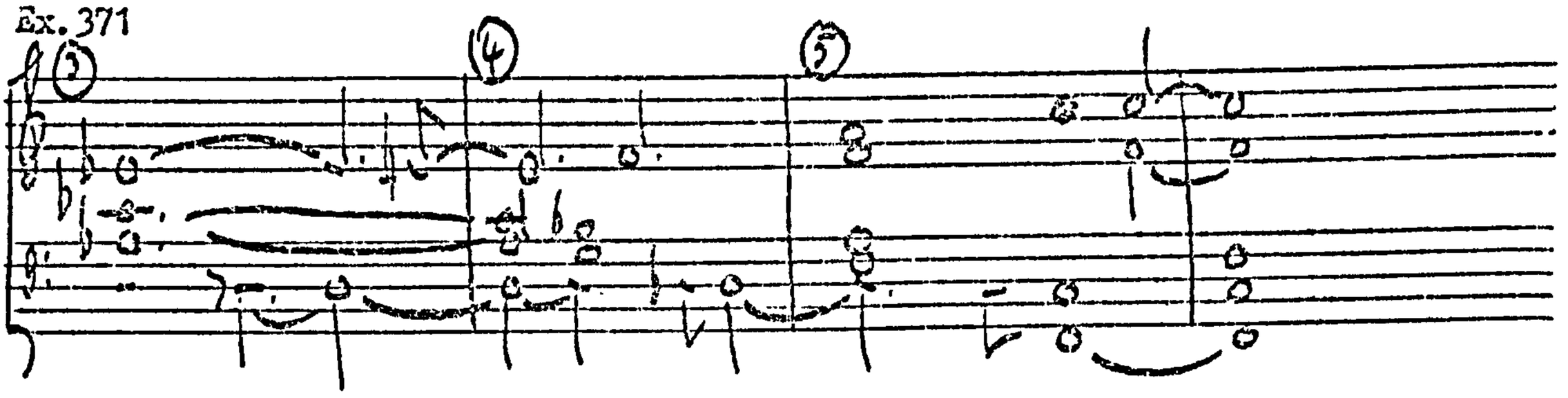
Ex.370



Bars 3 - 5

this A-flat minor chord then 'eases' to a distonic F major (and in bar 5 there is a return to 'straight' time):

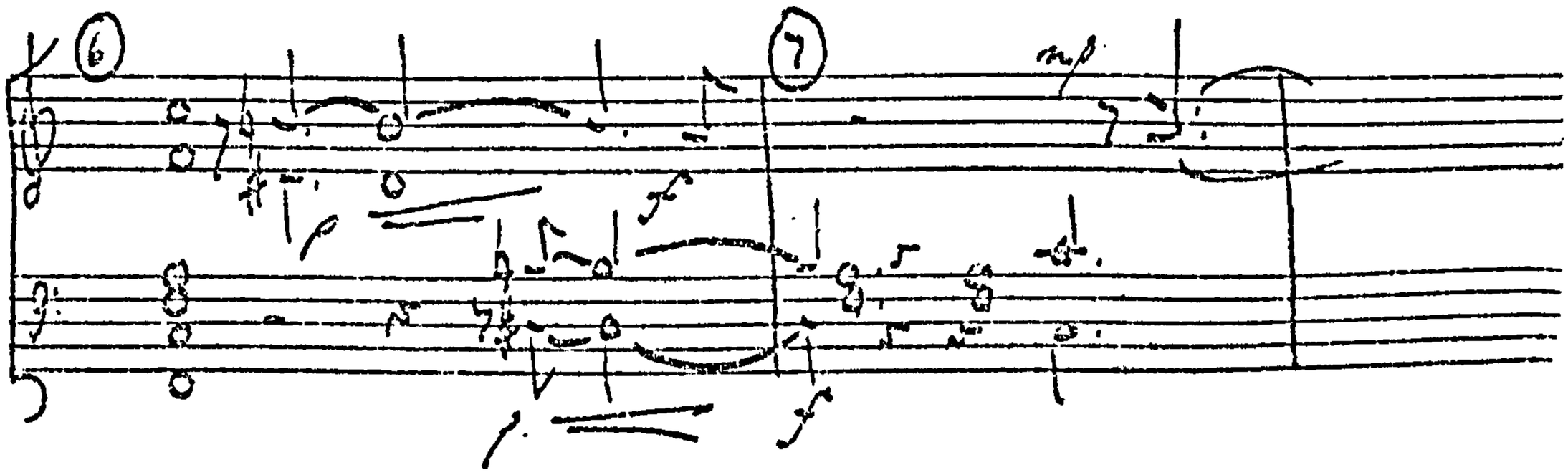
Ex.371



Bars 6 - 7

Next, the addition of "foreign" notes, D-sharp and B-natural (the enharmonics of the E-flat at the top of the A-flat minor chord and its minor third,) makes this F major chord into an augmented 6th (A2), and, as the tension increases again, the syncopation returns; the resolution of the augmented 6th is not stated, but the F major position is taken up; note also the appoggiatura effect of the B-natural:

Ex.372

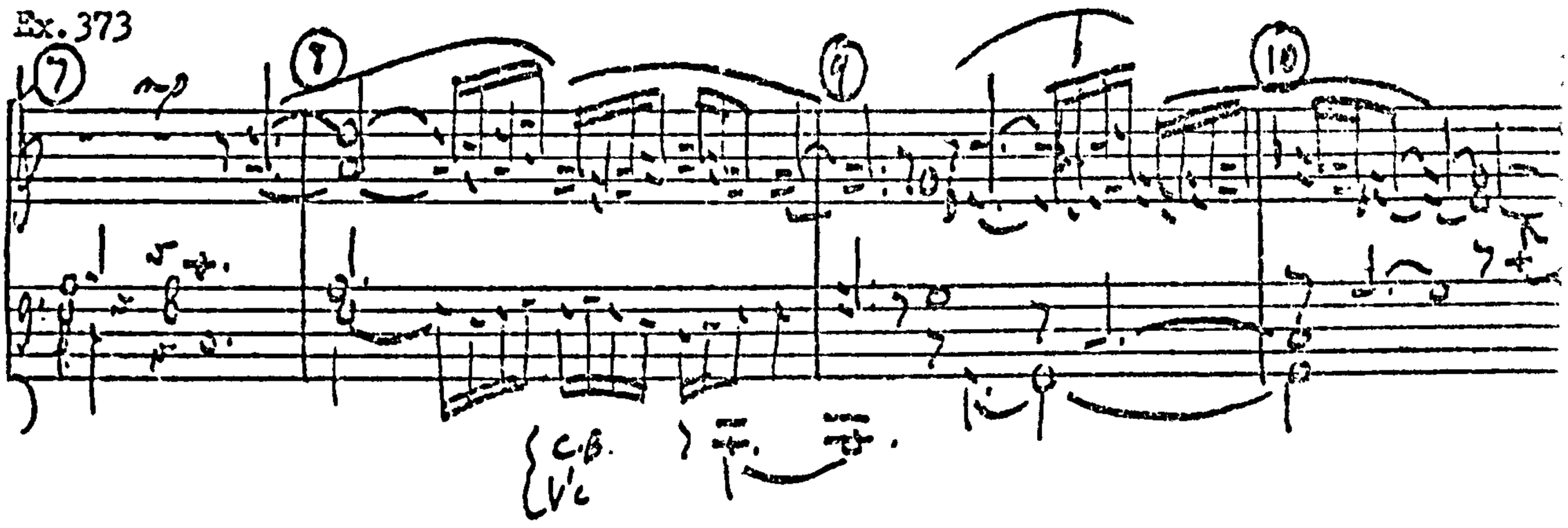


Bars 7 - 9

9 - 10

The relaxation of tension achieved by the F major chord in bar 7 is enhanced by the addition of an 'added-6th' in flutes - and its subsequent phrase (A3): and since the 'F major' chord of Bar 5 is 'en route' to C major, then the introduction of the (normal) added-6th cancels the impact of the previous D-sharp, and without altering the actual direction of the tonal argument. In turn this A3 flute phrase is (sequentially) answered by clarinets - though in C minor and with a B-flat. During these bars the tonal centre of C is strengthened by the string entries:

Ex. 373



Bars 11 - 12

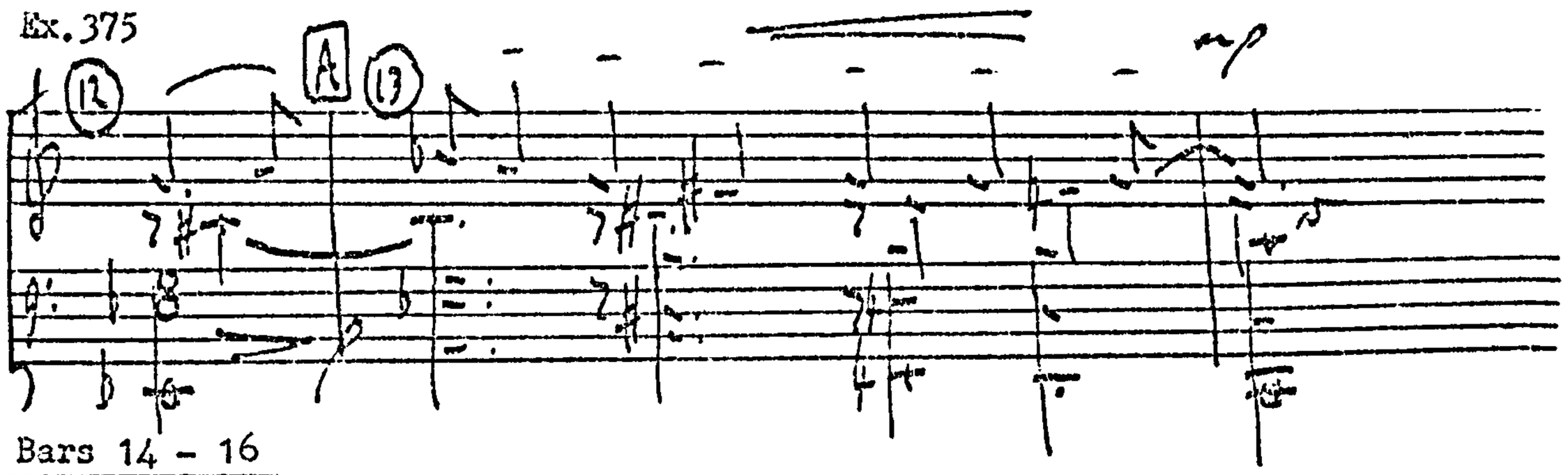
A simplified version (A4) of the previous flute-clarinet phrase is presented - at first taking up the F major position but then continuing the C minor characteristic, complete with B-flat:

Ex. 374

Bars 12 - 13

Following this (in the bar before Letter A) an augmented 6th reappears, and this leads to a 'foreign' chord of B major; note (i) the contour and syncopation of the phrase (A5), and (ii) the appearance of F-sharp (followed by a repeated G-natural) which helps to turn the tonality (quickly) to C major:

Ex.375



Bars 14 - 16

Having, at last, reached a C major chord, the movement appears to settle down to start a sequence, but by bar 17 (i.e.the first bar p.5) the sequence is disturbed by syncopation (again), and in the following bars

Bars 18 - 22

A falling sequence (for woodwind, over a tonic pedal in timpani, horns and 2nd violins) takes up the C minor characteristic before completing its phrase with a half-close, after which

Bars 22 - 60 (i.e.to the second bar p.9)

a sustained polyphonic passage for divided strings is presented in C major.

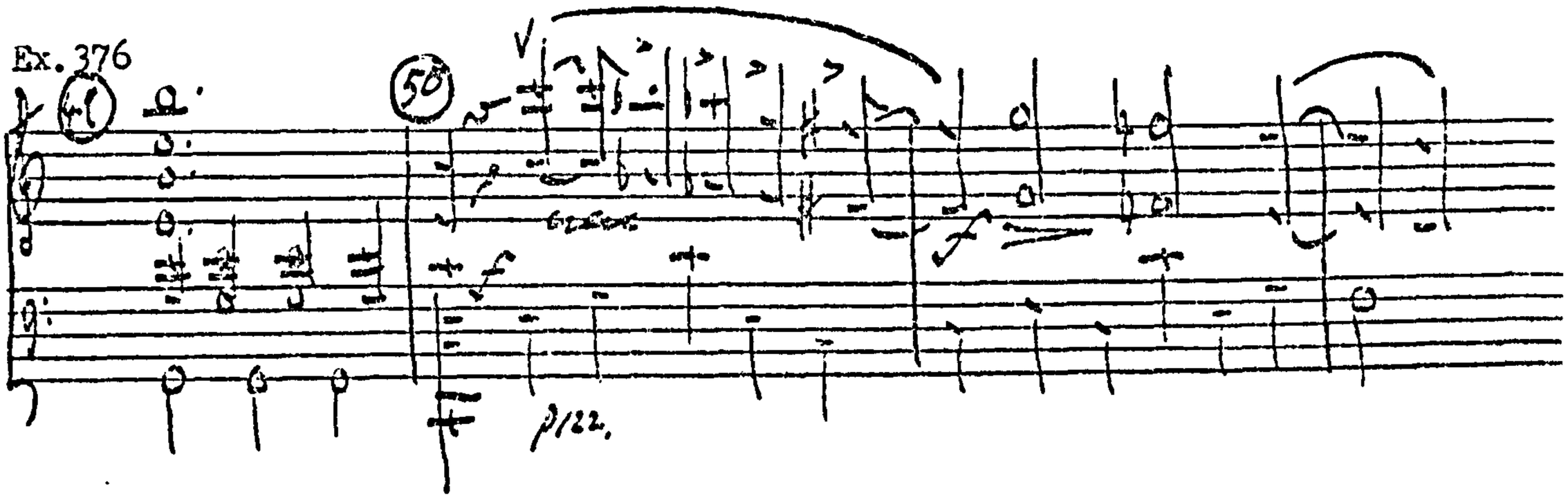
The number of separate features presented in these opening bars has not always been fully appreciated, yet there is an almost continuous counterpulling of opposing elements: these could be tabled as follows :-

	Bar	
	I	Timpani sound Dominant of C
Syncopation	1 - 2	
A-flat minor chord	3	
	5	F major chord
Augmented 6th	6	
	7 - 8	F major and added-6th
C minor with B-flat	9 - 10	
	8 - 10	String entries - C,G, C,G, C,G.
	11	Towards F major
C min.with B-flat	12	
Augmented-6th	12	
Syncopation	13	
	13	F-sharp to G
	14	C major chord
	14	Sequence starts
Syncopation	17	
C minor sequence	18 - 20	
		Tonic Pedal
	21 - 22	
		To half-close in C major

Thus the source of energy of this movement (and the disturbance of C major) is seen to arise from the presence of a number of contradictory elements, and these could later be taken up singly or in combination - and this is a considerable factor governing the size of this composition; moreover it is one of the reasons for the length of the immediately following paragraph in C major itself.

This magnificent polyphonic passage for divided strings (beginning at bar 22) is one of the finest moments in all of Sibelius's orchestral music. Its basis is a 16 bar melody, the first 12 bars of which are then repeated in a strengthened orchestration before the passage reaches a first C major cadence (at bar 50, i.e.bar 1 p.8) - though the cadence itself is marked by syncopation (and B- and A-flat) :

Ex.376



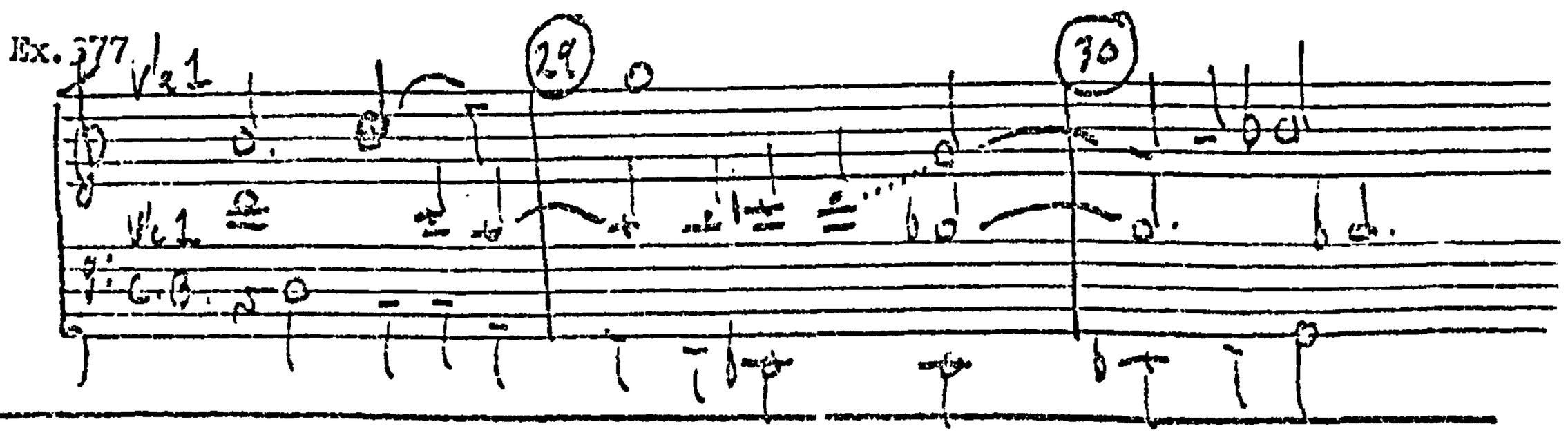
After this a short, simple, sequence leads to an emphatic full close and the beginning of a (climactic) trombone theme in bar 60 (i.e.bar 2 p.9).

The polyphonic quality of this passage for divided strings[1] (up to bar 50) is somewhat unusual in that it is not imitative, and the contrapuntal character (and energy) of this passage seems to derive from the polarity of the two outer parts: but this is considerably enhanced by

(i) the 'propulsive' effect of the cross-rhythm in the inner parts,

(ii) the type of voice-leading that enables the inner parts to lead directly to an outer part :-

Ex.377



1. The strings have in fact been divided since the beginning of this movement, but it is only from bar 22 onwards that they are presented (on their own) as such.

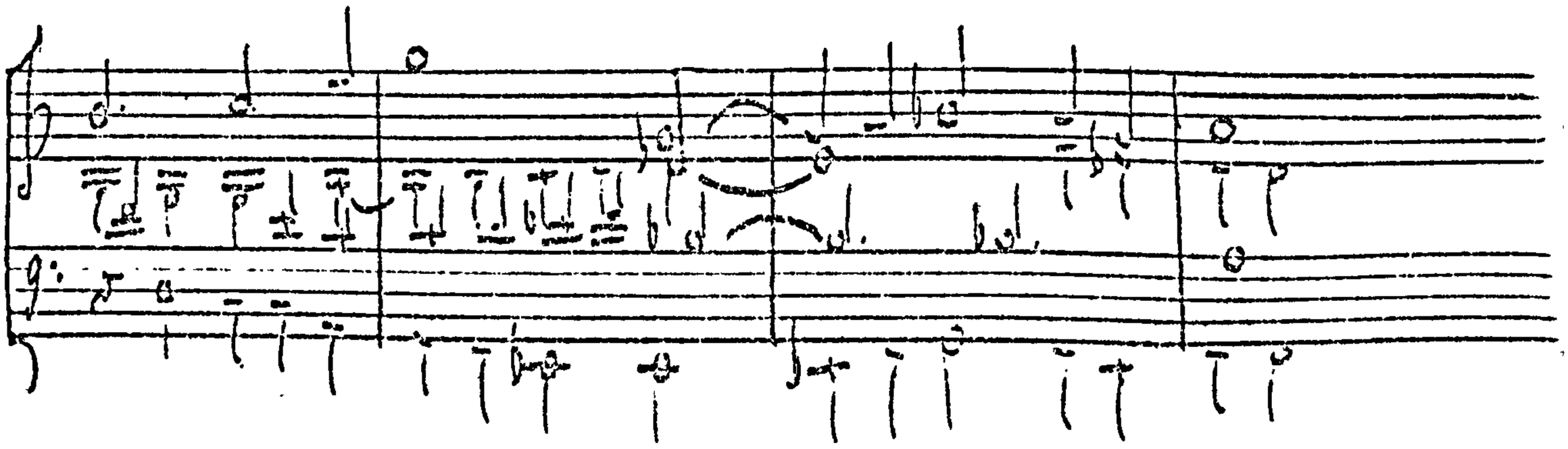
and,

(iii) the fact that although (from the bottom line of p.6 onwards) the strings are all divisi (except contra- basses) there is rarely more than 4 real parts, and frequently only 3 - though they are often doubled in octaves; this gives the passage a strong, spacious characteristic, and enhances its 'polyphonic' qualities.

Apart from its own intrisic interest (and beauty) this passage is important for its contribution to the size of the design; for had Sibelius omitted this passage and proceeded directly to a 'second subject' paragraph (as in the first movements of the 5th and 6th Symphonies) then the result could well have been a comparatively small design rather like the first movement of the Sixth Symphony (and the argument of which was then continued throughout the subsequent 3 movements) or could have led to a large design as in the 5th Symphony (where the early move to the second subject paragraph was later balanced by a coda, and then a complete second 'half'). This present C major passage (between bars 22 and 60) probably represents the 'bulkiness' of C major - it epitomizes the idea of a paragraph in the tonic key - and it is a further factor contributing to the impressive size of this composition.

