A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE 1915 AND 1919 VERSIONS OF THE SYMPHONY NO. 5 IN E-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 82 BY JEAN SIBELIUS

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The initial composition of the Fifth Symphony in E-flat Major, Op. 82 was undertaken as a commission to celebrate the composer's fiftieth birthday. Unhappy with the initial efforts, two revisions were then performed; the first was in 1916 and the final revision in 1919. Despite the larger form of the work seeming to have been changed between the 1915 and 1919 versions, the smaller gestures of thematic expression in both versions remained similar. On the surface, it had appeared that the composer had eliminated a movement, changing the 1919 version into a three movement form. This view was not challenged by the composer at the time, and since the earlier versions had either been withdrawn or destroyed, there was no way to compare the original efforts to the final product until recently. In comparing the 1919 version to the original, a definite strong parallel can be seen between the two – despite the changes to form, rearrangement of melodic material, and the seemingly different number of movements. However, the parallel is enough that the 1915 version can be a guide to classifying the 1919 version, an act that has eluded many scholars since the 1920s. Most importantly, comparing the two versions shows that the 1919 version is not a three movement form at all; it is a four movement form that is obscured by the connection of the first and second movements by a thematic bridge that contains elements from both movements, but is not placed within either structure.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Jean Sibelius (1865 - 1957) began composing his Fifth Symphony as a result of a 1914 commission from the Finnish government; this commission was to celebrate the composer’s fiftieth birthday which had been declared a national holiday in Finland.\(^1\) The premiere occurred on 8 December 1915, with the composer conducting.\(^2\) Unsatisfied with his original effort, Sibelius began reworking the symphony, and one year after the original performance a revised version was premiered, again with the composer conducting. Still unhappy with the work, another series of revisions were undertaken, and in December 1919 Sibelius led the Helsinki City Orchestra in the third and final version of the work.\(^3\)

In his book *The Symphonies of Sibelius: A Study in Musical Appreciation*, Sibelius scholar Simon Parmet writes:

*The Fifth Symphony occupies a special place among the symphonies. It represents a return, a homecoming. The tempest in the Fourth had detached Sibelius from the sure anchorage of his innermost personality, but here in the Fifth he is in home waters again, sure of himself and his course.*\(^4\)

The tempest that Parmet refers to surrounds two major events that occurred in the composer’s life before the First World War. In 1908 Sibelius had a benign tumor successfully removed from his throat, but spent the next several years dreading a relapse which had the possibility of becoming cancerous.\(^5\) A year later Sibelius toured central Europe and had the opportunity to meet with several of his fellow composers - including Igor Stravinsky and Arnold Schönberg. In his biography on Sibelius, Guy Rickards states that the Fourth Symphony was

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\(^3\) Ibid, 218.
partly Sibelius’s reaction to the music being written at that time in relation to his own music. Sibelius wrote later to his student Rosa Newmarch about the Fourth Symphony: "It stands as a protest against present-day music. It has absolutely nothing of the circus about it."6 Further, author Harold Truscott wrote in his article on Jean Sibelius that the composer would have taken note of the political climate of the time and that the Fourth Symphony could be viewed as “…the sensing of an atmosphere which was to explode in 1914 into a world war.”7 The reception of this work was very limited for several years – it was not until after the death of Sibelius that the work began to see a resurgance in performance and popularity.

According to James Hepokoski, Sibelius’s compositional output can be placed into three time phases: the first between 1890 and 1903, the second between 1904 and 1912, and the last from 1913 to 1930.8 The first is “… an emphatically Finnish political phase marked by his immersion into and gradual emergence out of the exclusively local and national.”9 The second is when “Sibelius shifted to a ‘modern-classical’ strategy that strove to engage a larger public, that of the central musical marketplaces of Europe.”10 The final phase “was triggered both by his realization of the inevitable marketplace failure of the second [phase] and by the unforeseen emergence of the aggressive cultural politics surrounding the dissonant New Music of a younger generation.”11 Taking these three phases into account would place the Fourth Symphony right at the end of his second phase, corroborating the statements written in the letter to Rosa Newmarch. This may explain the differences between the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies, and also place a possible explanation on why the Fifth Symphony was revised twice; Sibelius, having rejected the

9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
“modern” voice that was beginning to pervade music at the time was returning to the voice of his youth and taking no heed to what the European community felt about his works.