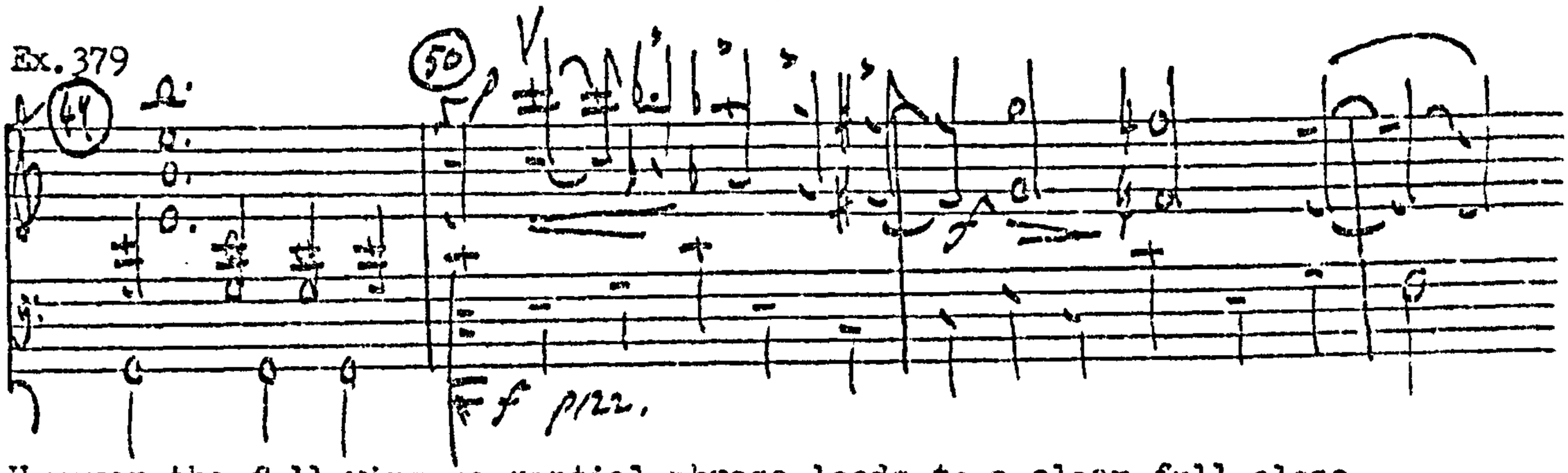
The C major tonality of this passage is strengthened by the early appearance of F-sharp, though as it approaches its (C major) cadence points, the appearance of E-flat (and then B-flat) turns the tonality to C minor;

Ex.378



This occurs twice and although the sequential treatment of the subsequent phrase prevents this minor characteristic from achieving any serious disruption at this point, the first full close (at bar 50) is marked by a (syncopated) phrase that recalls the syncopation of bar 17 (which was itself a reflection of the phrase at Letter A) :

Ex.379



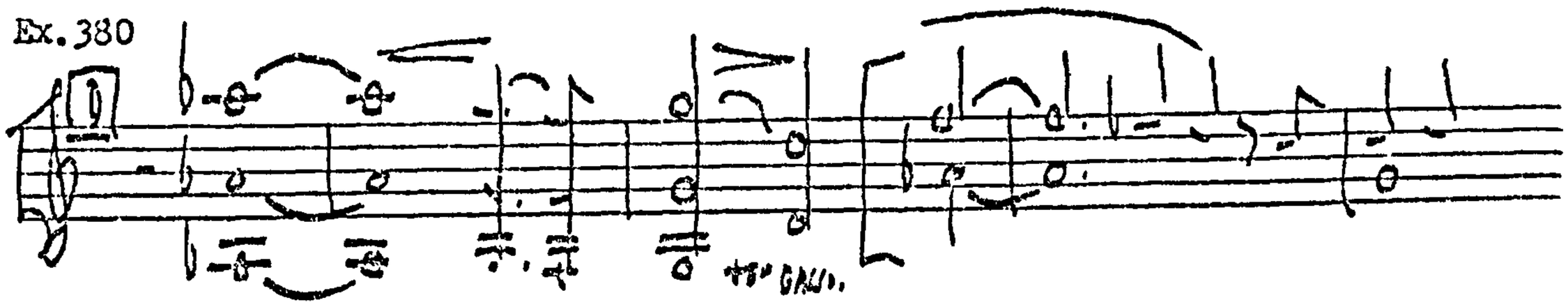
However the following sequential phrase leads to a clear full close and introduces a theme for trombone solo (A6) 'sonore' - in bar 60.

This A6 trombone theme is the affirmation and confirmation of C major and (although it obviously has an important thematic function, and begins with an appoggiatura) it recalls the same tonal function as that of the C - D - E brass motive in the first movement of the Third Symphony, or the emphatic brass cadence in 'Pohjola's Daughter'. The fact that the tonal confirmation of the opening tonic paragraph of this composition is marked by the presentation of a theme (of some stature) and not just a brass cadence (as in those previous works) is itself a further indication of the sheer size of this composition. This theme complements the inherent broadness of the opening proposition and the subsequent polyphonic passage, and completes the tonic paragraph; the later appearances of this theme mark the progress of the musical argument.

As this trombone theme comes to a close (in the three bars before Letter D, p.10) the cadence is again turned to the minor by a phrase

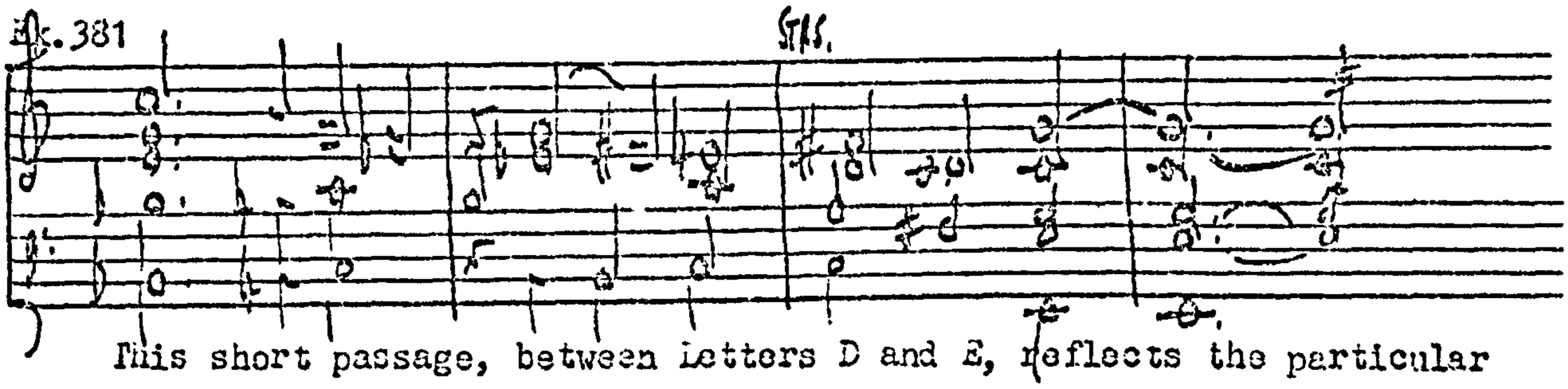
(for horns 1 and 3, violins I and II, and oboes) that clearly refers to the opening A1 scale and in particular its progression to the chord of A-flat minor: indeed this progression is anticipated by the timpani E-flat (though afterwards the timpani complete a normal cadence). This reference to A1 is immediately taken up - at Letter D - with the presentation of what, at first, appears to be a new theme (A7) for clarinet and flute (on p.10):

Ex.380



But this theme - which makes a particular reference to A-flat and is therefore a further allusion to the opening of the work - has already been heard twice before in this movement (p.6, bars 7 - 8 viola I, and p.7 bar 6 - 7, violins and flutes) and this is made quite explicit by the horn entries on p.11. The sequential treatment of this phrase leads to a tonic chord (with B-flat) after which (in the four bars before Letter E) the C major tonality is again steadied by the appearance of F-sharp (in this following phrase, A8) :

Ex.381



This short passage, between Letters D and E, reflects the particular tensions originally expressed in the opening 22 bars and although there is (here) a strong gravitational pull to C major, there is also a disturbing counterpulling of the opposing elements (principally E-flat and A-flat on one side and F-sharp on the other). And this counterpulling

is now emphasized by (i) the direction (ex Cherniavsky) 'accelerando al...' which begins at Letter D, and

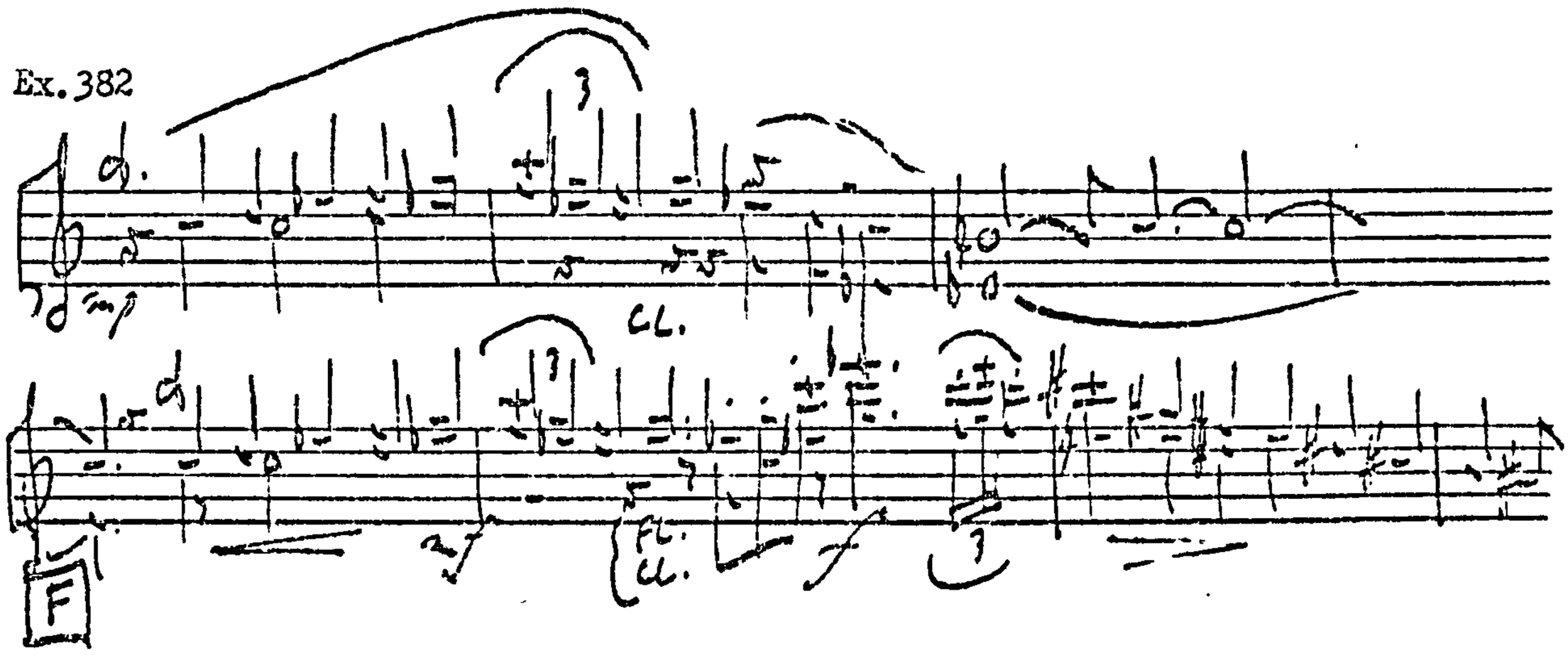
(ii) by the 'coll punto e veloce' marking for the strings.

This disturbing counterpulling is continued (after Letter E) in a short phrase which begins with A-flat and an augmented 6th chord: the first two bars of this phrase are then repeated and come to rest (p.12, bar 2) on the chord of A-flat major. The actual position of this chord is worth noting: for it appears where the dominant chord of a cadence would be - and indeed the horns and timpani complete the cadential function by moving to C-natural.

This assumption of the position of the dominant chord, followed by the return of the opening material suggests the possibility that this is the beginning of a development section: thus A1 reappears in flutes and strings, though its phrase is now completed by the addition of the A4 flute-clarinet phrase; while the diminished chord at 'un pochett.meno adagio' recalls the C minor phrase for clarinets at bars 9 - 10. But since the movement appears reluctant to leave C major (minor) it also recalls the extended 'transition' in (the first movement of) the Second Symphony where each apparent movement away from the tonic key was turned back; and here also the (three) sentences of this transition are at first turned back to C.

The first sentence of this transition (beginning 3 bars before Letter F) presents a revised version of A1 that is answered by a phrase for clarinets (that seems to be derived from the phrase at Letter A or Bar 50) and completed with referance to the half close of bars 21 - 22:

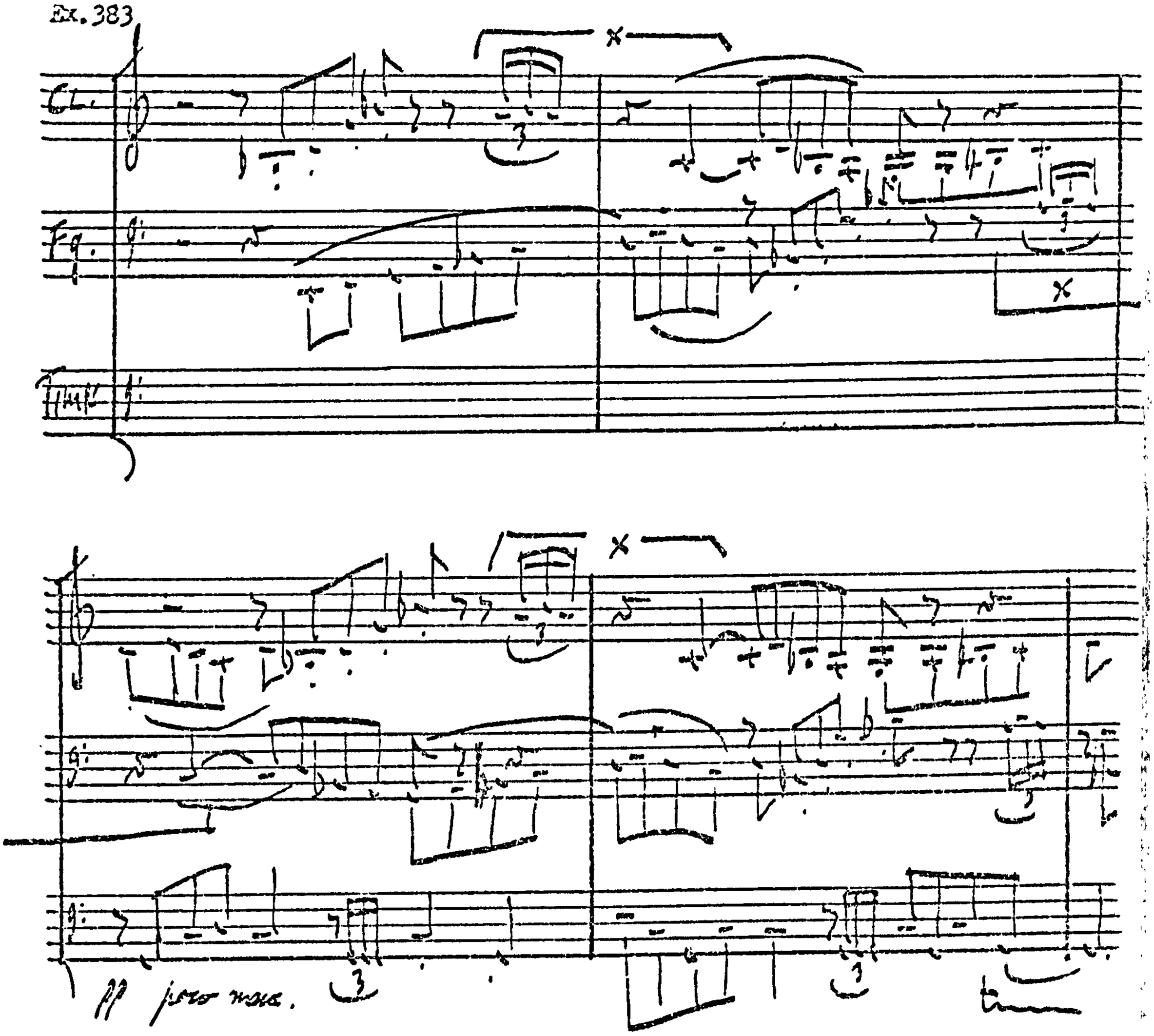
Ex. 382



The desire for tonal movement at this point is reflected in the repeated and syncopated string chords, the rhetorical hastening of the shorter wind and string phrases, as well as the increase in tempo. But as this first sentence begins to move away from the tonic, the opposing elements of F-sharp and B-flat reappear and (at Letter G) the movement is back (on a dominant ninth) on C - complete with a reference (in horns) to the opening of the trombone theme.

The second transition sequence begins (over a C-natural pedal in horns) with the revised version of A1 in flutes, though the following phrase for clarinets and bassoons suggests both the diminution of A1 and (at 'x') the thematic development of the interval of a sixth first outlined by the timpani in bars 1 - 3 :

Ex. 383



Moreover the idea that this section is a transition (rather than a reluctant development section) is strengthened by the reduction in the orchestral textures at this point and the clear 'contrapuntal' interplay between bassoon, clarinet, and timpani; the desire for tonal movement is further emphasized (on p.16) by :

(i) the staccato scale for strings,

(ii) the subsequent woodwind phrases - particularly for flutes, whose phrases shown an increasing number of notes (to 4, 5, 6) and

(iii) the consecutive (pizz) ninth chords for strings which come to rest on A-flat (= G-sharp).

At Letter H the final transition sentence (which includes the most important elements of the first two sentences) begins as though repeating the first sentence, but (initially) on C-sharp - thus moving away from the tonic key of C at last - even though it (also) quickly comes to a pause on a (dominant seventh) chord of C (p.19, last 2 bars - p.20).

But by now the thematic (and tonal) evolution - together with the increasing impetus resulting from the consecutive ninth chords, the rhetorical power of the contrapuntal passage for woodwind and timpani and a further increase in speed - leads to the beginning (at 6/4, p.20) of what may be called the 'second subject' paragraph; this paragraph has frequently been described as the first scherzo section.

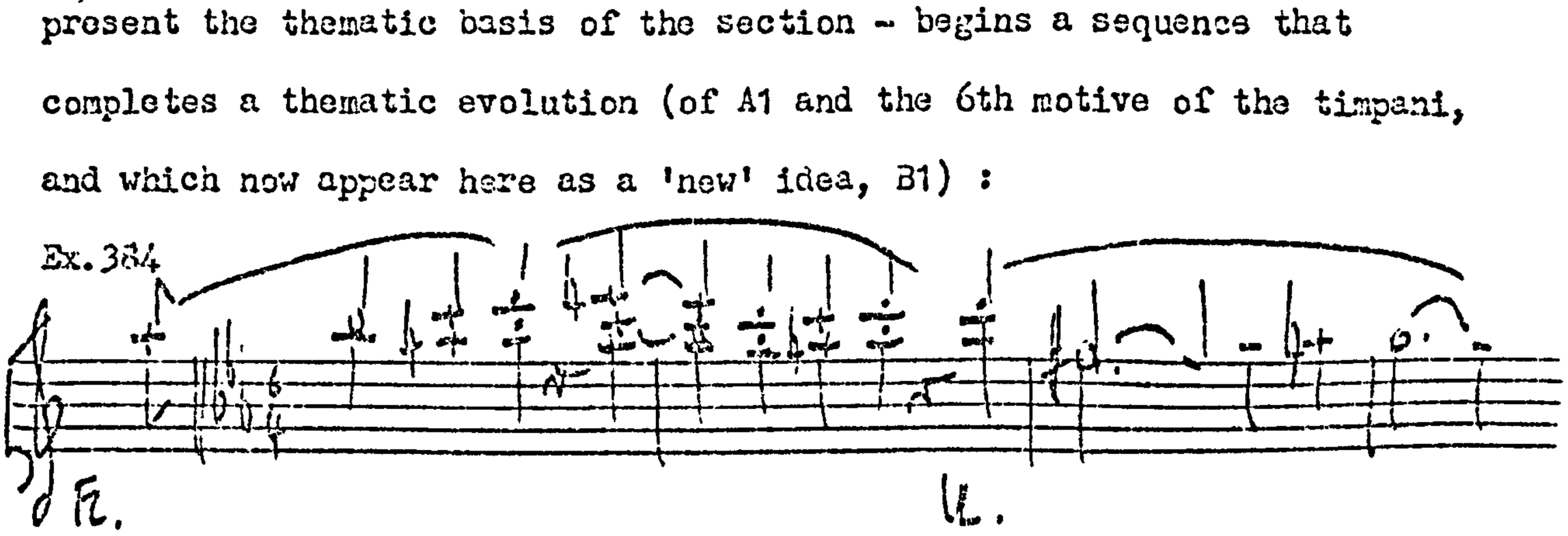
This 'scherzo' consists of 14 'introductory' bars (p.20, bar 2 - p.21 last bar) followed by 3 largely repetitive sentences:

1. p.22 bar 1 to p.24, bar 1.
2. p.24 bar 2 - p.27 bar 2, and
3. p.27 bar 3 - p.29 bar 1,

- during which the tempo is further increased to Vivacissimo (at Letter J p.23).