This rejection of modernism did also have a personal aspect for Sibelius. In 1918, while working on the final revisions of the Fifth Symphony, Sibelius wrote in his diary: “From everything I notice how my inner being has changed since the period of the Fourth Symphony. And these symphonies of mine are more confessions of faith than are my other works.”12 The sense of spirituality would pervade his last period in general and the Fifth Symphony in particular. In working with the “swan hymn” that would form the basis of the final movement, Sibelius ascribed the movement of the swans in flight a mystical, almost religious connotation. He wrote in 1915: “Their [the swans] voices and being apropos of [my] symphonies. To me they are confessions of faith from the different periods of my life.”13 Also in 1915 he wrote: “Arrangement of the themes… It’s as if God the Father had thrown down the tiles of a mosaic from heaven’s floor and asked me to determine what kind of picture it was.”14 This begins to give one an insight into why there were so many drastic revisions in the Fifth Symphony – the basis is found in the composer’s spirituality and his desire to place that spirituality in its correct context.

Apart from the underlying emotion behind the changes, the general tendency towards the idea of revision was not unusual in Sibelius’s compositional process – most recently, he had undergone a similar process with the Violin Concerto, which premiered in 1903 with a subsequent revised edition being presented in 1905. And as with the case of the original version of the Violin Concerto, the composer was most strenuous in his desire to withdraw the original

12 Ibid, 436.
version from the performance world. In most cases this was a simple matter, as Sibelius commonly withheld publish a work until he was satisfied with it in its entirety – as he did with the Violin Concerto, *Rakastava*, and *Kuolema* among others. However, this had the unintended consequence of the 1916 version being lost. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Sibelius was in the practice of burning outdated versions of his works; written on the concertmaster’s part for the 1915 version of the Fifth Symphony is a pencil indication that the part was to be burnt. This was subsequently erased, but then underlined again in red pencil.\(^\text{15}\) This may have been the fate of the 1916 version, but without confirmation this cannot be confirmed conclusively.

For whatever reason, the 1915 version of the symphony did survive. This allows one to look closer at the compositional process that Sibelius undertook with regards to revising his own compositions. Further, it allows a glimpse into the genesis of these revisions that propelled a work from its initial effort to its final product. Lastly - and most importantly (especially in the case of the Fifth Symphony) it allows one to possibly answer questions generated by the final version with regards to the large and small scale forms shown in the work.

The 1915 version of the symphony is in four movements:

I. Tempo tranquillo assai  
II. Allegro commodo  
III. Andante mosso  
IV. Allegro commodo – Largamente molto

However, the 1919 version is in three movements:

I. Tempo molto moderato  
II. Andante mosso, quasi allegretto  
III. Allegro molto

The following discussion is meant to highlight the changes between the two versions in orchestration, theme and form – showing Sibelius’s compositional thoughts between the original and final versions. Additionally, the question of the “missing” second movement which appeared in the 1915 version as a sole entity but in the 1919 version was largely characterized as incorporated into the first movement will be discussed; ultimately showing that the 1919 version of the Fifth Symphony has been misclassified as a three movement work, when in reality it is a four movement work with a thematic bridge connecting the first and second movements. The first two chapters will cover the final two movements of the symphony, and the final chapter will deal with the first movement.
CHAPTER 2
THIRD MOVEMENT (1915)/ SECOND MOVEMENT (1919)

The third movement of the 1915 version of the symphony corresponds with what is traditionally labeled the second movement in the 1919 version. In both cases the melody is based on the same motive:

Ex. 1. Main theme, Third Movement (1915 version)/Second Movement (1919 version).

However, the usage of this motive varies greatly between the 1915 and 1919 versions, and at times does not solely rely on the written pitches, but rather devolves into the base rhythmic values:

Ex. 2. Main Theme, rhythm.

The 1915 version opens with a four bar introduction in the flutes, oboes and horns. The first presentation of the ostinato melody is in mm. 5-9, with a repetition beginning in m. 10. There is a variant of the motive, which occurs in the violins at m. 34 and is echoed in the flutes in m. 36. In this variant, the notes are the same as is the rhythm – the change is merely textual in the arco strings, not pizzicato as before. The texture shifts back to the pizzicato strings in m. 48. The ostinato stays constant until m. 94, where the texture shifts again to the arco figure in the violins and violas for three measures. In m. 119, Sibelius sets a variation of the ostinato against
itself in the string section. The violins enter with a two quarter note displacement that anticipates the original ostinato in the cellos and basses. At m. 133, he sets this ostinato variant in the woodwinds and breaks the original ostinato into its component parts and scatters it among the entire string section. The first two quarter notes are found in the basses, the third is found in the cellos, and the fourth and fifth are found in the violins. This pattern continues until m. 148, where the combined string sections (minus the basses) return to the original non-variation ostinato. However, for the first time, this section marks where the ostinato is broken down fully into its most base component of rhythm which can be seen beginning in m. 156. The rhythm remains the same, but the melodic motion in the quarter notes has been lost. The movement ends some twenty bars later with no real conclusion. The ostinato remains fragmented even in mm. 167-171 with all melodic variant above being replaced by long harmonic tones, first in the flutes and bassoons in mm. 155-165, where the horns take over the long tones until the end of the movement.

The melodic variation that continuously accompanies the ostinato is based off a similar rhythmic pattern, starting with a grouping of three followed by two (in the small scale). In some cases, such as mm. 76-82 in the oboes, the melody simply outlines the movement of the ostinato on the first and last beats of the measure. Overall, it is hard to label much of what accompanies the ostinato as a true melody – rather, in this version it mostly serves as an embellishment and elongation of the rhythm and pitch of the underlying rhythm of the ostinato.

The 1919 version, while sharing the same basic motive of the ostinato is distinct in both development and form. While the 1915 version is best viewed as a passacaglia, the 1919 version moves beyond this continuous variation form and constitutes a true theme and variations form.
The *pizzicato* motive is heard for the first time in the cellos at m. 5 with the violas providing rhythmic support. The theme is passed to the flutes in m. 9 and then to the violins in m. 14. The theme ends in m. 46 with a 2 measure extension of the theme in bars 45 and 46.

Ex. 3. Second Movement, mm. 125-133, 1919 version.

The first variation begins in m. 49 with the first violins in counterpoint with the second violins and the violas. The unvariated theme appears in m. 61 in the violins, set against a fragment of the variation theme in the violas and cellos. In m. 67 the theme is moved to the violas and cellos and the violins take up the variation melody. The variation ends in m. 95 with a two bar tag in the woodwinds, violas and cellos. The second variation begins in m. 98, and is based on one of the fragments of the first variation (mm. 73-75), now set against a triplet figure in the violas and cellos. This variation employs a large transition which begins in m. 111 and leads to the third
variation. For the first time in this version, the variant is based on the rhythm of the motive rather than the melodic content – the cellos and basses are playing in the original rhythm with the violins and violas offset by two quarter notes. The transition lasts until m. 124 and the third variation begins in m. 125. Much like the second half of the first variation, this section sets the unvariated melody in the woodwinds and a variated form passed around the violins, violas and cellos. Also, a new melody makes an appearance for the first time in the basses (Ex. 3).

The first four bars (mm. 125-128) are actually a variant of an accompaniment figure found earlier in the work (mm. 78-86, Ex. 4) also in the bass line.

Ex. 4. Second Movement, mm. 78-86, 1919 version.
movement theme. However, in the second instance (m. 125) only the first four bars follow the pattern of the earlier statement. In this variation, beginning in m. 129 the basses play a direct quotation of the “swan hymn.” This anticipation of the theme from the final movement does not appear at any time in the 1915 version – thus the appearance is a new idea on the composer’s part.

The third variation ends in m. 161, with a two bar transitional tag in the violins moving the music to the fourth variation. In the same vein as some of the smaller sections found in the previous three variations, the fourth is based on the variation of the rhythmic value rather than the melodic content. The melody is actually presented much more chromatically than previous statements, and throughout the variation there is not a single complete statement of the original melody. The fourth variation is also the shortest yet presented, only lasting seventeen bars (mm. 164-180) and presents no real transition between the fourth and fifth variation. The fifth variation begins in m. 181, dovetailing on the final fragment of the fourth. Again borrowing material from earlier variations, the triplet accompaniment has returned from variation three, this time set against both a melodic and rhythmic variation of the theme presented in the oboe. Like the variation immediately preceding, the total length is only seventeen bars. Unlike that same variation, there is a complete statement of the theme beginning in the oboe and moves to the strings for the last three bars of the theme. The fifth variation dovetails into the sixth and final variation which begins in m. 199. The sixth variation is totally based on orchestration; the melodic and rhythmic material is completely intact – the variation is found in the presentation – the strings are arco, not pizzicato as the theme is normally presented. After a complete statement of the theme which ends in m. 209, the composer ends the variation with a small coda-like tag that brings the movement to a close – the material is not distinct enough to be a true coda, and
should thus be considered part of the final variation. The purpose of the final five bars is to merely return the motivic material to the tonic pitch, this being a consequence of the melody being open-ended harmonically.
CHAPTER 3