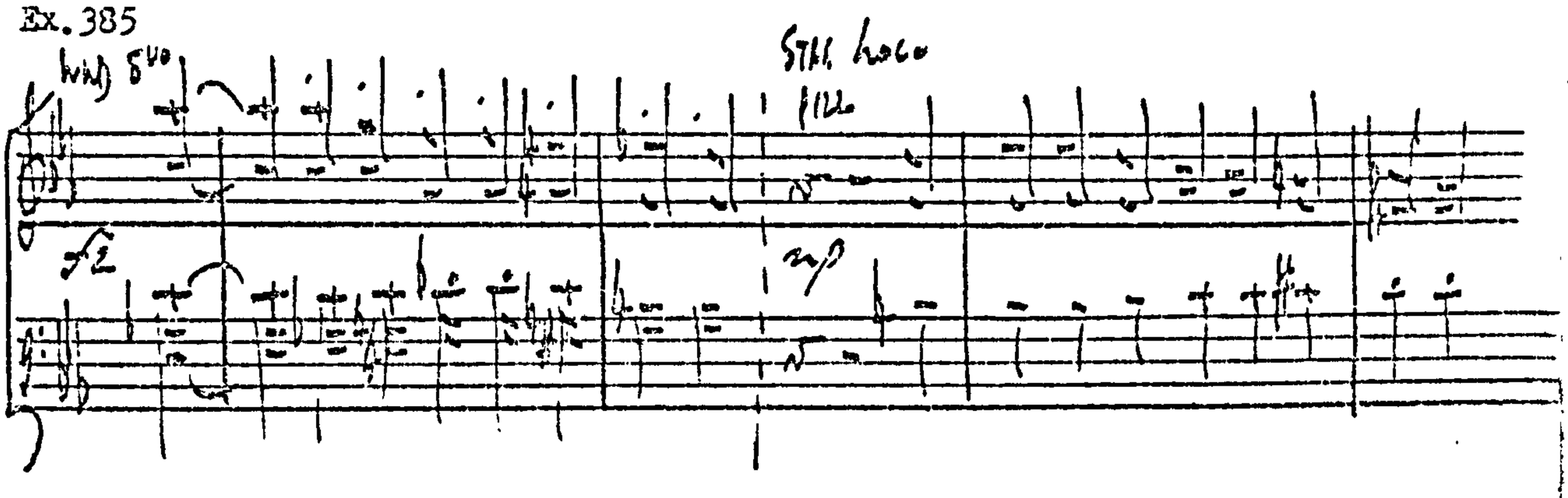
The introductory bars (from 6/4 p.20 to last bar p.21) - which present the thematic basis of the section - begins a sequence that completes a thematic evolution (of A1 and the 6th motive of the timpani, and which now appear here as a 'new' idea, B1) :

Ex. 334



and then passes quickly through G minor and B-flat minor to reach the first main sentence of this second subject paragraph which begins on an augmented 6th chord on A-flat:

Ex.385



This first sentence moves quickly to the dominant of C minor, but, at letter J this key centre is avoided and (the second phrase of) the sentence then passes quickly through the keys of A-flat minor, C minor and E-flat minor to arrive at the dominant of G-flat.

At this point the sequence is broken, and the dominant-7th of G-flat is taken enharmonically (and as an augmented 6th) so that the first 8 bars of the second sentence now move to the dominant of F minor. So far this second sentence has been a simple transposition (a fourth up) of the first, but having arrived at the dominant of F minor (p.25, bar 4) the transposition is changed (to a fourth down) so that the rest of this second sentence now passes through the keys of E-flat minor, G-flat minor and B-flat minor to arrive at the dominant of D-flat. This enables the third and final sentence to begin with a return of the augmented 6th on A-flat after which the following 8 bars once more move quickly to the dominant of C minor. The whole of this short section could be shown as follows :

1st sentence: A-flat (augmented 6th).....to V of C minor

then passing quickly through A-flat minor,
C minor, E-flat minor, to V of G-flat.

2nd sentence: D-flat (augmented 6th).....to V of F minor

then passing quickly through A-flat minor,
G-flat minor, B-flat minor, to V of D-flat,

3rd sentence: A-flat (augmented 6th).....to V of C minor
which is now accepted.

The beginning of the third sentence is steadied by a G-natural horn pedal (supported by timpani) which, from p.29 onwards, allows the rushing crotchets simply to dissolve into quavers so that the direction 'poco rall' and a change of the signature - to 3/2 (minim = dotted crotchet) effects an easy transition to Adagio (p.30) - in which tempo the (A6) trombone theme is restated in C minor.

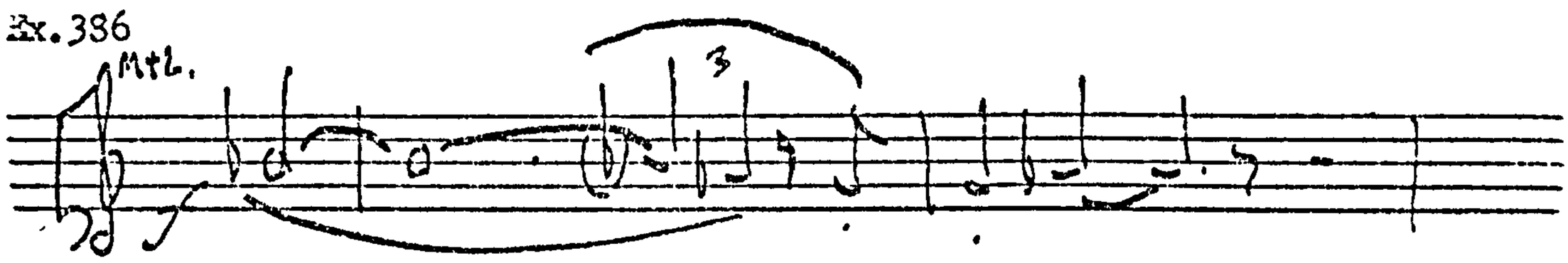
The design of this so-called scherzo section is important (in its own right) and illuminates the one-movement conception and realization of this composition. In essence it fulfils the function of a second subject paragraph and, although it does not establish any one particular key in opposition to C major, it clearly AVOIDS that (tonic) key. Moreover it is the result and climax of a gradual quickening of the pace of the movement - that has been in progress since Letter D - and which is itself accompanied by a very considerable increase in sheer speed. Robert Simpson has described this function as "a powerful contraction of thought" though it is perhaps necessary to point out that this means a quickening of the rate at which events happen, rather than any 'compression'. The increase in pace is not the result of a sudden realisation that to continue along lines comparable to the opening would result in a work of prodigious length: rather it is the inherent and essential creative purpose of the work. Therefore this second subject

paragraph enhances this purposeful contraction of thought (i) by avoiding any one established key centre, while (ii) it is precisely because it works through a complete design that it effects the increased pace of the movement.

The importance of the completion and wholeness of this section's (small) design is considerable, especially since the 'contraction' of thought it represents has arisen as a direct consequence and evolution of the opening proposition. Further, the fact that this 'second subject' section completes its own design within - and as a function of - a larger design clearly points to the indivisible and organic nature of this composition.

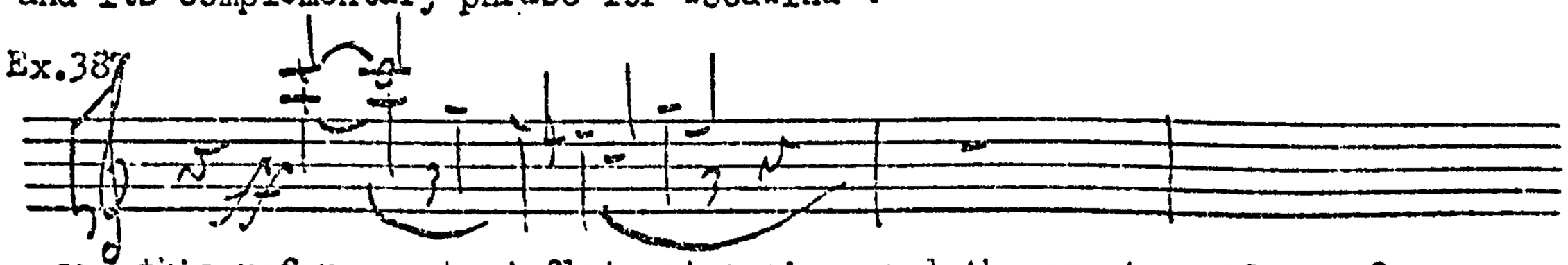
At Letter L (on p.30) the trombone theme is restated in C minor and accompanied by the G - E-flat motive in timpani; the opening of the trombone theme is 'echoed' by horns and bassoons and creates the illusion of a complete restatement though, in fact, this theme soon abandons its earlier phrases and (from bar 2 p.33) establishes a sequence that works round to the major mode. But as the tonic major chord is reached it is immediately contradicted by the appearance of the following phrase (in horns - which could be derived from A5) :

Ex.386



and its complementary phrase for woodwind :

Ex.387



- and this reference to A-flat yet again - and the counterpulling of the C major chord - presents the opportunity for a tremendous swing of

harmony to an E major chord (at 6/4, p.36), and although this is not immediately taken up it initiates a development (a second transition) that will eventually lead to C major: the 'major' quality of this E major chord (and the fact that it is so 'sharp', even in C major) is its essential feature, though of course the thematic phrase by which it is characteristic refers to the previous scherzo section and will be used again later :

Ex.388



The (abbreviated) restatement of the trombone theme together with the subsequent interplay and counteraction of A-flat and C major (E-natural) lends strength to the suggestion that -

(i) the scherzo section of pp.20-29 fulfils the function of a second subject paragraph, and

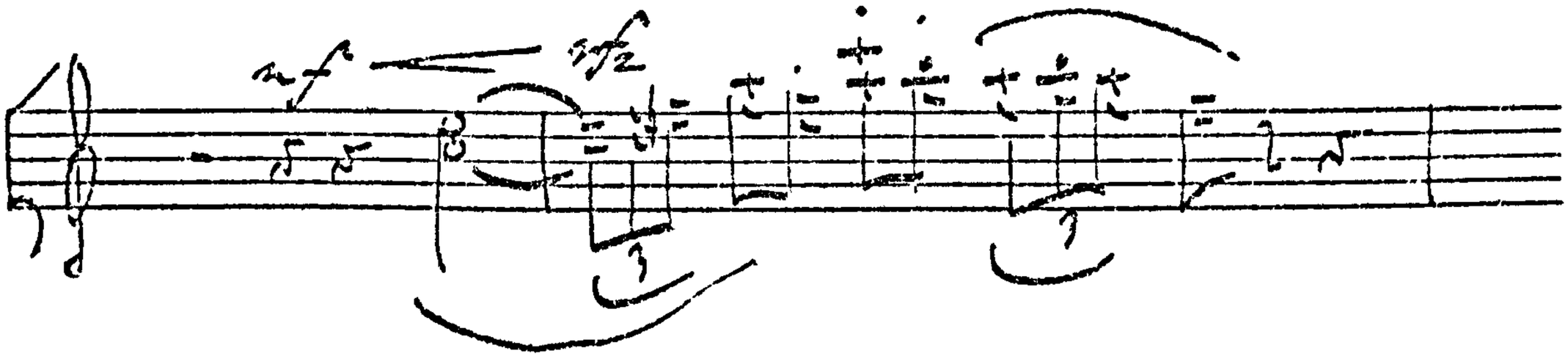
(ii) that it is about to be followed by a 'development' section.

And this idea is enhanced by the sudden interruption caused by the E major chord (on p.36) and the introduction of 'new' material that now follows.

However at the 6/4 on p.37 (two bars before Letter N) the G-sharp (of the E major chord) is again taken enharmonically, though the movement then settles down to present a sequence that passes - with increasing rapidity - through the minor keys of F, E, E-flat, D, C-sharp, and C; these tonal transitions are stabilized by (double) internal pedals, their 'cadences' are marked by pizz contra-basses, and the passage is thematically characterised by a scalic phrase for strings, and an

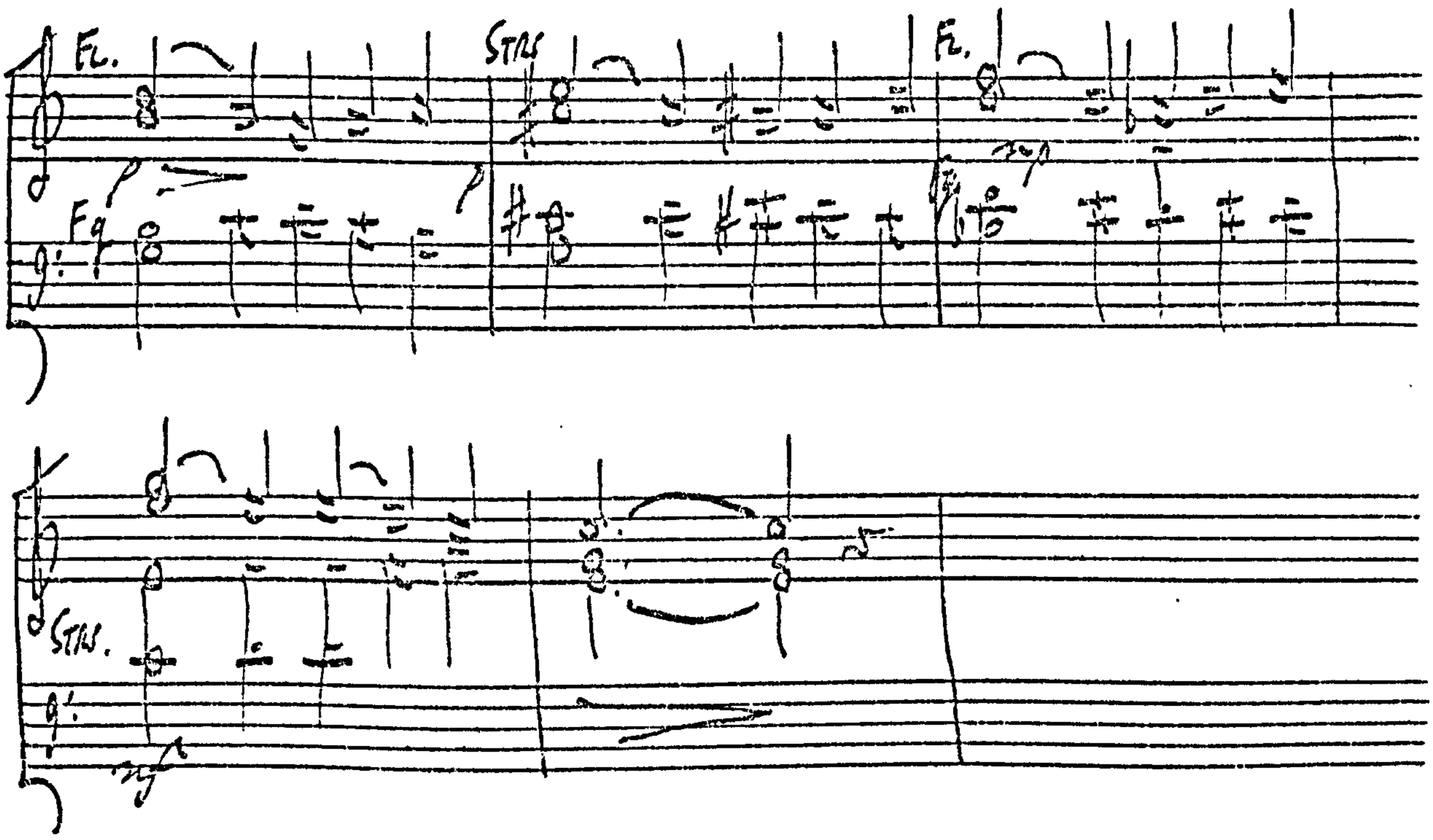
answering woodwind phrase that suggests its derivation from the previous revised version of A1 (and which first appeared on p.12 - 3 bars before Letter F):

Ex.389



This sequence of passing modulations is broken at Allegro molto moderato (p.40) where a G major chord is followed by the major chords of A, B-flat and C, - all in root position and presented antiphonally between woodwind and strings :

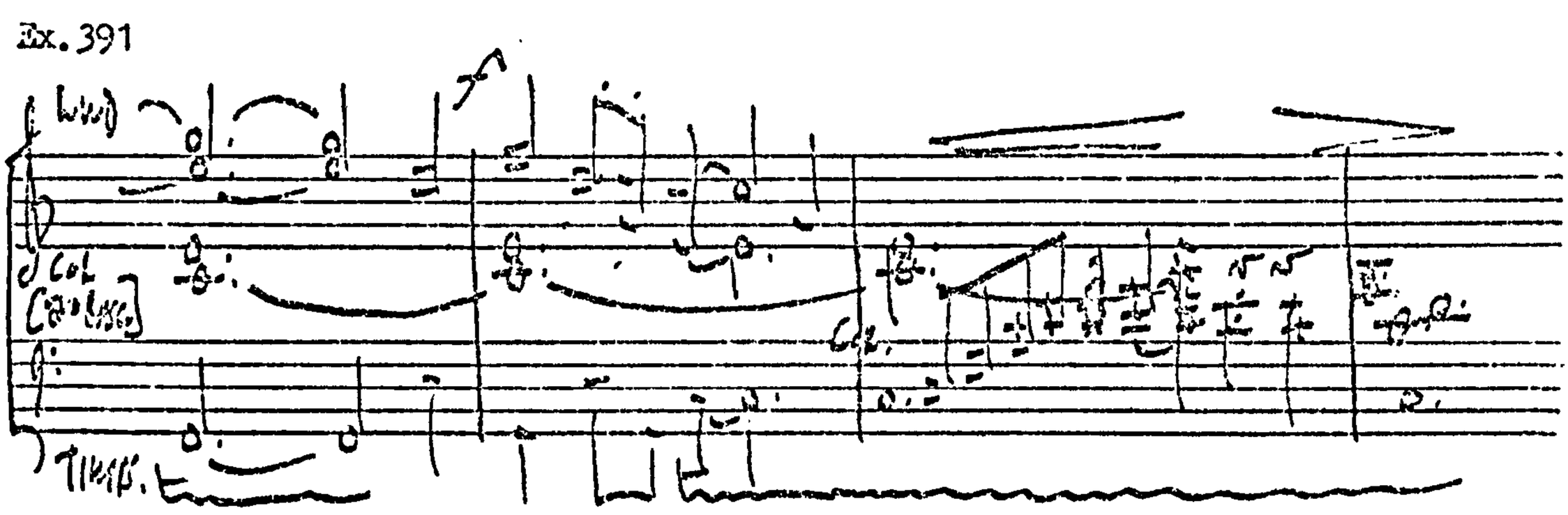
Ex.390



The consecutive quality of these major chords occurs as a climax to the previous passing modulations and also refers to the ninth chords in the (first) transition (p.16, p.19). Moreover the subtle preparation (which began on p.35, 3 bars after Letter M) for a subsequent increase in speed, together with the increasing rapidity of the passing modulations that culminates in the short sequence of major chords in root position, suggests that this passage (from Letter M) is simultaneously fulfilling the functions of development and transition.

Thus when this sequence of major chords (beginning at Allegro molto moderato p.40) arrives at a C major chord it provides the opportunity to introduce a new thematic idea, C1, in woodwind, accompanied by the G - E motive in timpani, and completed by the addition of horn phrase that comes to a pause on an added-sixth chord:

Ex. 391



- and four bars after this the movement comes to a full close in C major.

The appearance here of the same added-sixth that first appeared on p.4 is clearly a further reference to the persistence and 'bulk' of C major: further the cadential emphasis (and tonal establishment) at this point is quite remarkable - and continues until the movement settles down (for an extended section) at Allegro moderato, p.42. And this extended section (begining on p.42) lasts until the appearance of Vivace on p.59: its formal outlines are clear and could be sketched thus:

1st Section: D1 (p.42, bar11) . . . . . C major

D2 (p.45, bar 5) . . . . . A minor

Middle Section:(p.46, bar 5 - Letter T p.54) -

Third Section: (recap)

D1 (letter T) . . . . . E-flat major

D2 (p.58 bar 2) . . . . . C minor

The form of this section has been variously described as 'a gay scherzo-like section' (Gray) and representative of 'a kind of sonata form' (Parmet); Abraham avoids giving a title for this section, though he refers to the A2 passages as 'codettas'.

The essential features of this allegro section are as follows :

(i) it presents a C major tonality that includes both B-flat and A-flat, and

(ii) these 'modal' characteristics are countered (at Letter F) by F-sharp; shortly afterwards

(iii) the tonality is momentarily pulled towards the key of A-flat (bars 5 - 6, p.44), though

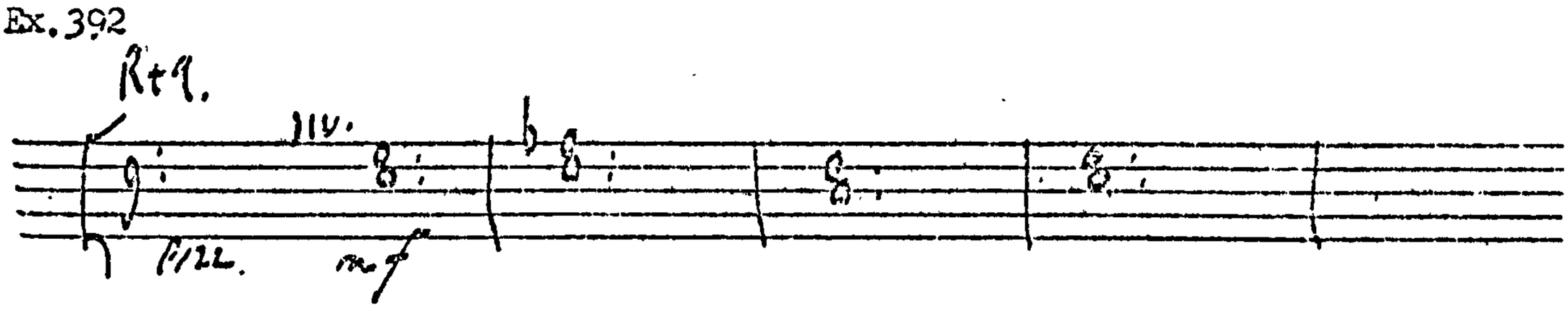
(iv) this is immediately contradicted by an energetic (and excitable) C major chord that leads directly to

(v) the first codetta in which the A-flat (that has just disturbed the C major tonality) is taken as G-sharp and turns the tonality to A minor.

But this sudden release of energy, together with the move to A minor and the enharmonic interplay of G-sharp/A-flat, leads to an abrupt swerve (p.46, bars 3 - 4) to an emphatic A-flat major chord, and clearly recalls the closely similar procedure that followed the C minor statement of the trombone theme (on p.36, 6/4): consequently a further passage of passing modulations ensues (beginning last two bars p.46). This constitutes a large part of the middle section of this Allegro moderato, and (p.47 - 8) passes quickly through the minor keys of G-sharp, G, F-sharp, F, and E-flat before the movement is steadied by the appearance of a G-natural horn pedal (p.49) which then moves to C (at Letter R) where D1 is momentarily restated - accompanied by the timpani 6th-motivo, now presented as A-flat - F.

However the steadying influence of C major and the appearance of the D1 theme is 'quickened' by the following phrase for contra-basses (p.51):

Ex.392

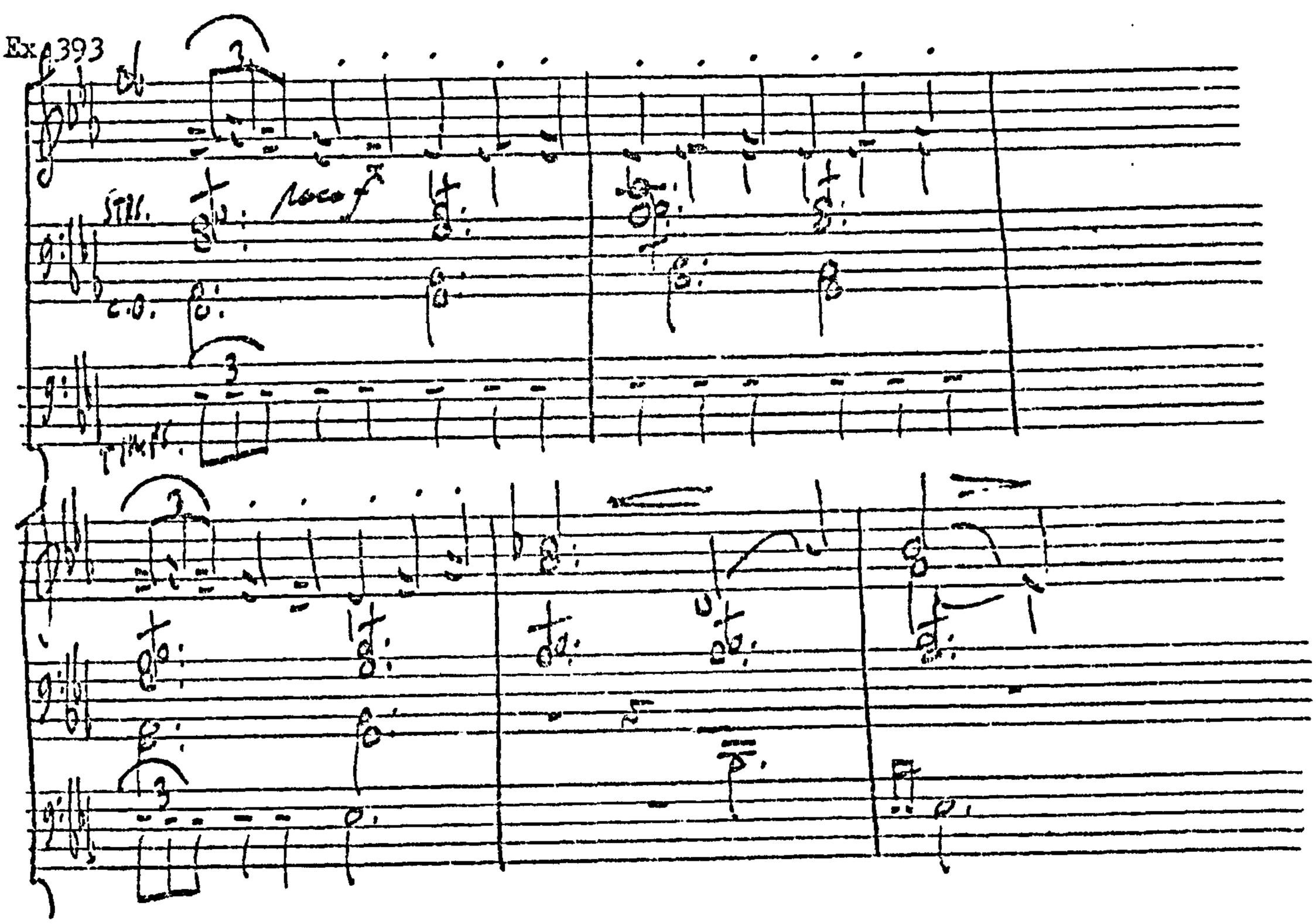


This 'flexing of the muscles' has already been observed in the Fifth Symphony and its function here is essentially similar: it anticipates a tonal movement. So here, at Letter S, the movement shortly abandons both D1 and C major and passes sequentially through a variety of keys, momentarily stabilized by internal pedals, until - after some typical tonal prevarication (on p.54, bars 4 - 6) - it arrives at E-flat major and begins the 'recapitulation'.

Here D1 is repeated in A-flat, complete with D-flat and C-flat and until the end of the codetta (on p.59), it is followed by a largely literal repeat of the first section (though of course the initial move to A-flat is now paralleled by a move to C-flat). Nevertheless

two additional features are subtly woven into this recapitulation: first there is another 'muscular' contra-bass entry (last bar, p.55 et seq.) and secondly there is a new phrase for oboes (Ex.393), accompanied by a further contra-bass entry and rhythmically underlined by timpani on E-flat: though perhaps the most important feature of this oboe entry is its low-pitched timbre, since the theme itself does not reappear -

Ex.393

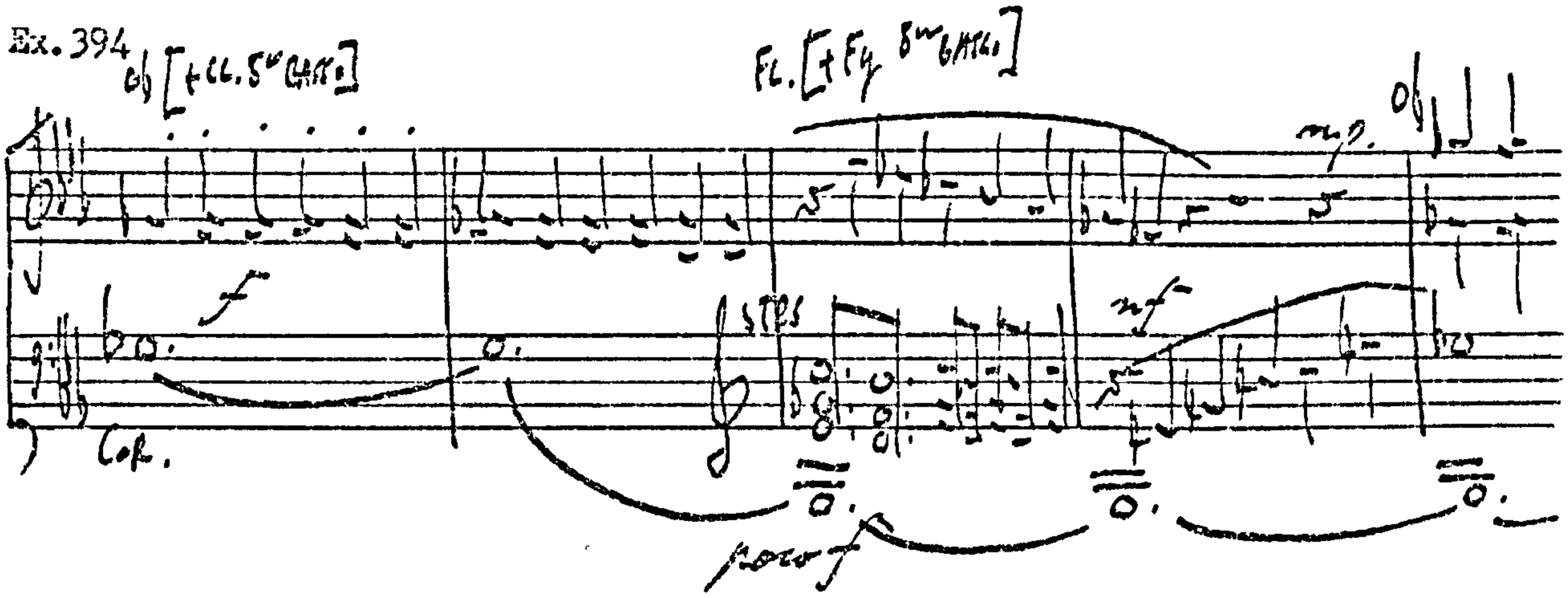


After a transposed (but literal) repeat of the codetta in C minor, it breaks off abruptly after its 'ff' swerve to C-flat (at the comma, p.59): it is immediately followed by a Vivace section that takes up the C-flat tonality as B major.

This Vivace section opens with a 2-bar theme (Ex.394) presented by oboes (staccato, and in their lower register) and clarinets, which is answered by a phrase for strings, flutes, and bassoons: the whole

supported by a G-flat (F-sharp) horn pedal:

Ex. 394



- while the section is characterised by

(i) the antiphonal orchestration,

(ii) the use of repeated melody notes, and

(iii) the (augmented-6th) bII - I harmonic undulation.

The metrical structure of this section is uneven, and this contributes to its feeling of imminent climax: thus although it begins in 2-bar units, a 3-bar phrase appears as early as the 5th bar of the Vivace. Following this the section appears to settle down in 2-bar phrases but, at Letter V, a further 3-bar phrase anticipates the subsequent modulation to E-flat in which key the 2-bar units return: a similar 3-bar phrase occurs on p.62, (3 bars after Letter W).

On p.61 this section moves to E-flat where the bII - I harmonic undulation is continued and at Letter W the apparent movements towards D-flat is taken as the opportunity to move directly to the dominant of C major (at Presto p.64) - at which point a large part of the design of this 7th Symphony is completed.

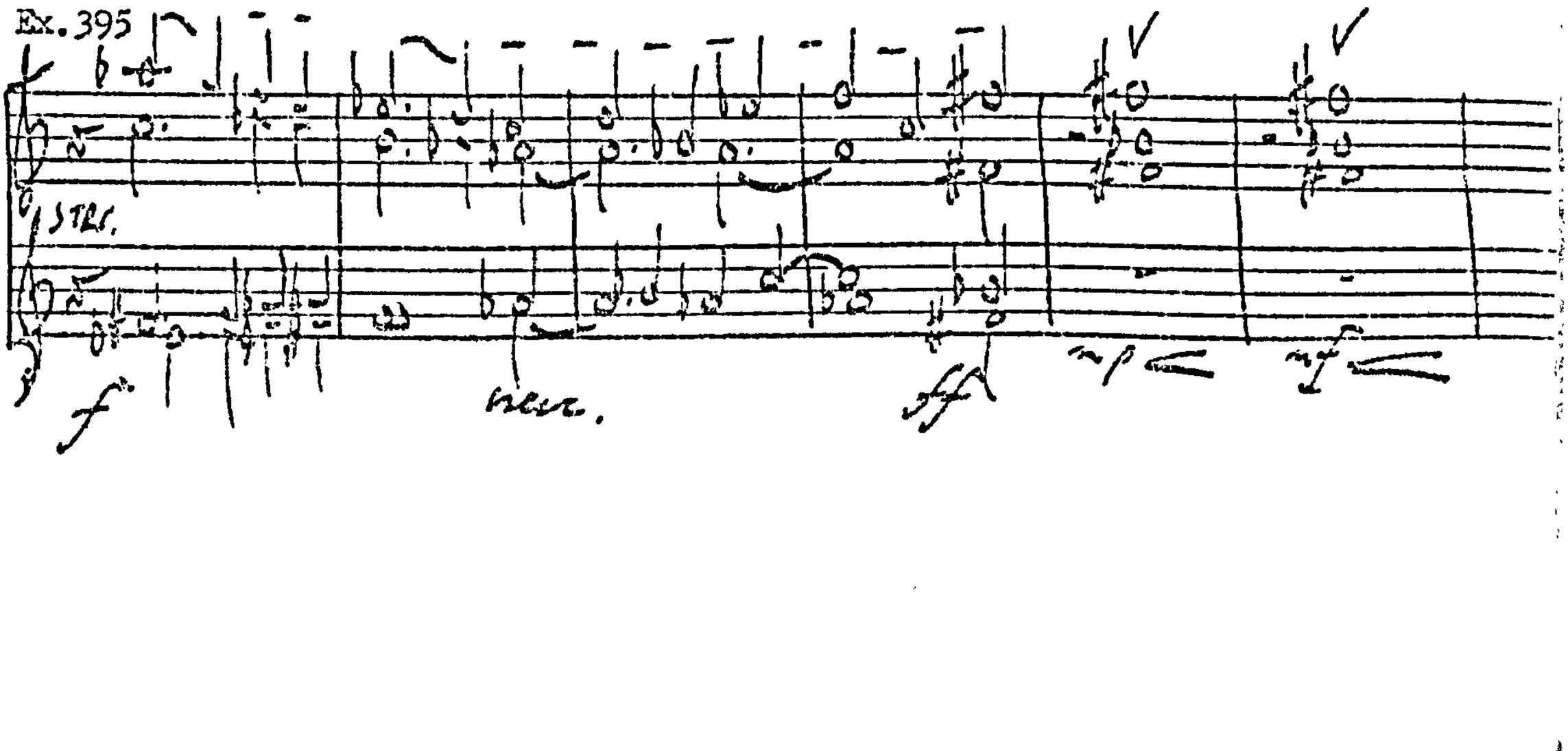
At Presto (p.64) over a dominant pedal the 'recapitulation' section of this symphony begins with the reappearance of A1 in horns. This now begins on F-sharp and twice rises to E-natural, before a third repetition of this phrase (on bassoons) dovetails directly into the beginning (of the final statement) of the trombone theme: the fact that the A1 phrase

originally began within the key of C and moved to a foreign chord, and is now answered by a phrase that begins with a foreign note (F-sharp) and leads to the trombone theme is highly significant and suggests a considerable degree of thematic and tonal 'resolution', and meanwhile the direction 'poco a poco rall' (that accompanies the three appearances of A1 above) effects a smooth transition to Adagio (p.68).

The trombone theme is now restated in its entirity, but as it approaches its climax the C major cadence (at Letter Y) it is again disturbed by the appearance of A7 (with its A- and E-flat elements). The sequential repetition of this A7 phrase (beginning on B-flat, and then C) is now accompanied by an independant string figure that is characterised by the interval of an augmented-fourth between its outer parts; moreover the rushing demi-semiquaver phrase (for cellos, contra-bassoons) adds point to this augmented fourth interval which serves to increase the climactic tension.

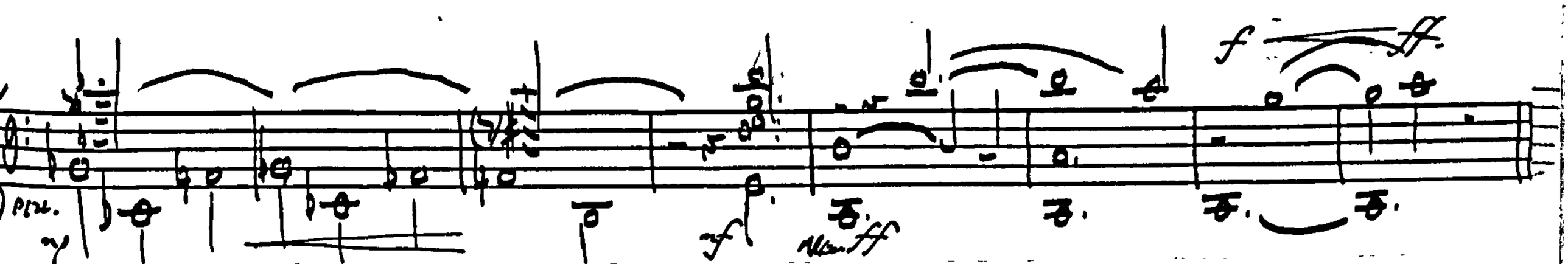
The climax of this composition is reached in the passage beginning at Largamente (Letter Z p.73) where the reappearance of A8 which moves to a C major cadence (and is strengthened by the inclusion of F-sharp) is at once contradicted by its following phrase (which originally came to rest on an A-flat major chord). And this leads to a confrontation and climax on the notes F-sharp and B-flat thus:

Ex.395



This tension is resolved by (i) the horns 'quotation' of the trombone theme, (ii) by allowing the B-flat to resolve to a diatonic F major chord, while (iii) at $\overset{\text{"}}{0} + 1$ this F major is again enhanced by the addition of an added-sixth in woodwind and a clear reference to M4. This conclusive reference to the exposition is then completed by a passage which recalls the original movement to a half close (bars 18 - 22) and it culminates in the following progression:

Ex.396



after which a simple cadence, and a reference to the (trombone) appoggiatura closes the work.

The organic and indivisible nature of this symphony can not be doubted. The character and function of the exposition (and its first and second subject paragraphs) has already been discussed together with the facts concerning (i) the essential nature of the increase of pace and (ii) the avoidance (in the second subject paragraph) of an established tonality.

The function and realization of the rest of this composition is perhaps more clearly seen if the attempt is made to present an overall picture of the Symphony: and it could perhaps be summarized as follows. An opening (cadential) statement in C major is disturbed by the presence of a number of contradictory elements; the effect of these (persistent) elements is gradually overcome by the gravitational pull of C major after which the 'body' of C major is presented in a sustained passage of string polyphony that culminates in a climactic theme for trombone solo.

But as this reaches its (tonic) cadence the passage is interrupted by the reappearance of the contradictory elements and the resulting tension leads to a tonal and thematic evolution that is characterised by a considerable increase in (speed and) pace and avoids establishing any one particular key centre. The latter part of this section creates its own design and has frequently been described as the first 'scherzo' section - though it is perhaps more convenient to consider it as a second subject paragraph (since it is both complementary to, and a direct consequence of, the first tonic paragraph). After this the disturbance of the tonic key is taken up in (a development section that begins in) C minor, and following a further 'transition' (in which the enharmonic identity of A-flat/G-sharp - one of the most persistent disruptive features - is itself explored) leads to a further increase in speed and a second allegro section.

The essence of this allegro section (p.42 - 59) is not so much that it is in C major, as the fact that it explores the relationship (and works out the tension caused by some of the contradictory elements that first appeared in the very opening bars) between C major (with B- and A-flat) and its eventual pull to E-flat (for a 'restatement').[1]

Further, the fact that this section evolves its own sonata-like design is less important than the realization that it is a logical and imaginative development of the creative essence of the symphony. Subsequently this design is worked to a climax that provides the opportunity for a return to an abbreviated 'recapitulation' which provides both the formal and emotional climax and resolution of the composition.

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1. Perhaps therefore the progress of the argument could be summarized thus:
   1) Bar 1. C major is disturbed by contradictory elements but leads to an emphatic (trombone) theme in the tonic;
   2) Letter L: the trombone theme now returns in C minor,
   3) P.42 : C major (with B- and A-flat) is later pulled to E-flat major.

The tautness of the overall design that carries this tonal and thematic evolution is enhanced by the fact that so much of the subsequent thematic material can be seen to derive from the opening bars; this movement is extraordinarily economic in its use of material yet the thematic relationships are never strained but have a remarkable quality of freshness.

Equally the fact that certain of the 'sections' proceed to evolve their own designs (in miniature) lends the movement a strength and coherence it would not otherwise have had: it enables the progress of the argument to be effected without becoming loose-limbed and rhapsodic, while conversely, its careful utilisation of these small design (within its larger framework) ensures that they are always pertinent and never allowed to descend into mere 'sectionalism'. Further, two of these separate small design are worked out at a different pace and accompanied by considerable changes in speed: these features are interactive - the second allegro section is less fast than the first since it is to present its argument in both a more leisurely and a larger design that the first - and are themselves an inevitable and essential feature in the overall purpose of this composition.

The variety of tempi that this work necessarily encompasses within its overall design (and not forgetting the powerful 'transitions' themselves) are clearly descended from the separate movements of a conventional symphony. But they do not represent the attempt to join a series of separate movements together, not do they constitute a work which is in effect four movements joined together.

The Seventh Symphony is clearly indebted to its 6 predecessors and indeed reflects and shares many of their most characteristic procedures;

its symphonic qualities are not to be doubted, and its size and form are the only logical (and highly imaginative) vehicle through which its essential creative fancy could be realised. The marvel of this composition is to be found in the serene grandeur of its poetry, and the Olympian 'calm' of its passions.