FINAL MOVEMENT

In looking at both versions of the final movement, there are several notable changes between the two versions, both thematically and formally. Thematically, many of the changes that are in the 1919 version come from within the same movement found in the 1915 version – there is little new material that is not already present in the original version. Mostly, the material is reorganized and reorchestrated. There is also a more discernable difference in form:

1915 version:

**Introduction**: mm. 1-104
**Exposition**: mm. 105-236
  -transition mm. 198-236
**Development #1**: mm. 237-547
  -false recap of introduction at mm. 312-450
  -transition (bridge) mm. 451-483
**Development #2**: mm. 484-609
  -retransition mm. 582-609
**Recapitulation**: mm. 610-679

1919 version:

**Introduction**: mm. 1-104
**Exposition**: mm. 105-212
  -closing theme transition mm. 198-212
**Development**: mm. 213-371
  -false recap of introduction at m. 280-360
  -retransition mm. 361-371
**Recapitulation**: mm. 372-438
**Coda**: mm. 438-483

The function of the introduction and exposition are fundamentally the same in both versions; many of the major differences lie in their differences of orchestration as well as minor changes in presentation of thematic material, and these issues are discussed below. As indicated above, the greatest difference between the two versions is in the development of the movement. The 1915 version applies the use of a double developmental section – by this I mean that
Sibelius took material (in this case the material came from the introduction) and developed it fully with a closing retransition that normally would lead to the recapitulation. In this case, the retransition acts as a bridge between the developed material and a second development. The melodic content used for this retransition is a new melody not previously heard up to this moment in the movement. Sibelius then begins a second development using the material from the retransition/bridge, again developing it fully in the same manner as the first development, ending with a second retransition that this time leads to the recapitulation. The composer then truncates the recapitulation to a single statement of the melody from the exposition ending with a brass chorale version of the “swan hymn.”

In the 1919 version, Sibelius drastically changes the makeup and function of the development, moving from the double development model to a single development structure. This change actually begins in the exposition of the 1919 version with a change in the main countermelody set against the “swan hymn” (these changes are discussed in greater detail below) – the melody was originally the retransition/bridge found between the two developments in the 1915 version. Due to its inclusion in the exposition, the purpose of the melodic content is changed in the development. It is no longer a retransition/bridge and part of the development but now marks the opening of the recapitulation. This then extends the recapitulation of this version to multiple full statements of the material and allowed Sibelius to close the material harmonically and develop what was originally the end of the 1915 version (the brass chorale) into a separate and distinct coda.

Thematically, the opening material for both the 1915 and 1919 versions is based on the same motive and progression, but differs significantly in presentation. In the 1915 version, the main presentation of the thematic material is in the string section, with reinforcement in the
flutes, oboes, clarinets, and bassoons only occurring mm. 52-55 and mm 60-62. The first instance lasts four measures in length and the second lasts three measures. In the 1919 version, the scoring is vastly different. The later version opens in the same manner and is the same until m. 51, when the third horn enters on beat two on concert E-flat, doubling the tonic of the tonality and preparing the flutes, oboes, and clarinets for their entrance two bars later in m. 52 – mirroring the 1915 version. However, in m. 55 the upper woodwinds continue, the flutes doubling the first violin part, the oboes doubling the second violin part, and the clarinets holding a concert E-flat pedal until m. 58. Also in m. 52 the remaining three horn players enter, doubling the pitches of the violin sections down the octave. The scoring in the woodwinds at m. 62 matches the 1915 version, however Sibelius adds the horns to the sound, this time doubling the long tones in the viola part. At m. 63 he again differs from the 1915 scoring by adding the flutes and bassoons to double the main melodic line that is embedded in the cello part.

Another major difference first occurs at m. 77 in both versions. In the 1915 version, the melody restarts to the opening of the theme, mirroring mm. 1-22 with the addition of the cellos to the second half of the melody (taking the place of the violas). This leads into the presentation of the main “swan hymn” theme in m. 105. However, in the 1919 version the melody fragments the final section with repetition of the material found in mm. 63-66. In m. 84 the music transitions to the second half of the melody in a similar manner to the 1915 version. The scoring also differs here: the 1915 version is solely written for strings, but the 1919 version has the full woodwind section doubling the melodic content. This section is developmentally distinct from the 1915 version, but does end in the same time frame with the presentation of the “swan hymn” theme in m. 105.
The “swan hymn,” which acts as the main theme for the movement was inspired by a scene that Sibelius saw on one of his many walks around his home of Aniola. In his diary he writes:

Today at ten to eleven I saw 16 swans. One of my greatest experiences! Lord God, that beauty! They circled over me for a long time. Disappeared into the solar haze like a gleaming, silver ribbon. Their call the same woodwind type as that of cranes, but without tremolo. The swan-call closer to the trumpet although it’s obviously a sarrusophone sound. A low [-pitched] refrain reminiscent of a small child crying. Nature mysticism and life’s Angst! The Fifth Symphony’s finale-theme: Legato in the trumpets!! … That this should have happened to me, who have so long been the outsider. Have thus been in the sanctuary, today 21 April 1915.16

He wrote again on 24 April 1915:

The swans are always in my thoughts and give splendour to [my] life. [It’s] strange to learn that nothing in the whole world affects me – nothing in art, literature, or music – in the same way as do these swans and cranes and wild geese. Their voices and being apropos of [my] symphonies. To me they are confessions of faith from the different periods of my life. And from this it follows that my symphonies are all so different.17

The “swan hymn” is a three bar motive repeated four times (Ex. 5).

Ex. 5. Final Movement, mm. 105-116 “Swan Hymn” 1915 and 1919 versions.

It is heard for the first time in fragmentation during the opening material of the movement (for example see mm. 60-62 horn part in the 1919 version), but the full presentation comes at the close of the opening material in the horns one bar after rehearsal D. The theme is broken down into a single motive repeated four times with the first and third bar in each fragmented either descending (first three motive presentations) or ascending by step (fourth motive presentation). The scoring alternates the first and second horn with the third and fourth

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17 Ibid, 36-37.
horn in four bar sections – the fourth bar doubling the next presentation of the motive by the alternating players.

Against this “swan hymn” theme Sibelius set a counter melody in both versions. In the 1915 version, the theme is scored for flutes, oboes, and clarinets. In the 1919 version, the theme is similarly scored in the flutes, oboes, and clarinets, but also adds the cello section. The scoring difference is not the most remarkable issue concerning this section; the addition of the cello is merely to reinforce the lower octave due to register shift in the second clarinet part. The larger issue is the theme itself – namely that the 1915 and 1919 versions of the countermelody theme are completely different. The 1915 version (Ex. 6) is principally made up of longer tones outlining the harmonic progression of the “swan hymn,” albeit with some non-harmonic tones added. The scope of the melodic material is also longer; the first segment of the theme lasting 18 bars as opposed to the 9 bars in the 1919 theme.

Ex. 6. Final Movement, mm. 134-185, 1915 version.
Ex. 7. Final Movement, mm.129-206, 1919 version.

The 1919 theme (Ex. 7) functions more as a true countermelody, not limiting itself to outlining the harmonic progression of the ‘swan hymn.’ As mentioned above, it is broken down into smaller sections - the first two being 9 bars in length with the third making up 19 bars.

While the countermelody in differs in each version, the melody found in the 1919 version actually has its basis in the 1915 version (Ex. 8). The melody is found beginning at m. 415 in the 1915 version, and continues for fifty-five bars until m. 470. The function for the melody differs in the two – in the 1915 version the melody is presented during the last half of the first development before the transition to the second development. In the 1919 version, the melody serves as the opening of the recapitulation – albeit in the wrong key. Sibelius also modified the presentation of the melody; in the 1915 version the theme repeats the third motive as to structure the melody to a four motive figure before the key change in m. 463. In the 1919 version the melody is three motives before the key change in m. 165; there is no repetition of the third motive.

The 1919 version is also extended further beyond the key change in a fourth motive which is heard twice. In the 1915 version the only motive heard after the key change is a restatement of the first motive (mm. 415-423) with a displacement of the rests and changed values in the long tones. The last motive of each serves to define the function of the melody. In the earlier version, the restatement of the first motive leaves the melody open-ended harmonically and begins the movement of the retransition to the tonic key of E-flat major. In the 1919 version, the fourth motive is closed harmonically, having already established the movement of the tonality from E-flat major to C major.