CHAPTER 22

TAPIOLA

THE TEMPEST

CHAPTER 22

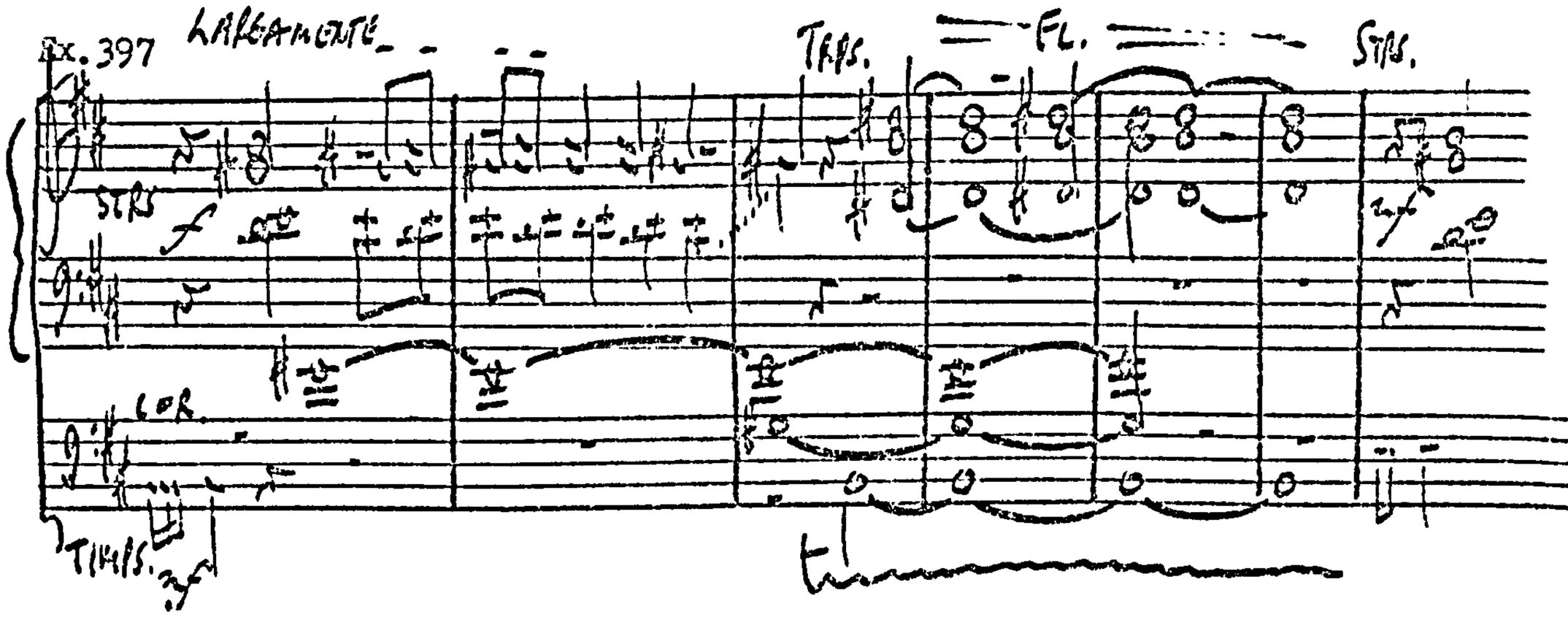
"When I set out to write symphonic poems it is a different matter. 'Tapiola', 'Pohjola's Daughter', 'Lemminkäinen', 'The Swan of Tuonela' are suggested to me by our national poetry, but I do not pretend that they are symphonies."

This remark of Sibelius (in a conversation with Walter Legge) is the more interesting since there has been (and still is) a considerable amount of discussion concerning the (non)symphonic character of 'Tapiola', a tone poem for large orchestra Op.112 [1] : and one writer has called this work 'a symphony in all but name', though the score is prefaced by the following quatrain :

"Widespread they stand, the Northlands dusky forests,
Ancient, mysterious, brooding savage dreams,
Within them dwells the Forests mighty God
And wood sprites in the gloom weave magic secrets."

The design of Tapiola falls into two roughly equal halves, both of which consist of three main paragraphs and a codetta/coda, and it is largely effected through a monothematic evolution: the main theme A1 is stated at the outset thus:

Ex. 397



1. It is scored for :

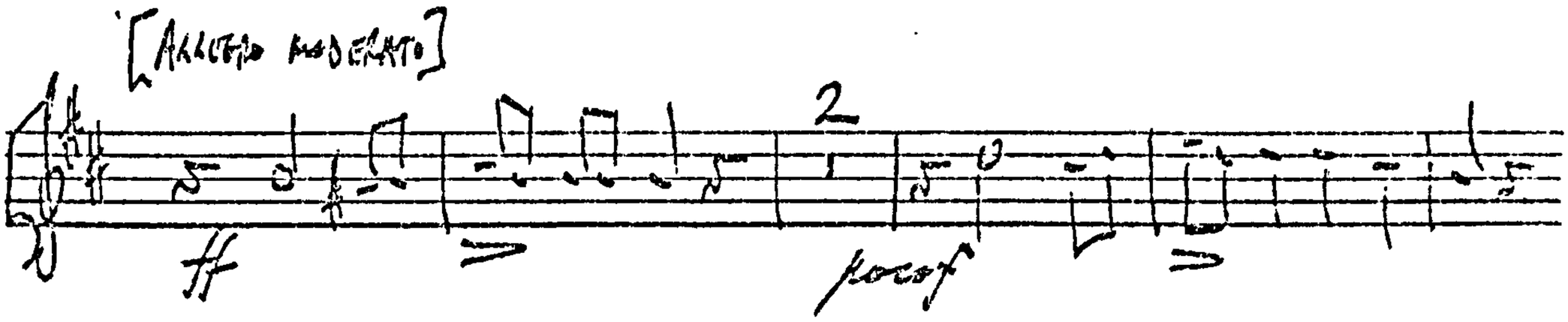
   3 flutes (and piccolo), 2 oboes, cor anglais, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contra bassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, strings.

   The work takes its name from Tapio, the God of the Forests in Finnish mythology.

This (dark?) theme is clearly in B minor, yet there is a strong pull to G-sharp, and (initially) the chord of G-sharp minor; this attraction to the major submediant is emphasized in the repetition of the main theme and its subsequent phrases (up to bar 20) which come to a close on a sustained G-sharp for horns over a B-natural roll for timpani.

The subdied tension created by this opening thematic statement is released (at Allegro moderato, bar 21) in a powerful string crescendo figure (over a mediant, D-natural pedal) and leads to an affirmative statement of the main theme. But even after its sequential repetition, which enables this main theme to end on the tonic thus:

Ex.398



the disturbing influence of the (secondary 7th) chord of G-sharp, in woodwind and brass, shows that the tension is not entirely resolved, though the subsequent melodic sentence, A2, (Ex.399, beginning at Letter A) suggests the 'absorption' of the disturbing G-sharp element, and a settling down of the B minor tonality - though the end of the sentence is marked by an elongated double suspension. (Characteristically, however, this melodic sentence is itself momentarily perturbed by the 'Fz' chord of bar 40).

This sentence is repeated (though there are some interesting small changes of detail - especially the omission of the A-sharp appoggiatura for oboe, and the inclusion of a D-natural pedal) after which the double suspension begins to evolve into a 'perpetuo' sequence of consecutive

thirds above which the main theme is repeated (in violas, and mostly in separate phrases) no less than eleven times.[1]

At first this perpetuo figure and the repetitions of the main theme are stabilized by a tonic pedal (in contra-basses) but as the passage continues a subtle change of emphasis takes place: as the theme diminishes in dynamics so the thirds figure gains in orchestral strength; it begins to generate an independant activity and, at bar 105, it launches a sustained dominant pedal effect in strings.

This marks the beginning of the second main sentence of this (opening) paragraph, and the string pedal now supports the presentation of a new theme,[2] A3, (Ex.400) in woodwind. After some sequential repetition of this A3 theme, a subsidiary phrase A4, (Ex.401) appears, and this moves to a conventional half close (in bars 143 - 4). At this point yet another variant, A5,(Ex.402) of the original theme is introduced (in clarinets and violas) and this is itself echoed in the following bassoon pendant, A6, (Ex.403).

Subsequently (at Letter E) the woodwind section takes up this A6 version of the main theme, and their energetic working of it (in close canon, at the fifth, Ex.404) recalls the 'propellor' music of earlier compositions, though it soon becomes apparent that this propellor will not launch a new figure or culminate in an emphatic (tonic) cadence; nor will it lead to a change of tonal direction. Instead this first paragraph is completed by a subdued cadential passage (Letters F - G) in which the phrases are prevented from completing an undisturbed B minor

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1. Again the small changes of detail are interesting; note the subtle changes between bars 55-6 and 63-4 and the particular version of the main theme they each follow.
2. It is perhaps worth remarking that, although the monothematic evolutions of Tapiola are extremely ingenious, too few writers have commented on the function and importance of the various evolutions as NEW characters in their own right - and whose appearance marks the progress of the musical argument.

cadence through the presence of the conflicting elements of D-sharp and G-natural, and (in bar 198) this is taken as the opportunity to begin a movement away from the tonic key.

The second paragraph (of the first half) begins at Letter G where the key of D major is accepted with a new thematic figure, B1 (Ex.405) a new texture, and (for flutes, oboes, timpani, and all strings except contra-basses) a new time signature. The workings of this paragraph are largely concerned with B1 - whose sense of increased speed is enhanced by its tiered scoring and predominantly quaver movement - which is in clear contrast (and a welcome relief) to the preceding main theme and its variants, and the sequential treatment of this (B1) theme passes quickly through F-sharp minor before arriving back at D major (in bar 229). This sequential treatment could be regarded as an elaborate method of establishing D major, but, having arrived back at D, the process is continued and shortly arrives at a B major chord where the thirds-figure reappears (in horns) and, after touching on the flat side of the key, the movement again settles down in B minor (at Letter I) to present the third (and final) paragraph of the first half of this composition.

The third paragraph seeks to (re)establish B minor - with some considerable emphasis and in an especially cadential manner: and the complex of time signatures is retained as the paragraph is built up to a restrained climax by the repetition of a number of simple (ostinato-like) phrases of which five may be distinguished :

(i) a 2-bar figure for violins, Ex.406
(ii) a phrase in consecutive major thirds (making a particular point of E-sharp, the augmented-fourth), "
(iii) the persistent 3 note-relationship for timpani - A-sharp, D, E-natural, "
(iv) the whole-tone phrase - for clarinet and piccolo, or clarinet and bass-clarinet, and Ex.407

(v) the theme for woodwind (which also makes a consistent use of the augmented fourth), Ex.407

- while, from bar 248, there is a contra-bass pedal (thickened out by cellos) which gives a subdominant emphasis to the passage as a whole.

As this paragraph comes to its close (in B minor) the thirds-figure returns in augmentation (in horns bar 260) while a persistent G-sharp remains in solo flute; but as the movement reaches a B major chord (in bar 272) the cadence is disturbed by the presence of an A-natural in bass clarinet. The codetta follows and, after a chromatic phrase moving in contrary motion for flutes and bassoons, it presents a further variant A8, (Ex.408) of the main theme that finishes its phrase with the subdominant (major) chord presented at the very outset of this composition. This A8 phrase - which has evolved from the closing bars of the third paragraph - is now extended and presented over dominant and (later) tonic pedals to complete the first half of this work.

But, in spite of the cadential nature of this codetta the movement is prevented from completing an undisturbed cadence: subsequently although the passage reaches a half close, the extension of the phrase (by violas) unleashes a dramatic outburst for brass and timpani[1] that makes an emphatic cadence in B minor - though still over a mediant pedal.

The second half (beginning at Allegro, bar 359) opens with an energetic working of the previous string phrases, and (in the passage up Letter N) it creates the opportunity for the presentation of a number of possible tonal openings, though none of them are taken up (and the tonic key is never abandoned) and the passage comes to a momentary pause on a C major chord. At Letter M this is followed by the appearance of a powerful motive (for brass and woodwind, Ex.409) that emphasizes the dominant

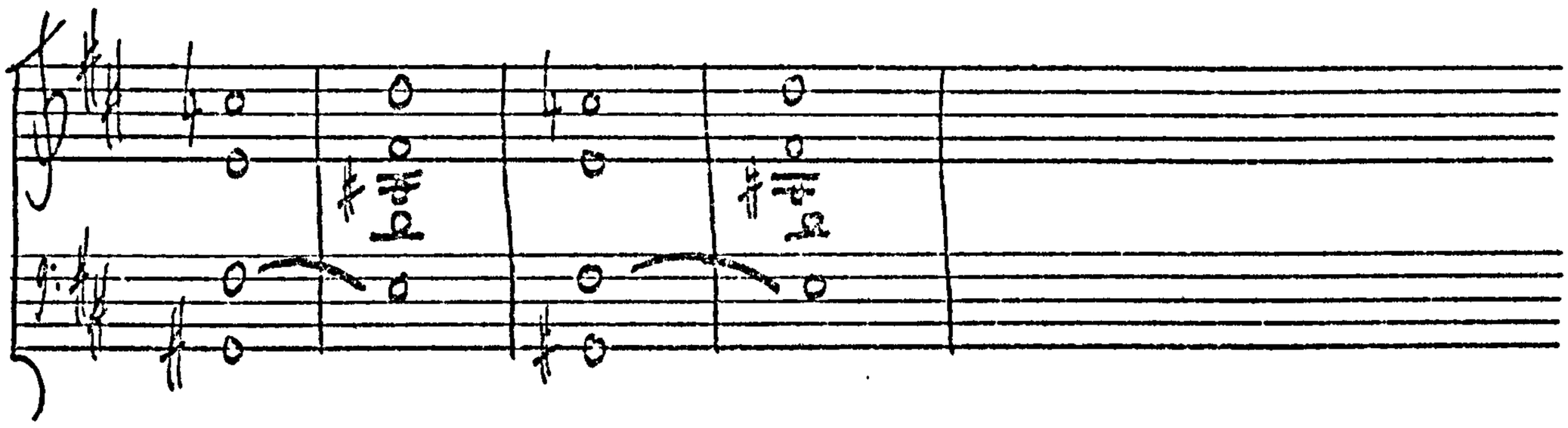
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1. But note the use of clarinets.

(of B minor), but the sequential repetition of this motive (after bar 407) leads to an enharmonic change of direction and the second paragraph of this second half begins at Letter N.

This second paragraph lasts until the return to Allegro moderato (bar 462) and it is essentially concerned with the obscuration of the tonic key. It presents a closely worked passage, sometimes in canon, (Ex.410) that is at first supported by a sequential progression of augmented 6ths (in brass and strings) while later (bar 429 onwards) it is propelled by a sequence of whole-tone phrases.[1] During the progress of this sequence the following harmonic alternation gradually emerges :

Ex.411



Eventually this progression alone achieves complete domination of the passage, and (from bar 465) it marks the beginning of the third paragraph.

Here the design of 'Tapiola' is completed by the largely literal transposition of that part of the first paragraph of this work which includes themes A3, A4, and A5, as well as the string pedal effect - though (from bar 495) this pedal is now subdominant rather than dominant.

With the return of Allegro (in bar 513) the 'restatement' of the first paragraph is completed by the presentation of another orchestral 'effect'; for, whereas the first paragraph reached its climax through the

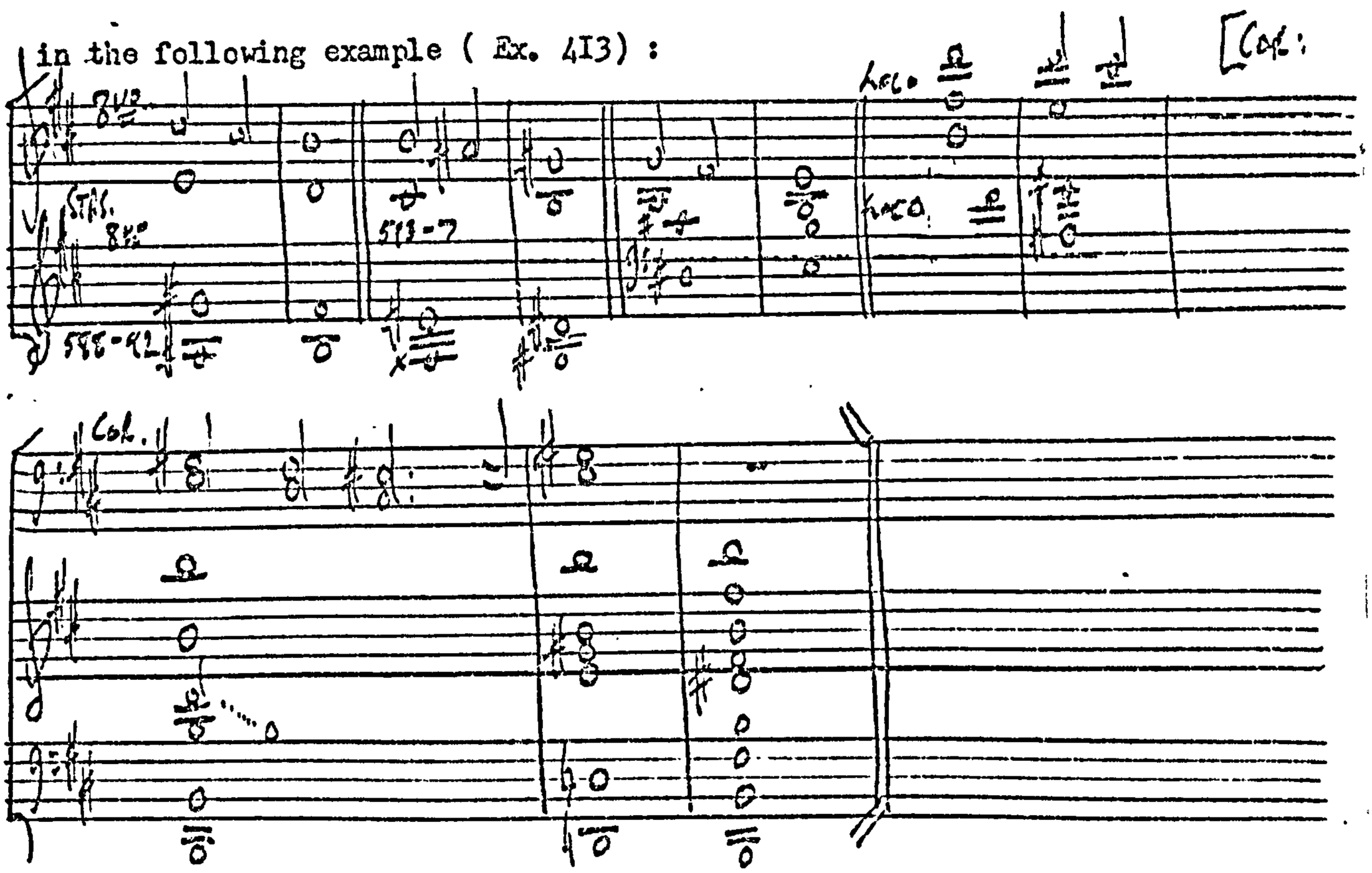
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1. These whole-tone sequences first appear in the contra-bass entries from bar 429 onwards; subsequently (from bar 432) the cello entries present a chromatically rising sequence of six 4-bar phrases, and the whole passage culminates in the phrase beginning (on C-natural) at bar 456 and rising to C-sharp.

propellor-like figure, the climax here - and it is the climax of the work - is effected by a powerful chromatic crescendo for strings accompanied by some forceful brass entries[1] that culminate in the 'fff' climactic outburst in bar 569.

Subsequently the diminuendo of this climax is followed by a short coda (beginning at bar 577) and the scoring of the opening woodwind phrases (bars 577 - 82) is of particular interest. The phrase itself (Ex.412) is peculiarly Sibelian in essence and function[2] - and the scoring is exactly right. One writer,[3] however, has described the 'fff' marking as 'idealistic', but in fact it is purposefully realistic: the tessitura of the high bassoon and low flute is exactly right - it contains just the right amount of tension that any 'easier' orchestration would have missed!

The remaining bars of this work are shown (in diagrammatic reduction) in the following example (Ex. 413) :



1. The relationship between these entries and those in bars 398 et seq is obvious - and this time they are allowed to complete their cadential function.
2. Both the ancestry of the passage and its scoring may be traced back to as far as the second movement of 'Kullervo' (pages 61-2).
3. Ralph Wood.

Characteristically these bars (for high strings - deliberately employed for climactic tension) illustrate both the musical 'kernel' of this composition and its final resolution: they show -

(i) the basic 'disruption' caused by the persistent G-sharp in B minor,

(ii) the countering of this attraction, by the move to E minor,

(iii) (in bars 593 - 605) the gradual 'settling' of the horns thirds-figure, and

(iv) the final resolution and dissolution of the tonal tension in the (glorious) plagal cadence.

'Tapiola' is the last significant orchestral work of Sibelius, and perhaps more than any other it illustrates the essential distinction (in Sibelius's creative conception) between the symphony and symphonic poem; indeed the particular character (and achievement) of this work arises from the deliberate utilisation of that distinction.

The essence and character of 'Tapiola' are largely established in the opening paragraph, and the initial thematic statement is perhaps related to the thematic/tonal propositions of, for example, the Fourth Symphony and the First 'Humoresque'. But it is quickly shown that the tonal tension contained in this opening thematic statement is not something that will be taken up symphonically and which will effect a tonal evolution; rather the tension is to be gradually absorbed through the presentation of a number of (almost) static episodes. Further, that although the tonality is disturbed by this inner tension, the tonic key will not be abandoned: indeed the monotonality of 'Tapiola' is one of its most important and impressive characteristics, and is especially (though not entirely) responsible for its emotional intensity.

And, in regard to the (essentially creative) monotonality of this work, one of the most significant passages is that which begins at Letter F; for here the expected, but long-delayed B minor cadence is further postponed, and the subdued restlessness of this passage is suddenly taken as the 'symphonic working' towards a new key.

Indeed a new key is quickly reached, although it is soon abandoned and shortly returns to the original tonic - which is then restated with considerable emphasis. But while this new key is never symphonically established, the symphonic working (of the whole passage from Letter F - I) adds a strength and depth to B minor.

Similarly the passage between Letters M - N presents an impressive movement towards a climax that creates the opportunity to leave the tonic key. But while (from Letter N onwards) the tonic key is obscured it is not abandoned: again there is a degree of symphonic working which, as before, is not allowed to become tonally (and symphonically) significant. Equally these two passages (between Letters F - I, and M - Allegro moderato, bar 462) do provide some degree of tonal variety, and support, for the tonic key even though no other key is established: this allows B minor to remain static without being stagnant.[1]

The monotonality of 'Tapiola' is not only impressive in its extension and achievement but is responsible for the extraordinary tension - the 'savage brooding' - that this work generates (and which is its principal emotional characteristic). Indeed this is surely the 'programmatic' purpose and 'poetic idea' that animates this composition; the programme,

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1. Once again Robert Simpson has commented very pertinently on this very quality, stating that, in 'Tapiola' "there is no real sense of movement", a comment that is all the more pointed after his previous remark "the symphony is action".

as outlined in the quatrain that prefaces the score[1] is minimal, though it clearly suggests the presence of a brooding character and (dark) atmosphere.

These particular qualities of character and atmosphere are themselves created and reflected in the monothematic and monotonal working of this composition, and they are enhanced by the choice of B minor as the key centre: for this key is rarely used by Sibelius, and it is very close to the 'dark' key area of A minor.

In contrast the tautness and symphonic integration (and vitality) of 'Tapiola' is largely due to its monothematic evolutions; and the monothematic character of this work is abundantly clear from the examples already quoted, while it has already been suggested that there is an important relationship between the particular character of each new variant and the function it is to fulfil. In this respect two particular passages are worthy of note - the more so since not only do both function through a contrapuntal texture, but both also make some use of canon - a device that is not typical of Sibelius's musical thought.

The first of these passages is the propellor-like section (Letters E - F) in the very first paragraph. This is mostly in 3-part counterpoint (including a close canon at the fifth) and is presented over a sustained dominant pedal effect in strings. It arouses the expectation of some sort of tonal event and the fact that it does not immediately achieve this result creates a considerable degree of tension that is part of the essential character of this work.

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1. Ringbom states (p.155): "the score contains, as motto, a quatrain .....which according to the Master, he himself wrote at the request of his publisher".

Similarly the passage between Letter N and Allegro moderato (bar 462) is again contrapuntal and (sometimes) in canon. Here the contrapuntal texture provides a convincing progression to (what is to be) both the formal and emotional climax of the work. And this is especially necessary in this design since the absence of a tonal evolution denies (to the work) that excitement which is generated by the (tonal) preparations for a restatement. This particular passage overcomes this drawback by its imperspicuity, so that the tonic is (later) enabled to re-emerge with very nearly all the impact of a conventional 'return'. In this respect, and in the function of its contrapuntal character, this passage recalls the development section from the first movement of the Fourth Symphony - which also avoids more normal means of progression.

Finally it may be remarked that the monothematic evolutions of 'Tapiola', and the progress of its musical argument, are enhanced and characterised by rhetorical changes in rhythm and speed: thus the passage beginning at Letter E suggests the possibility of subsequent movement because of the greater rhythmic animation of its phrases (in addition to its contrapuntal texture and dominant pedal situation). Equally the increased vigour of the second half (whose first paragraph presents an energetic tonal working that arrives at the dominant of B minor from where it is taken enharmonically to launch the second paragraph) is enhanced by rhetorical impact of the predominantly quaver movement and contrapuntal texture of the passage beginning at Letter N.

The interplay of all of these features mentioned above - and especially that of a continuous thematic development worked out in conjunction with a deliberately static tonality - results in a work of extraordinary tension. 'Tapiola' is a symphonically integrated design

whose essential character is that it is not allowed to function symphonically - and as a direct (and deliberate) result it is enabled to project a haunting musical experience of 'Tapiola' (- the dominions of Tapio).

The incidental music to 'The Tempest' was commissioned by the Royal Theatre of Copenhagen, and the original score consisted of 34 numbers for soloists, mixed chorus, orchestra, and harmonium; it was first performed in March 1926[1]. Later, Sibelius published the Prelude (Op.109 No.1) and two Suites (Op.109 Nos.2, 3) containing only 17 pieces.

The Prelude is essentially an extended crescendo and decrescendo for full orchestra based on a simple chromatic figure for strings (Ex.414) which is supported by a slow descending sequence of whole-tone chords for brass (Ex.415) and characterised by a woodwind melody Ex.416 (that is used in canon, and later appears in augmentation). In performance the onomatopoetic effect of this composition is stunning, but for all its impact in the concert hall it is the quiet closing section (Letters H al fine, where the movement avoids any clear-cut conclusion) that haunts the memory.

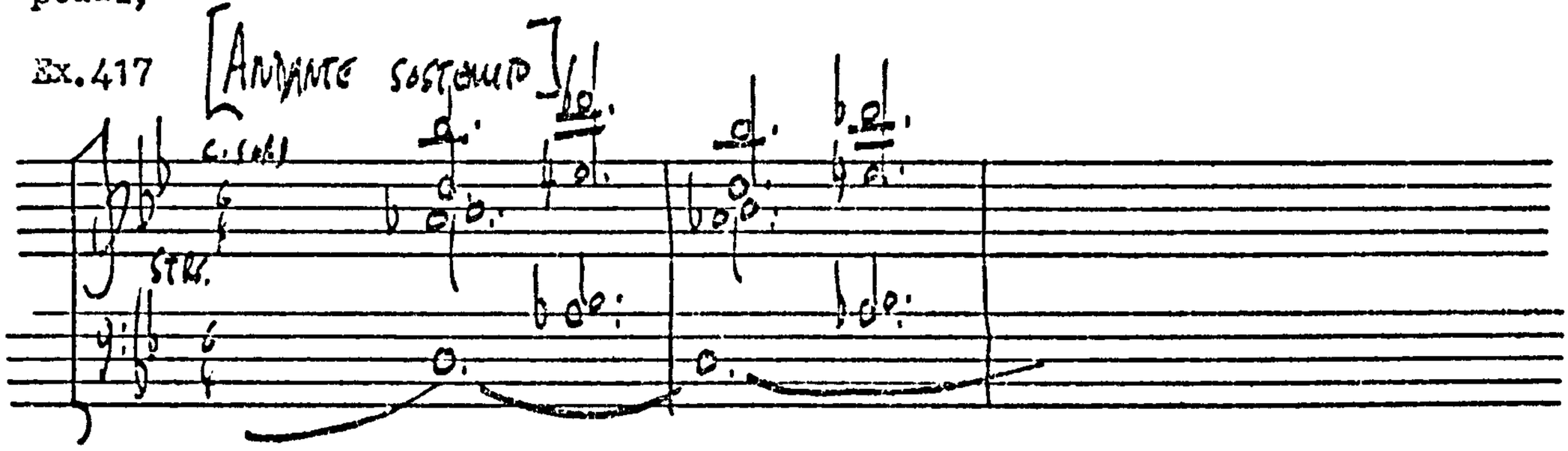
The First Suite (Op.109 No.2) consists of 9 numbers, and, like the Second Suite, it begins with (what many would agree to be) its best number, 'The Oak-tree'. The substance of this piece is an undulating

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1. Several authorities state that 'Tapiola' was written in 1925, and 'The Tempest' was composed in 1926; Johnson, however, insists that the reverse is true.

harmonic progression (Ex.417) frequently supported by a D-natural pedal,

Ex.417



(which, although used sequentially, remains as an ostinato throughout the composition) above which solo flute weaves a fluid, almost rhapsodic melody (Ex.418) that rises to an impassioned climax before the piece closes quietly on a (6/3) chord of B-flat major.

The aptly named 'Humoresque' which follows, is straightforward and enjoyable - though it lacks the poetry (and depth) of the 'Humoresques' for Solo Violin. It is simple in construction and centres on the ambivalence of its B-flat major tonality (which is marked by a strong counter-attraction to G minor). Although obviously designed as a miniature this piece has a delightful sense of forward movement and simple purpose.

'Caliban's Song' (in G minor) is the first of three character sketches included in the published Suites, and as sketches all three (rightly) concentrate on only one facet - though they are inclined to sound a little contrived. 'Caliban's Song' concentrates on a 'grotesque' characteristic, and this is reflected (in its main theme, Ex.419) in its persistent use of the augmented-fourth, its abrupt movement to other 'keys', and the use of such bizarre percussion instrument as Xylophone. After a contrasting middle sentence, the return of the main theme soon abandons any idea of a more penetrating character study.

'The Harvesters', in G minor, is a somewhat lengthy number in two sections. The main theme of the first section has a delightful 'rustic' character (marked by some modal characteristics) while the section consists of simple alternations of the main theme first in G major, then hovering on the dominant of D-flat. The extended second section (beginning p.24, bar 2) is based on new material though it bears some sort of familly resemblance to the material of the first section - in particular there is now a persistent use of the augmented fourth (- and the relationship between these two melodies (Ex.420 a, b) suggests a musical anagram!)

The following piece, 'Canon', is one of the best numbers of this First Suite. Unpretentious in character, its simple rhythmic animation and forward movement make it engagingly effective, and in its quiet ending it avoids the commonplace. In contrast the next piece 'Scéne' (in C major) is a ternary design, using simple material, that never achieves significance or individual character. The middle section in C major is undistinguished and the first and last sections consist of a constant (and 'fortspinnung') dialogue (Ex.421) between strings (whose melody is thickened out in consecutive 7ths) and woodwind. The whole piece is quite unmarked by any Sibelian characteristics.

The 'Berceuse' in E-flat minor is introduced by a harmonically intense (and 'ff') 6-bar 'Intrada' whose tension quickly dies away as it approaches the dominant (of E-flat minor). The 'Berceuse' is elegant, beautiful, and restrained: it presents a simple melody (Ex.422) that is occasionally illuminated by subdominant major chords and it has much in common with such previous pieces as the 'Lovesong' from 'Scènes historiques II', and those in equally rich, dark, keys.

The penultimate number of the First Suite, 'Ariels Song', is in A minor, though its opening section (up to Letter B) suggests both

C minor and F-sharp minor before the movement settles down to present its main theme in the tonic (in C time). This main theme (Ex.423) is an anguished chromatic melody (in octave strings) that is twice stated simply before becoming sequential and rising to its brief climax where there is a broader restatement of the main theme (in 6/4 Ex.424) and the piece closes with another of Sibelius's subtle 'ppp' cadences.

The choice of key, and the opening progression towards its key centre, suggests the presence of Sibelius in this piece, and it emphasizes the lack of this quality in some of the preceding numbers.

The final piece, 'The Tempest', is an almost literal transcription of the Prelude though it now ends abruptly in E-flat minor: this unexpected ending is not as satisfactory as that of the Prelude itself, and certainly it is difficult to argue convincingly for the return of the Prelude - as it is actually written here - as a final number for this First Suite.

The opening number of the Second Suite, 'Chorus of the Winds', is (again) perhaps the best number of the Suite. The simple structure and exquisite scoring of the opening 3/2 section is finally rounded off by short B major section that acts as a climax - a fulfilment of the opening section - without destroying its delicate character. This 'Chorus' leads directly into the 'Intermezzo' which (characteristically) is in the key of E-flat minor; but although there are several deft orchestral touches, this Intermezzo does not sustain the ethereal beauty of the opening Chorus (nor does it match the poetry of the Berceuse).

The Third number, 'Dance of the Nymphs', is straightforward and unremarkable, consisting almost exclusively of one theme which is used

in both C major and G-sharp minor. It is pleasantly conventional, though in no way typical of Sibelius.

'Prospero' has been described (by some writers) as the most penetrating character sketch in the Suite; this is probably correct, but although its measured deliberation (and 'false relations' in its outer parts) lend it a certain grandeur, it nevertheless seems a little contrived.

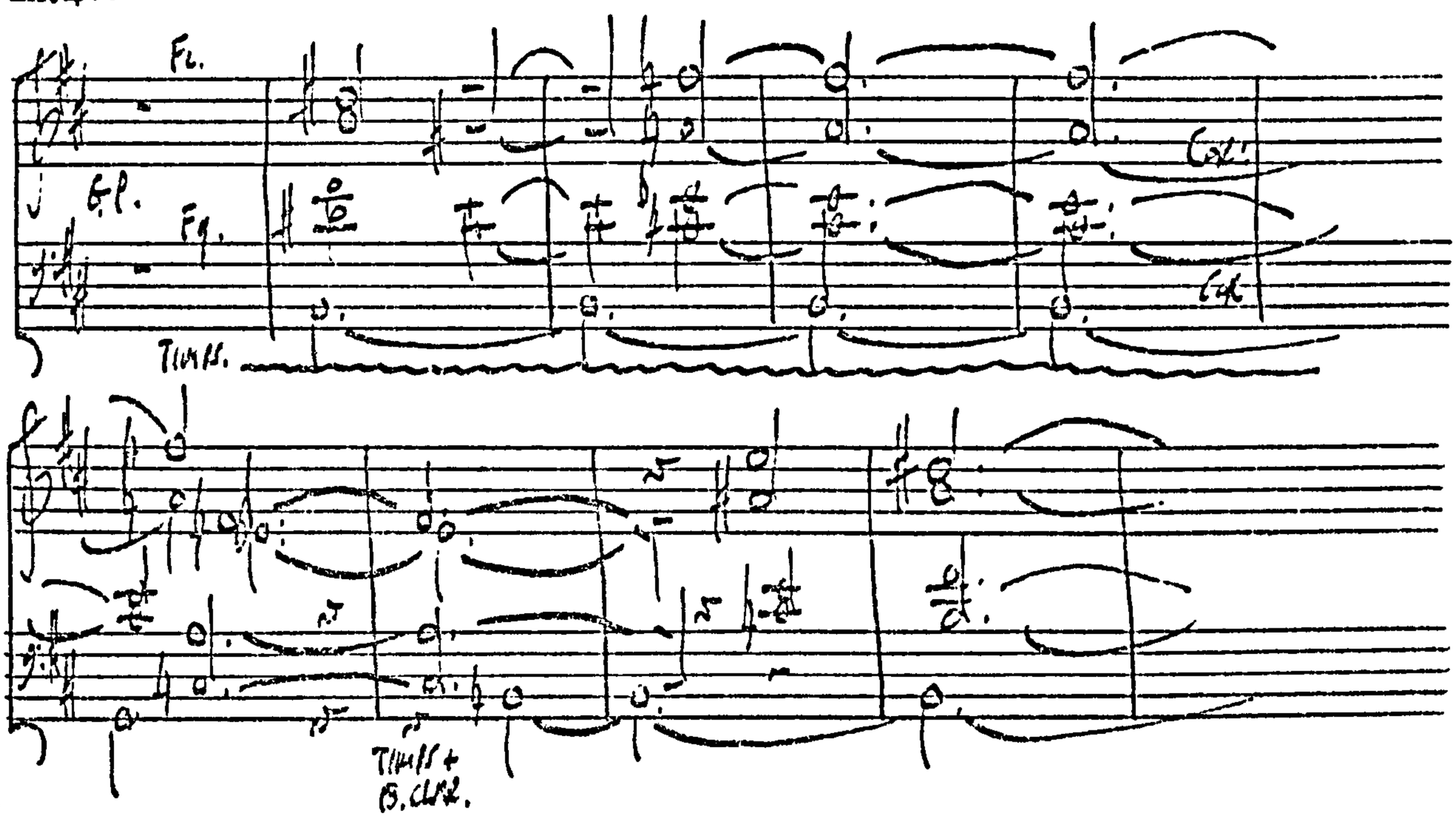
The following 'Lied I' and 'Lied II' are again pleasant but quite conventional though the former evokes an almost immediate memory of the 'Alla marcia' from the Karelia Suite. 'Miranda' follows Lied II directly and it opens with a delicately scored idea of some charm (Ex.425); its sequential treatment (which has been criticised by some writers) is not unexpected, since, like the previous character sketches, it is no way designed as a serious portrait.

The melody, orchestral layout, and harmonic language of 'The Naiads' recalls the 'King Christian II' Suite, of which it is obviously a descendant. But while this piece has a greater refinement in its textures and spacing (in which the woodwind have the melody, and strings present an accompanying figure while brass supply the harmonic background) it also seems to have lost some of the individuality of that earlier suite.

The final piece, 'Dance Episode', (in B minor) appears to be too consciously contrived to be really successful. Yet (on p.46, miniature score) the sudden move to G minor creates the opportunity for a characteristically Sibelian and imaginative ending; the subsequent enharmonic prevarication of B-flat/A-sharp is continued even after a 'G.P.' and the

ensuing cadence is as delightful as it is characteristic:

Ex.426



It is all the more unfortunate that these closing bars seem - as a pre-requisite - to demand the uneventful repetitions of the earlier phrases.

The incidental music to 'The Tempest' is imaginatively uneven and ranges from the beauty of the 'Chorus of the Winds', the warmth of the 'Berceuse', and the emotional 'anguish' of 'The Oak-tree' and 'Ariel's Song' to such conventional numbers of the 'Dance of the Nymphs', and 'Lied I and II', while in certain other pieces (especially 'Caliban's Song') there is a striving for 'effect' (and a lack of what Ralph Wood called 'creative impulse') that is not typical of Sibelius.

The craftsmanship of these pieces is undeniable, but the two Suites are not as satisfactory or enjoyable as 'Pelléas and Mélisande' or even 'King Christian II', and they add little to the musical stature of Sibelius.

CHAPTER 23

IN CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 23

It is not infrequently remarked that the range and depth of musical experience in Sibelius is not as great as other composers: and Nielsen (his exact contemporary) is often cited as a contrasting comparison; Sibelius published no opera and only one String Quartet, and his contribution to piano literature is very small and nowhere as significant as his orchestral music. Against this there is the fact that a large amount of Sibelius's music remains unknown outside Finland: this is especially true of his Choral music (which includes 'Tulen synty' Op.32, a work that is impressive in its very 'woodenness') while only a minority of his (90+) songs are known - even 'Luonnotar' Op.70, a hauntingly beautiful tone-poem for Voice and Orchestra, remains neglected.

However, 'Luonnotar' and one or two other works apart, there seems little evidence to support the suggestion that the practical experience and knowledge of these 'hidden' works would significantly widen the known range and depth of the musical experience of Sibelius's compositions.

Obviously then the achievement of Sibelius lies in his orchestral music, though this too has been described as limited; but the study of Sibelius's orchestral works leads to the conclusion that such a statement confuses the presence of limitations that arise from choice with those that occur through necessity. The fact that certain states of emotion are ignored by Sibelius (in his orchestral music) does not merely support the view that he was therefore severely circumscribed in outlook; rather it supports the simple fact that they were (to him) unnecessary -

and uninteresting. Sibelius's limitations arise from choice, not lack of ability or emotional experience; and this led him to pursue (persistently) certain lines of thought to the exclusion of other possibilities.

The orchestral music of Sibelius is characterised by a concentration on certain areas of musical thought, on their consistent development, and especially on their organization; this enabled Sibelius to retain his 'handful' of characteristic and frequently observed features and procedures, and yet in successive compositions to reveal a new quality of thought and/or organization, and to present a new and valuable musical experience. It is these qualities that define the 'advances' in Sibelius's musical development, and made it largely unnecessary for him to seek for much more than the harmonic language and established forms he inherited.

At the same time this concentration and development allowed him to use both language and form in an idiosyncratic manner that defies (valuable) imitation: Sibelius was, like Beethoven (to paraphrase Tovey) 'a Revolutionary without the R'. Robert Simpson sums up Sibelius's musical character and achievement by describing him[1] as "Deeply contemplative, of closely consistent mind, he creates a music that while it is highly circumscribed and based on only a handful of characteristic ingredients is able to suggest worlds." This creative ability - which could avoid empty mannerisms and yet 'suggest worlds', and indeed shows an almost constant unfolding of enjoyable creative musical experience - has been demonstrated in the preceding chapters; at this point however it may be helpful to summarize (and illustrate) this consistent development by considering individually some of the more important features of Sibelius's musical thought.

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1. Simpson, op.cit., p.36.

The basic strength (and success) of Sibelius's orchestral music arises from tonality, and in particular from the presence, consistent pursuit, and development of a tonal evolution; of course other elements cannot be separated from tonality since they arise from it, react to it, complement and characterise it. Nevertheless it remains true that in Sibelius the tonal evolution is the eseential and directly creative force, and that his most valuable and characteristic works depend on a tonal evolution for their creative existence; this consistent concern will be sketched here in condensed form.

In the symphonies the most often employed key relationships between movements (Table I) are mediant, though this was not immediately apparent or pronounced in early works: 'Kullervo' is more concerned with conventional (dominant) relationships than with mediant ones, and although the 'Lemminkäinen Suite' shows some progress towards mediant relationships, both of these works are more remarkable for their placing of movements an augmented fourth apart (for dramatic reasons).

Table I

Kullervo	E min	B min	F	C	E min
Lemminkäinen Suite	E-flat	A min	F-sharp min	E-flat	
Symphony I	E min	E-flat	C	E min	
Symphony 2	D	D min	B-flat	D	
Symphony 3	C	G-sharp (A-flat)	C		
Symphony 4	A min	F	C-sharp	A	
Symphony 5	E-flat	G	E-flat		
Symphony 6	D min/C	G min	D min	D min	

The First Symphony too is somewhat unusual in its choice of key

centres (though they are entirely dependant on internal and organic factors) but from the Second Symphony onwards mediant relationships become the norm; the second movement of the Sixth Symphony is again exceptional - and again dependant on organic and internal factors.

The key relationships WITHIN movements (Table 2) shows an unmistakable development of mediant relationships; and for the moment it is only necessary to show the exposition of the first movements :

Table 2

Symphony I	E min/G		B minor
Symphony 2	D	(F-sharp)	A
Symphony 3	C		B min/G
Symphony 4	A min	(⟶ C)	F-sharp
Symphony 5 (whole movement)	E-flat.....G;	C-flat.....	E-flat
Symphony 6	D min (?)		C

More importantly however this development of mediant relationships points towards one of the most basic and consistent sources of Sibelius's creative imagination. The characteristic of tonality that most seems to have attracted and fascinated Sibelius is the tension and energy that arise from (i) the exploration and display of ambiguous features, or (ii) the fact that features more normally employed to establish tonality can function ambiguously.

This creative concern with ambivalence/ambiguity is not immediately observed at the outset of Sibelius's orchestral compositions; 'Kullervo' shows no direct sign of its presence though there are certain moments in the first movement which lead directly to particular features in the First Symphony - and from where their development is both consistent and

central to this particular characteristic of tonality. Equally it is possible to suggest some evidence (the 'Nocturne' from the 'King Christian II' Suite, and 'Lemminkäinens Return') that illustrates Sibelius's growing interest in this area in the period up to the composition of the First Symphony.

Sibelius's concern with this particular area of tonality is immediately obvious in the first movement of the First Symphony where there is a tonal conflict arising from the ambiguous and overlapping areas of E minor and G major.[1] This ambiguity is present from the very opening of the work - even in the Introduction - and the first subject paragraph presents a continuous counterpulling of opposing and ambiguous elements. In turn this tonal tension is reflected and paralleled by the extended (supertonic-) dominant pedal of the second subject paragraph.

The energy of the Second Symphony arises from only a slightly different source: there is nothing ambiguous about the D major tonality but its internal organization is characterised by a somewhat fluid arrangement - i.e. the 'ambiguity' is now internal rather than an overlapping area between two related keys: this organization allows the supertonic chord to assume a considerable importance and to create a considerable tension, the initial presentation of which suggests its derivation from cadential formulae more normally used to establish a key. In the subsequent presentation of the second subject paragraph the internally ambiguous first subject is counterbalanced by the enhancement of the submediant chord (F-sharp) which supports the introduction of the second subject theme itself.

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1. Here I must disagree with Simpson who, when describing the dipolar oscillation of the first movement as "the possible root of a Nielsenish process of progressive tonality" remarks that Sibelius "sees in this a threat rather than a promise"; perhaps it is merely a question of emphasis but, for Sibelius, surely, the promise was already extant in this very quality of ambiguity.

At first sight the Third Symphony does not immediately appear to further the line of tonal development pursued by its predecessors. But the essential features of the exposition of the first movement are (i) that in an otherwise unblemished C major tonality there is a 'passing' reference to the augmented-fourth degree - a feature which conventionally helps to stabilize tonality by its pro-dominant qualities - and (ii) that this passing reference is taken up and directly intrudes upon the very moment of cadential climax and tonal affirmation, and immediately effects a modulation to B minor; in turn, in the second subject paragraph, B minor swings round to G major, a process that is obviously indebted to the F-sharp....A procedure observed in the Second Symphony, itself derived from the extended (modal) pedal in the First Symphony.

In the Fourth Symphony the source of energy, which is at first presented as a dramatic commentary on a note-relationship, arises from the presence of the contradictory elements of the minor third and major sixth degree that symbolize the tonal alternatives reaching out from the central A minor, and which themselves outline the interval of an augmented-fourth. This dramatic presentation is followed by a somewhat leisurely paragraph that seems to be moving towards the normal mediant key when it is abruptly overtaken by the submediant, and in a manner that takes up the symphonic significance of the first three notes (and the subsequent pedal undulation.

Conversely the opening of the Fifth Symphony avoids the dramatic, though its exposition displays close affinities with that of the Fourth Symphony. Here, in the Fifth, the opening harmonic undulation postpones the (cadential) progression to the dominant chord (and the possibility of tonal stabilization) and in so doing creates the opportunity for an

enharmonic change of direction (and the sudden movement to G majcr). Moreover the unfolding of the movement as a whole illustrates a further development of the counterbalancing of the mediant poles as well as a novel and ambiguous functioning of certain moments of the design - of which , more later.

Tonal ambivalence characterises the whole of the Sixth Symphony and it is enhanced by its presentation in rather elusive and enigmatic terms. The first 3 bars gently proclaim its presence and it is interesting to see just how far this Sixth Symphony presents what could be considered as a far-reaching refinement of the First Symphony: clearly there is an ancestral relationship. Indeed though it is not immediately obvious there is a close parallel between these two works both in actual procedures and indeed in the central tonal ambivalence and exploration of overlapping tonal areas that are at the centre of their creative imagination (and attention has already been drawn to the effect of the presence of an Introduction in the First Symphony and its absence in the Sixth).

The unique organisation and construction of the Seventh Symphony makes it rather more difficult to show precisely how it continues the line of thought pursued in its predecessors. But again the basic tonal evolution arises from the fact that an essentially cadential progression (to the tonic) is interrupted by a foreign chord, and the subsequent counterpulling of a number of opposing elements.

The principal concern of the symphonies therefore is clearly with a tonal evolution arising from the presence of ambiguous characteristics or the equivocational function of material more normally used to establish tonality. The detailed functioning of these ambiguous characteristics (or moments in the design) are extremely interesting and worthy of remark

here, but for the immediate moment the subsequent movements of the symphonies deserve mention in this respect.

In these movements the central creative idea is continued or reflected in a variety of ways, though with Sibelius it is interesting to observe just how far this reflection or continuation is exact: the following movements do not merely extend or prolong the same line of thought: they themselves explore it in a manner that directly relates to its idiosyncreatic presentation in the first movement, thus although the viewpoint may be different the 'angle of sight', as it were, remains the same.

In the First Symphony, for instance, the second movement is clearly taken up with the exploration of the ambiguous area between E-flat and C minor which it pursues with a mixture of melodic and symphonic elements; the third movement in C major not only makes a point of its relationship to E but, in doing so, it makes use of a persistent colour note (B-flat/A-sharp) which itself made a (dramatic) appearance at a crucial moment in first movement.

In the Second Symphony the internal tonal fluidity of the first movement finds reflection in the second movement in the internal disturbance of D minor which is initially characterised by the extended pizz. contra-bass line with which it begins. In contrast the middle movement of the Third Symphony is primarily concerned with a tonal and thematic obsession which does not appear to be related to the argument of the first movement, yet in view of the character and construction of the finale this obsessive quality is exactly right here.

The unique finale of the Third Symphony is clearly concerned - to a very large extent - with the question of tonal establishment,

and in particular with the ambivalent C...A-flat/G-sharp motive which was itself derived from a G - C cadential phrase-ending.

The last three movements of the Fourth Symphony are all concerned, in varying degrees, with the presence of the augmented fourth, though it is not until the finale that tonal conflict breaks out; but the ambivalent elements present in the first movement are now characterised by the sustained confrontation of opposing tonalities - a presentation that is especially powerful when there is a simultaneous pulling in contrary directions.

In the Fifth Symphony the middle movement betrays its indebtedness to its counterpart in the Third, though it now achieves a monumental aspect: a characteristic that not only appears to take up the G major of the first movement, but - through the sheer size of this deceptive movement - also provides a very necessary balance to that of the first movement.

The last three movements of the Sixth Symphony further the tonal argument in a variety of ways: the second movement parallels the tonal ambivalence of the first by its own wayward and disembodied presentation of G minor, while some moments of the third movement display a simultaneous counterpulling in opposing directions enhanced at one stage by the melody being in canon. The finale, of course, is directly concerned with the tonal question that, to some extent, remained unanswered and unresolved at the end of the first movement. Here it is more passionately presented and indeed offers what amounts to a mirror reflection of the first movement.

The fact that this incontrovertible and particularly creative basis of Sibelius's symphonic compositions has been somewhat

overlooked has resulted in the misguided analysis of certain movements, largely because (i) the themes have frequently been unremarkable in themselves, while (ii) a large part of the underlying and vital tonal tension has been stated in 'commonplace' terms that have frequently been taken as 'introduction' or simply harmonic background.[1]

Although the First Symphony stands somewhat apart in this respect, the first movement of the Second Symphony clearly illustrates these facts, for the tonal tension suggested in the opening harmonic progression is not immediately apparent in the (conventional) woodwind theme which follows - the so called first subject: only the horn comment reveals more obviously its presence. Similarly in the second movement the inherent tension and restless energy of the opening phrases for contra-basses is not apparent in the following bassoon melody. In later works this procedure is subtly refined - as in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony where the tension remains 'in view' in the persistent pedal undulation, though again it is not explicit in the (A2) cello theme. The Sixth Symphony carries the refinement of this procedure a stage further and, although a symphonic tension is clearly present in the opening 30 bars there is for some time an avoidance of a 'first main theme' : yet these opening bars cannot be considered as just 'introduction'. Moreover it is interesting to note that because of a concentration on themes, the published analyses of such works (and the

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1. Although the description 'commonplace' is somewhat unjust, it points to the fact that several of Sibelius's themes and/or opening harmonic progressions are conventional in character; very few have the driving rhythmic daemon that charactorises (and marks the presence of) Beethoven; instead many of Sibelius's themes are clearly diatonic and rhymically easy-going, while several of them are rather rhapsodic and almost appear to lack the energy their position would seem to demand.

Second and Sixth Symphonies in particular) frequently dispute the identification of the 'first subject'.

The point is this: the source of energy for the tonal evolution in Sibelius's symphonic movements is not merely thematic or harmonic: the 'first subject' itself embraces both harmonic and melodic features and it is also characterised by the tension which results from their interplay (as has been shown in the Second Symphony); more often than not previous attempts to isolate the contributory features of Sibelius's first subjects have concentrated on themes alone, with the result that the basic symphonic tension has been overlooked.

Yet the interplay of thematic and harmonic features in the opening bars of Sibelius's compositions generally makes a quite fascinating study in itself: apart from the symphonies several examples spring to mind - though perhaps the 'Humoresques' may serve as convenient examples.

The construction of the main themes illustrates their tonal purpose and although this can easily be seen in those that are characterised by the presence of the 'disturbing' elements themselves - as for example in the First Humoresque, First Serenade, or the last movement of the Fourth Symphony, it is no less clearly apparent in the first main themes of such works as the Second and Fifth Symphonies, 'The Oceanides', and 'Pohjola's Daughter': the opening bars of the Fourth Humoresque are perhaps typical in this respect since the main solo theme presents little more than the G minor tonic chord while the accompanying harmonics suggest F- or B-flat.

However the tonal functions of the main theme are also to be observed in the thematic evolutions that occur in response to and as a direct part of the tonal evolution. One of the most obvious examples

of this occurs in the Fifth Symphony (first movement) where there is a complete recasting of many of the main themes; but the thematic evolution can also be less dramatically obvious as is illustrated by the gradual rapprochement of the first and second subject themes in the first movement of the Third Symphony. More subtle still, perhaps, is that of the Fourth Symphony (first movement) wherein the successive changes from augmented-fourth, to perfect fourth, then diminished fifth, are important in reflecting the progress (and emotional state) of the movement - and are quite characteristic. In contrast thematic evolutions outside a tonal evolution reach their climax in such a work as 'Tapiola'.

In Sibelius's orchestral music the main themes are present both as individual characters in their own right and as a function of tonality. Of course, themes also function in relation to their programmatic inspiration and this too is an interesting feature of the opening bars of several works: the atmospheric (and deliberately non-thematic) opening of 'En Saga' is ideally suited to the unfolding of a myth as is the cello 'recitative' at the beginning of 'Pohjola's Daughter'; in contrast there is the direct 'once upon a time' statement of the 'The Bard' and a pictorial representation of the sea in 'The Oceanides'.

But such is the influence of the creative characteristic of tonal ambivalence/ambiguity in Sibelius's symphonic compositions that it becomes increasingly difficult to separate the individual contributory factors that make up each work since they respond so closely (i) to the tonal argument and (ii) to the manner of its individual presentation and idiosyncratic characterisation.

It is partly for this reason, together with an underestimation of the essential tonal basis of some of Sibelius's movements, that has led

to the paradoxical fact that the formal innovations for which Sibelius has been praised have not always been accurately assessed, and some remain unrecognised (even by accepted authorities): there are at least two instances, the middle movements of the Third and Fifth Symphonies, which are frequently dismissed lightly whereas in fact both are quite unique movements and achievements - especially that of the Fifth. Similarly the second and third movements of the Sixth Symphony sustain and react to the prevailing tonal argument of the first movement: they maintain (and enhance) the tension until it breaks out in direct conflict in the finale, and their effect is therefore greater than their own modest dimensions and design would seem to imply - i.e. the significance and impact of these movements is increased as the result of the reaction between their own unique designs and their specific contexts.

Sibelius's formal innovations lie in two main areas, the first of which is seen in those movements where a completely new and unique designs are evolved: as in the finales of the Third and Sixth Symphonies, the first movement of the Fifth, the third movement of the Fourth, and of course the whole conception of the Seventh (in addition to the middle movements of the Third, Fifth, and Sixth Symphonies mentioned above). But at the same time it needs to be stressed that these unique designs arise in response to internal creative necessities that are, in turn, consequent (and dependant) upon the use and experience of previous conventional designs: the process is evolutionary though the results are sometimes almost revolutionary, and certainly the direct control of 'pace' (in the finale of the Third or the first movement of the Fifth Symphonies) opens up a considerable (and hitherto unexplored) area of creative possibilities.

But even these unique designs do not completely represent the extent of Sibelius's formal strength and innovations. Internal reorganization of sonata form movements is probably most immediately noticeable in shortened recapitulations as in the first movements of the First, Second and Fourth Symphonies, and there is also the apparent (and complete) omission of a return in such contexts as the second movements of the Fourth and Sixth Symphonies. The significance of these alterations has already been made clear when discussing these works, though it is perhaps worth repeating here that these changes are severely functional and arise (only) in response to the necessities and demands of the design and its tonal evolution; in the majority of cases the essential fact to be realised - and it is frequently ignored in critical writings - is that the abbreviation occurs because the omitted material is now no longer necessary. It is not merely redundant; rather the return of its presence would reintroduce the tension and energy from which the whole design originally evolved. For example the opening chordal figure of the Second Symphony does not return because the tonal fluidity it originally characterised has now been resolved; similarly in the second movement of the Fourth Symphony, a repeat of the opening (first) section is unthinkable, for the second section has worked out and resolved the underlying (though restrained) tension of the first. The (r)evolutionary formal innovations of Sibelius are essentially formal consequences - a further example of which is to be found in the development of the 'summing-up' theme in the finales of the first three symphonies (while later the finale of the Fifth illustrates the easy acceptance of a summing-up theme within a sonata design).

The 'hidden' strengths of Sibelius's formal construction are several, though the first is simply that his symphonic outlook enabled him to think in terms of complete and extended paragraphs of musical thought - a fact that, outside the symphonies, is responsible for the success and strength of such a work as 'Rakastava'. Within the symphonies these extended paragraphs are finely balanced in both dimensions and, more importantly, tension, and this apparent from the exposition of the First Symphony onwards.

These paragraphs are joined together by very short, functional transitions that themselves, in the later works, reflect the essence of the movement: for example the transition in the first movement of the Third Symphony is more directly concerned with the essence of the movement than its counterpart in the First, while the transition(s) in the finale of the Fourth Symphony are at the heart of the tonal argument.

Equally, in the first movement of the Sixth Symphony, the transition itself marks a distinct advance in the progress of the tonal argument. But although this work and Seventh Symphony represent the furthest point of such a development of the functional moments of a design, it is no less clearly exists in such moments as the 'thoughtful summary' in the recapitulation of the first movement of the First Symphony or the subsequent coda where the opposition of timpani and brass nevertheless significantly avoid a G major chord, thus continuing to narrow down the choice of key and justify the movement ending in E minor.

In fact the central tonal concern of the seven symphonies so permeates the entire construction and fabric that the functional moments of the design are made to respond in accordance to it and with a variety of

responses that equals the number of movements themselves; in one case there is the ambiguous functioning of whole sections of the design, as in the Fifth Symphony, where it is not immediately clear as to whether a development or a recapitulation (and coda) are presently unfolding, while in the Violin Concerto there is an amalgam of cadence and development.

Equally the response of the development sections in Sibelius's symphonic movements generally also shows a growing concern with the essence of the movement and not just a thematic development. Examples of this are to be seen in the first movements of the Third and Sixth Symphonies, while that of the first movement of the Fourth directly advances the argument by avoiding more normal means of development; similarly the development section of the finale of the Fourth presents the argument in a static form so as not to pre-empt the tonal conflict that is to follow.

In the Fifth Symphony the process of development is present for a very large part of the first movement though the late inclusion of a 'development' section is even more remarkable since it is so directly concerned with changes of tempi and pace (as well as the sheer number of thematic, orchestral, textural, and rhythmic features that come into play at that point.)

So far, however, this outline of the development of Sibelius's particular concern with mediant key relationships and especially tonal ambivalence illustrates his close consistency but does not show the important fact that both of these interests are constantly revitalized by their use in new contexts outside the symphonies, and by their inevitable contact with other ideas and procedures: indeed this cross fertilization itself produces new ideas that are then developed, creating -

as it were - a chain reaction of development and creative opportunity.

Although this inter-relationships is mostly restricted to that between the symphonies and the symphonic poems (and Violin Concerto) and is particularly concerned with a growling interest in changes of speed within movements, one of the first clear examples of this progressive and interactive relationship arises from the fact that in the Nocturne of the 'King Christian II, Suite a simple undulating harmonic progression is supported - for the first time in Sibelius's orchestral works - by a mediant pedal and this, of course, is to become of vital importance in the conception and realization of the First Symphony: indeed the First Symphony is founded on the tonal ambiguity that the mediant pedal helps to create (and the importance of the timpani entries have been discussed). Consequently 'En Saga', which is almost totally concerned with the exploitation of an ambiguous tonal area most particularly over a mediant pedal, was revised after a lapse of nine years.

Equally the experience of 'Lemminkäinen's Return' anticipates some of this tonal ambivalence and together these two works establish what could be taken as the general pattern of the tone-poems. Certain later works, 'Pohjola's Daughter', and 'Night-ride and Sunrise', are rather outside this pattern and are more symphonically active.

In turn the revision of 'En Saga' presents new factors which are themselves exploited and explored in subsequent works. Two features in particular are noticeable in this respect: first, 'En Saga' begins in A minor - the furthest point away from its central E-flat tonality - and although the two keys are not brought into direct contact, the relationship now exists within one movement (and not merely as before between movements); secondly, in the first section of 'En Saga' the gradual tonal

movement (from A minor to E-flat) is paralleled by a gradual increase in speed (and the equally gradual realization of a main theme). This change of speed could well have developed from the contrasting speeds of the first and second subjects in the finale of the First Symphony, and possibly from the experience of 'Lemminkäinen's Return', where there is a clear interest in 'speed' and the suggestion of its increase, as well as a tonal movement from C minor to E-flat. In 'En Saga' the change of speed is accomplished smoothly and easily and it is directly bound up with a tonal movement - a feature that is to become even more significant later.

The relationships of the First and Second Symphonies has already been fully discussed but it is possible to suggest that the transition (from the Second) to the 'advances' observed in the Third Symphony are in some measure due to the experiences of the Violin Concerto and 'Pohjola's Daughter'.

The unique design of the finale of the Third Symphony is considered by some authorities to show an abandonment of previous lines of thought (and design) and to represent the taking up of an entirely new idea. But its evolution and use of a 'summing-up' theme is obviously indebted to the previous experience of the First and Second Symphonies: in particular to the 'big tune' of the First (which included a dramatic change of speed) and the advance of this idea in the Second (where a similar effect was achieved through the 'perpetuo-like' character of the second subject and within the prevailing tempo). In turn the striking simplicity of the finale of Violin Concerto would seem to be an experience that was necessary before the finale of the Third Symphony could be realised. However the design of the finale (of the Third) is not only

concerned with an increase in speed, but with the direct control of 'pace' and it is the presence of this governing factor that makes it so unique and successful.

The key schemes and exposition of both the first movements of the Violin Concerto and the Third Symphony have some features in common - and different to the first two symphonies - while in 'Pohjola's Daughter' the sheer dramatic impact and orchestral characterisation of the striking modulation (from B-flat to E) seems to be reflected in the Third Symphony. The power and 'advance' of this modulation results from the direct juxtaposition of these two keys (an augmented-fourth apart); the ancestry of this idea reaches right back through 'En Saga' to the 'Lemminkäinen' Suite and 'Kullervo' and its future development is to result in such a profound experience as (the last movement of) the Fourth Symphony, though not before the intervening experience of what is otherwise a rather disappointing composition, 'The Dryad'.

'Pohjola's Daughter', like 'En Saga', begins with an increase in speed as the tonic key is established and the main theme evolves towards its characteristic shape; consequently the conception of 'Night-ride and Sunrise' (in which the final section appears as a sort of extended 'summing-up') is bound up with the direct relationships of changes of speed with changes of tonality, and the results of this experience (together with that of the Third Symphony and its antecedents) is eventually to be revealed in the first movement of the Fifth Symphony where the tonal evolution and pace (and changes of tempi) are indivisibly intertwined (a double helix) to create a further unique design: a design whose structure is only now becoming fully appreciated.

The composition of 'Nightride and Sunrise' (in 1907) was followed by 'The Dryad' and although this is not a particularly successful or poetic composition, it is the first to present the tonic....augmented fourth relationship as a direct conflict. Previously this key relationship was used for dramatic contrast but avoided the idea of diametric opposition (even in the immediate juxtaposition of these keys in 'Pohjola's Daughter') and it is precisely this quality and procedure that is pursued in 'The Dryad' and which is again associated with changes of tempi, albeit of lesser importance than in some earlier works.

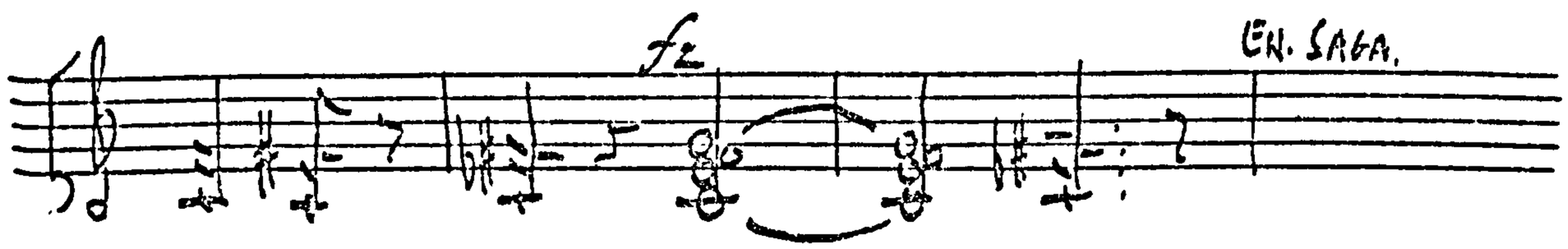
The interval of the augmented fourth characterises the whole of the Fourth Symphony, and although it disturbs the F major tonality of the second movement, in the finale it creates an extended and violent conflict between keys an augmented fourth apart (and for some this is one of the most profound movements in Sibelius's symphonies). Subsequently this dramatic key relationship is reflected, to some extent, in the First and Second Violin Serenades which point towards the conception of the 'Humoresques', while it is difficult not to feel that 'The Bard' is a consequence, per contra, of the Fourth Symphony. Further it has already been suggested that the expansive character of 'The Oceanides' derives partly from 'The Bard' and anticipates this characteristic of the extrovert Fifth Symphony.

The Fifth Symphony avoids the conflict arising from the presence of the augmented fourth and its first movement is essentially concerned with a thorough-going exploration of increasing speeds and pace while in the Sixth Symphony the idea of opposing speeds/tonalities appears in more poetic (and introvert) characterisation in the first and last movements; moreover the capricious nature and design of the deceptively simple second movement refers back to the 'Humoresques'.

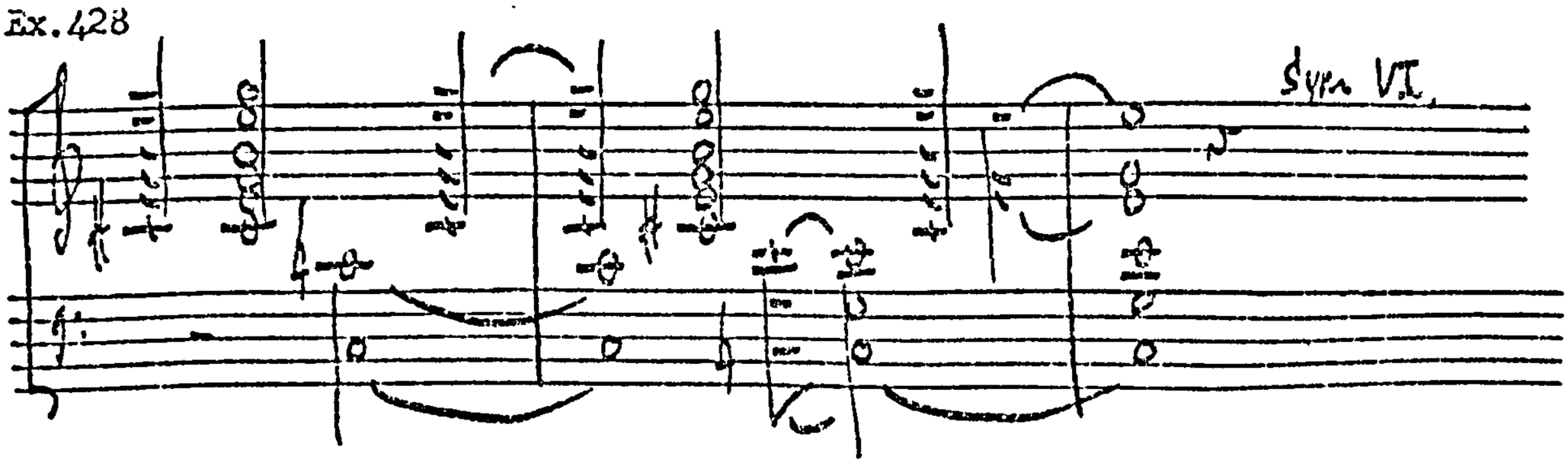
The conception and realization of the Seventh Symphony has been discussed in some detail and it is only necessary here to state that both its one movement design together with its crucial tonal evolution and changes of tempi (and pace) are directly related to previous experiences and are inconceivable without them.

Sibelius's consistent concern with tonality led him both to accept the existing harmonic language and to a general avoidance of 'modern' harmony. But the statement of this fact does not imply that his harmonic language was therefore passive or unadventurous. On the contrary the very strength of Sibelius's harmonic language and its application originates in the fact that the existing language he inherited was sufficient for his expressive needs: and sufficient not only in the range of its vocabulary but in the sense that it would respond to personal and idiosyncratic treatment - and in Sibelius's orchestral music this is characterised by the strength and purpose (and poetry) of its progressions and, especially, by its long range functioning. In fact these characteristics features are largely interdependant, and the logic of their progressions can result in such uncompromising clashes as :

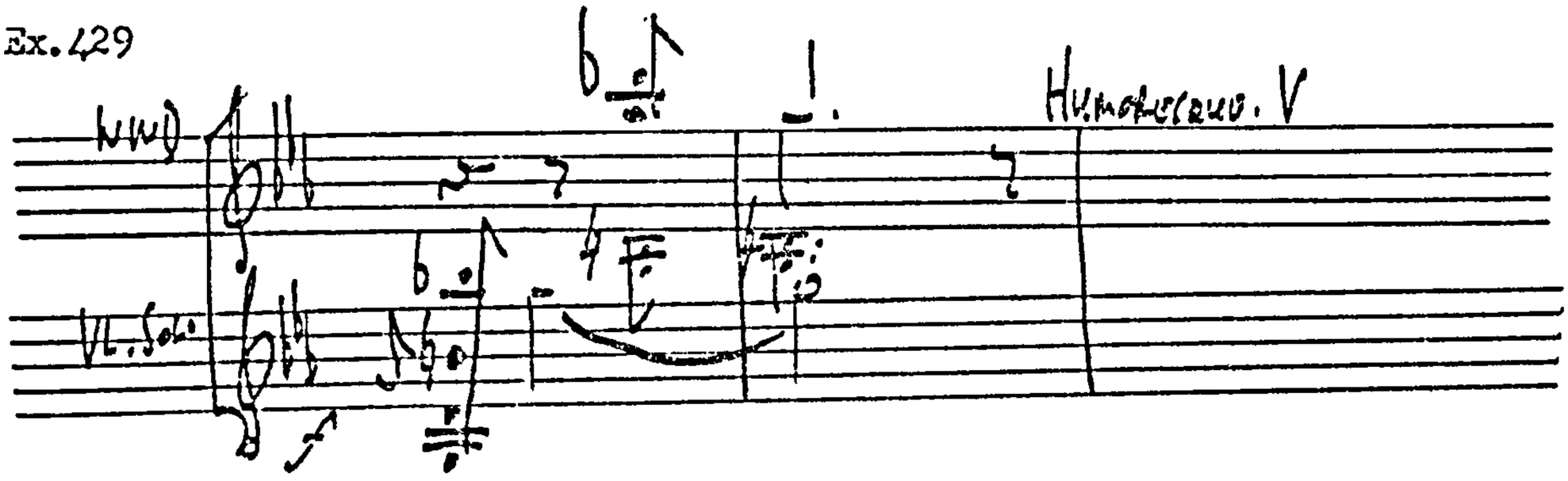
Ex.427



Ex.428



Ex. 429



The example from 'En Saga' occurs near the beginning of the work: its striking appearance at this point is eminently logical in that it is ideally suited to the generation of energy (and of seeking for tonal direction) that its context demands. A more significant and extended example is shown by the quotation from the Sixth Symphony, and this is a convenient and pointed illustration of what is meant by long range control and functioning of harmony in Sibelius - and which is (partly) responsible for a large part of the inevitability that so characterises his best orchestral works; for the effectiveness and indisputable logic of this striking clash arises from the growing confrontation of D minor and C major that has been in progress from the beginning of the movement: note too the important fact that this important event is non-thematic. On a smaller scale, though just as effective in its context, there is the example from the Fifth Humoresque: this too is utterly logical and clearly involved in a tonal argument (which amounts to much more than the harmonic 'experimentation' of which one writer remarks.)

But the extent of the strength and logic of harmonic progressions does not merely reside in the degree of dissonance they produce: rather it is measured by the variety of their application (and of context). Take, for example, the exposition of the first movement of the First Symphony: here the first paragraph is entirely taken up with the oposition

of E minor and G major and the harmonic progressions which support this opposition are severely restricted. But in the second subject paragraph this technique is 'foreshortened' so that there is now no more than an extended undulation between two chords in the same key. The result of this is that although the harmonic (and tonal) direction is never out of sight (or hearing) it generates a tension that - characterised by its second subject themes - complements and balances the ambiguous tonal tension of the first subject. In subsequent works similar slow alternations of harmonies prove to be one of Sibelius's more frequent (and constantly creative) procedures: they are found at the beginning of such widely different works as 'The Oceanides', the Fourth Humoresque and the Fifth Symphony.

However the above example from the Sixth Symphony also illustrates a further quite characteristic facet of Sibelius's harmonic style, and it has its roots in the compelling logic of such a progression as has just been mentioned with regard to the first movement of the First Symphony: the overlapping of chords, or the growing of one chord into another. Examples of this procedure, which are numerous and occur because the direction and purpose of the harmonic progression are so clearly predetermined, range from the simple anticipatory entry of one note, frequently in timpani or contra-basses as in 'The Bard' (Ex.430) to the almost simultaneous presentation of two unconnected chords in 'Tapiola' (Ex.431).

The inevitability and consequent strength of Sibelius's harmonic style is also reflected in the way in which he charts the progress of a musical argument by such a subtle device as making some small but

significant changes in the successive presentations of just one chord: the first movement of 'Rakastava' is a clear example of this. Moreover the fact that Sibelius is able to use such devices so frequently, and more importantly within widely differing contexts, is evidence that they are 'principles' of construction and not merely 'mannerisms': thus the charting of the progress of the musical argument by the differences in the presentations of one chord is clearly extended in range and depth by the 'progressive' presentations of the two opposing 'tonic' chords in the first movement of the Sixth Symphony.

One further feature of Sibelius's harmonic style remains to be noted. It is simply that there is a general avoidance of heated rhetorical climaxes and dramatic gestures; such is the strength and clarity of the harmonic progressions and direction that when a paragraph or even a complete movement reaches its climax then the fulfilment and conclusion is frequently laconic and never degenerates into empty bombast: those six (spaced) chords that complete the Fifth Symphony are one example, while the octave B-natural, 'mf', that rounds off the exposition of the first movement of the First Symphony is another.

Equally the moments of climax, which can be as pointed as that of the Sixth Symphony (Ex. 347), are as powerful and climactic as is necessary. Moreover it is at this point that Sibelius frequently illustrates his unique and purposeful orchestration and in this sense the orchestral colours are a direct function of the design and tonal evolution. Again examples of this are numerous and in addition to that of the Sixth Symphony or the coda of the First, mention must be made of that in 'Lapiola' (bar 577 al fine) or that of 'Nightride and Sunrise' (Fig.49 et seq).

The feature that denotes the presence of Sibelius almost as immediately as rhythm denotes the presence of Beethoven is (Sibelius's) orchestration, though the term 'orchestration' appears inaccurate when applied to Sibelius since it is so obvious that theme and colour are one being (though viewed from different perspectives). Several writers have mentioned Sibelius's extraordinary use of the orchestra though few have demonstrated the fact that, as Constant Lambert remarked, "Like the colour in a Cezanne landscape, Sibelius's orchestration is an integral part of the form".[1], [2].

The essential fact of Sibelius's orchestral writing is that it is conceived directly, and one would unhesitatingly say 'spontaneously', in orchestral terms; this seems to have been an inborn gift since, although it is refined by experience and polished and pointed by the unfolding of the tonal/thematic evolution it carries, there are in 'Kullervo' several moments whose essence lies in their orchestral characterisation (e.g.second movement, pp.61-2). It is important to realise that a large part of the strength of Sibelius's orchestration is to be comprehended in this fact: in the union of interesting/beautiful/powerful orchestral sounds per se, and their function within the design. The constituent elements can rarely be satisfactorily separated - the String Quartet is a notable exception while the piano music sounds like 'naked ' orchestral music - though the intention of the orchestration has sometimes been misunderstood;one obvious example is that passage for high bassoon and low flutes in 'Tapiola' (bar 577) - no other orchestral colours would obtain the exact degree of tension needed at this particular moment.

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1. To carry this simile further: Cezanne's landscapes depend, for their existence, on the fact that colour alone can carry perspective; indeed that (Cezanne's) colour and perspective cannot be divided; so too with Sibelius, theme and colour are indivisible, one entity.
2. Lambert, op.cit., p.225.

Of course the function of timpani and/or Gran cassa is deeply involved in this conjunction of function and orchestral colour, and other striking details illustrate this same characteristic: there is always a vital musical reason for noteworthy orchestral moments, details and effects in Sibelius - in 'The Bard' the solitary note for tam-tam marks the arrival at the tonic major chord while the use of 'stahlstabe' in 'The Oceanides' is just as much a simple musical necessity as it is an 'impressionistic' effect.

In addition there is the consistent development of the 'lion-roars', of the 'propeller' music and the recurring use of high strings at moments of climactic tension as well as the indispensable use of timpani as a tonal 'sign-post' and indeed as the 'instrument' of tonality at certain crucial moments in the symphonies.

When considering Sibelius's use of the orchestra it is interesting to recall Simpson's remark[1] that "Sibelius's wonderfully consistent and homogenous treatment of the orchestra (is) a kind of polyphony" after which he points out that "the prime characteristic of his orchestral writing is the mastery of its internal flow; the parts, the sounds are made to melt and shift upon and into each other with infinite cunning". This is undoubtedly true, though it is worth remarking that there is more polyphony in Sibelius than is generally realised, and 'Tapiola' and the Sixth Symphony makes use of such severe contrapuntal devices as canon. The symphonies are marked by a considerable amount of polyphonic writing including that magnificent passage for divided strings in the Seventh. But both here and in several other instances although the parts have an independance, a flow and a sense of movement (the essence of counterpoint)

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1. Simpson, op.cit., p.37.

its polyphonic quality does not simply manifest itself in imitative writing; it is also to be comprehended in the development section of the Fourth Symphony and the opening paragraph of the Sixth both of which reveal its purposeful presence. Further the musical experience of such passages as the opening of the Second and Fourth symphonies suggests the idea of counterpoint in their linear separation and in the contrast and tension of independantly moving characters. Finally it is worth noting its presence in the quiet (but vital) and momentary misalignments of contrapuntal lines in the 'development' section of the second movement of the Third Symphony.

In contrast it perhaps needs to be remarked that the formal mastery of Sibelius is largely restricted to large-scale and/or symphonic movements; a suggestion that recurrs with increasing insistence is that in his smalle-scale works Sibelius appears to be creatively inhibited. The small-scale works that are successful are relatively few: 'Rakastava' is exceptional and gains its strength from separate movements functioning as sections of a larger overall design; in other compositions the presence of a solo instrument (as in the Violin Humoresques) appears to offset the limitations imposed by their dimensions.

This brief summary of the use and development of some of Sibelius's characteristic features and procedures has made repeated references to certain works and examples: and the reason for this points towards one of the essential distinguishing features of any valuable orchestral composition by Sibelius - the striking fact that so many ideas are present and are simultaneously developed to achieve one totally unified creation that possesses a wealth of diversity. Sibelius appears to be

capable of thinking on a number of different planes at the same time - all with a view to the particular effect required for the immediate moment, and yet with a careful regard to the sense of overall direction, purpose and progress of the design. This is frequently accomplished by making one particular procedure function simultaneously in a number of capacities, or by ensuring that two or more features are so interdependant that in order to function they must do so in creative conjunction: the pace and speed of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony cannot be separated from its tonal evolution just as the overall design of the third movement of the Fourth Symphony cannot be separated from its pace or orchestration; the detailed charting of the 'steps' of progress in the finale of the Third Symphony illustrates this clearly, and takes account of its orchestration. Indeed, in the orchestral works generally, the orchestral colour is a (pre-)requisite dimension of the conception itself. Conversely it is also pertinent to point out that if the central tonal essence is removed, as it appears to be in several smaller works, then both the interplay of the constituent elements and the overall design loses its energy, and results in imaginatively unequal or uninspired compositions.

If one agrees with Georges Bracque that "there is no progress in art, only a clearer definition of its boundaries" then it may be said of Sibelius's orchestral compositions that not only are the boundaries more clearly defined but by the very act of definition they themselves are shown to open up further (infinite) possibilities: like the boundaries of the expanding universe, they are limited only by the rate of their infinite expansion.

M. Steuart-Bellin

CATALOGUE OF ORCHESTRAL WORKS

Abbreviations of Publishers' names :

B & H	Breitkopf & Härtel, Wiesbaden
C	Chappell & Co., London
H	Wilhelm Hansen, Copenhagen
L	Robert Lienau, Berlin

The abbreviations F (for Full Score) or M (for Miniature Score) placed against the Publishers name, indicates the particular scores to which reference (+ especially page numbers) is made in the main body of the text.

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Opus	Title	Publisher	Date of Composition
7	'Kullervo', symphonic poem for soprano, baritone, male chorus and orchestra: (1. Introduction (2. Kullervo's Youth (3. Kullervo and his Sister (4. Kullervo goes to War (5. Kullervo's Death	B & H (M)	1892
9	'En Saga', tone poem for orchestra	B & H (M)	1892 · rev.1901
10	'Karelia Overture'	B & H (F)	1893
11	'Karelia Suite' 1. Intermezzo 2. Ballade 3. Alla marcia	B & H (F)	1893
14	'Rakastava' 1. The Lover 2. The Path of the Beloved 3. Good Night - Farewell	B & H (M)	1911 (rewritten)
16	'Vårsång'	B & H (F)	1894
22	'Lemminkäinen Suite' for orchestra:	B & H (M)	
	1. Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island		1895 rev.1897, 1939
	2. The Swan of Tuonela		1893 rev.1897, 1900
	3. Lemminkäinen in Tuonela	B & H (M)	1895 rev.1897, 19[illegible]

Opus	Title	Publisher	Date of Composition
	4. Lemminkäinen's Homeward Journey	B & H (M)	1895 rev.1897, 190
25	'Scènes historiques I'; for orchestra	B & H (F)	1899 rev.1911
	1. All' Overtura		
	2. Scena		
	3. Festivo		
26	'Finlandia'	B & H (F)	1899 rev.1900
27	Incidental Music to 'King Christian II'	B & H (F)	1898
	1. Elegie		
	2. Musette		
	3. Menuetto		
	4. Fool's Song of the Spider		
	5. Nocturne		
	6. Serenade		
	7. Ballade		
39	Symphony No.1 in E minor	B & H (M)	1899
42	Romance in C major, for string orchestra	B & H (F)	1903
43	Symphony No.2 in D major	B & H (M)	1901-2
44	Incidental music to 'Kuolema':	B & H (F)	1904
	'Valse Triste'		
45	1. The Dryad, tone poem for orchestra	B & H (F)	1910
	2. Dance Intermezzo, for orchestra	B & H (F)	1907
46	Incidental music to 'Pelléas and 'Mélisande'	B & H (F)	1905
	1. At the Castle Gate		
	2. Mélisande		
	3. At the Seashore		
	4. A Spring in the Park		
	5. The Three Blind Sisters		
	6. Pastorale		
	7. Mélisande at the Spinning Wheel		
	8. Entr'acte		
	9. Mélisande's Death		
47	Concerto in D minor, for Violin and Orchestra	L (H)	1903 rev.1905
49	'Pohjola's Daughter', symphonic fantasia for Orchestra	L (F)	1906

Opus	Title	Publisher	Date of Composition
51	Incidental music to 'Belshazzar's Feast' 1. Oriental Procession 2. Solitude 3. Night Music 4. Khadra's Dance	L (F)	1906
52	Symphony No.3 in C major	L (M)	1907
53	'Pan and Echo', dance intermezzo	L (F)	1906
54	Incidental music to 'Swanwhite' 1. The Peacock 2. The Harp 3. The Maiden with the Roses 4. Listen, the Robin Sings 5. The Prince Alone 6. Swanwhite and the Prince 7. Song of Praise	L (F)	1908
55	'Nightride and Sunrise', tone poem for Orchestra	L (F)	1907
59	'In Memoriam', funeral March for orchestra	B & H (F)	1909
62	(Incidental Music to 'Kuolema'): 1. Canzonetta, for string orchestra 2. Valse romantique	B & H (F)	1911
63	Symphony No.4 in A minor	B & H (M)	1911
64	'The Bard' tone poem for orchestra	B & H (M)	1913 rev.1914
66	'Scènes historiques II', for orchestra: 1. The Chase 2. Love Song 3. At the Drawbridge	B & H (F)	1912
71	'Scaramouche', music for the tragic pantomime	H (F)	1913
73	'The Oceanides', tone poem for orchestra	B & H (F)	1914
77	Two Pieces for Violin (or Cello) and Orchestra: 1. Cantique (Laetare anima mea) 2. Devotion (Ab imo pectore)	H (F)	1914

Opus	Title	Publisher	Composition
82	Symphony No.5 in E-flat major	H (M)	1915 rev.1916, 1919.
87	'Humoresques' I - II for violin and Orchestra	H (M)	1917
89	'Humoresques' III - VI for violin and Orchestra	B & H (M)	1917
96	1. Valse lyrique, for orchestra	H (F)	1920
	2. Autrefois, scene pastorale for two voices ad lib.and orchestra	H	1919
	3. Valse Chevaleresque, for orchestra	H (F)	1920
98	1. Suite mignonne, for 2 flutes and strings	C (F)	1921
	a Petite scène		
	b Polka		
	c Epilogue		
	2. Suite champêtre, for string orchestra	H (M)	1921
	a Pièce caractéristique		
	b Mélodie élégiaque		
	c Danse		
104	Symphony No.6	H (M)	1923
105	Symphony No.7 (In einem Satze)	H (M)	1924
109	Incidental music to 'The Tempest'		1925
	1. Prelude	H (M)	
	2. Suite No.1:	H (M)	
	a The Oak Tree		
	b Humoresque		
	c Caliban's Song		
	d The Harvesters		
	e Canon		
	f Scena		
	g Intrada - Berceuse		
	h Entr'acte - Ariel's Song		
	i The Storm		
	3. Suite No.2:	H (M)	
	a Chorus of the Winds		
	b Intermezzo		
	c Dance of the Nymphs		
	d Prospero		
	e Song I		
	f Song II		
	g Miranda		
	h The Naiads		
	i Dance Episode		
112	'Tapiola' tone poem for orchestra	B & H (M)	1926

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Note: (i) the orchestral works are listed under 'Sibelius'.

(ii) since most of the major orchestral works are necessarily mentioned several times in Ch.23 (pp.430-58) NO references are given for the orchestral works in that chapter.

Abraham, Gerald :
1, 28, 33, 77, 121-2, 198, 323, 331, 360, 377-9

'Aino' Symphony :
7

Bartok:
1

Beethoven:
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