The recapitulation also presents a change in function for the two versions. In the 1915 version of the final movement, the recap begins in m. 610 and lasts the remaining duration of the movement. The parallel section in the 1919 version actually starts earlier, due to the aforementioned melody that is used as the primary theme in the 1919 version but not in the 1915 version. There is also a coda present in the 1919 version of the symphony, yet the coda is lacking.
in the earlier work. The melodic content of the coda is present in the 1915 version, yet it does not
act as a coda because of its placement. In the 1915 version, the brass chorale takes the forefront
beginning in m. 623; however, the final statement of the melody is not yet complete. The first
fragment is heard in mm. 612-616 and the second in mm. 618-623. There is a gap beginning in
m. 623 where the chorale starts in the horns, trumpets and trombones and it is not until m. 624
that the final statement of the theme (the missing complete version of the “swan hymn”) is heard
in the brass. The movement ends with a massive dominant pedal in the woodwinds, horns, and
strings, punctuated by the trumpets and trombones in mm. 675 and 677. The last two measures of
the work are framed by a dominant-tonic cadence in the key of E-flat.

The 1919 version differs by offering similar material as the coda beginning m. 438. The
material is very similar to the 1915 version, only an orchestration change in the upper
woodwinds is present (the flutes are added to the brass chorale for harmonic support). Missing is
the figure from the 1915 version that begins in m. 652 and ends in m. 658. The material begins
with the cellos and the basses continuing the off-beat progression while the violins and violas
play repetitive scale passages ending on E-flat after several repetitions through E-flat major, C
minor, and A-Flat major. While the material is scored in a similar fashion to other Sibelius-style
transitions, the material is not transitory in nature because it begins in E-flat major and ends in
the same key. It could possibly be described as an elongated tag to the melody; however it bears
little resemblance to either the main melodic content of the section or the brass chorale. The last
eight measures of the 1919 are also significantly different from the earlier version; gone is the
elongated dominant pedal in the woodwinds, horns, and strings. The final bars now consist of six
quarter-note orchestral hits, the first on a second inversion E-flat major triad, followed by four B-
flat major dominant hits (the penultimate chord adding the seventh), followed by a perfect
authentic cadence in E-flat major in the last measure. Author Alex Ross writes about the last eight bars of the 1919 version that “the symphony ends with six far-flung chords, through which the main theme shoots like a pulse of energy. The swan becomes the sun.” This idea, while valid, needs to be taken a step further. The chords at the end of the 1919 version exist for the purpose of breaking the pattern – the swan does not merely become the sun, but becomes all encompassing. Without the breaking of the pattern the swans (and thus the inherent sanctity that Sibelius assigns them) cannot transubstantiate beyond their ceaseless circling the sky. Further, breaking the bonds that hold them to this effort is in some way Sibelius’s own admission of independence from the music of Europe – a comparison which he no longer wants nor needs.

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CHAPTER 4
INTERLUDE

The final two movements of the Fifth Symphony in both the 1915 and 1919 versions bear some striking similarities in the usage and placement of thematic material while showing a remarkable difference in the large scale of the individual movements. In the case of the final movement, the move was from a more complicated form – the use of a double development in the 1915 version – to a more simplified form in the use of a single development with the addition of a coda. The inner movement of the two versions worked in the opposite manner; the 1915 version was a constant variation form whereas the 1919 version was a formal theme and variations where the ground bass from the earlier movement was set to both rhythmic and melodic changes. The sophistication of each version is easily evident – and shows an insight into the composer’s process of composition and revision. The most evident example is the elevation of the transitional theme found in the development of the last movement of the 1915 version from a secondary developmental idea to the primary countermelody of the entire movement. Further examples lie in the expanded use of the “swan hymn” in not only the final movement but also the appearance of the theme in the inner movement of the 1919 version. However, these changes do not take the step of altering the form of the work as a whole. The inner movement is still a variation form; the final movement is still in sonata-allegro format. The fact is clear - Sibelius felt the need to bring certain themes and ideas to the forefront as well as abandon others threads. However, the changes stop short of true replacement; rather, they are sophisticated forms of revision. The greatest challenge was to take the first two movements - two separate, distinct forms and to blend them together into something new… yet something familiar.
CHAPTER 5
FIRST MOVEMENT

Questions regarding the form of the first movement and whether it is best considered as a single movement, dual movement, or something in between has been the topic of debate among musicologists since the 1930’s. In 1935, Sibelian scholar Cecil Gray wrote about the Fifth Symphony:

…the first movement definitely falls into two strongly contrasted sections in such a way that it is possible to regard them as two separate movements playing without a break, like the last two movements of the Second Symphony. Support for this contention may be found in the fact that the letters inserted in the score at various intervals for the purposes of rehearsal stop short with N and begin again with A at the very point where the second section begins; but this is not conclusive, because if the lettering had been continued in the normal way the letter Z would have been reached before the end of the movement.19

Gray goes on to state that the question cannot be definitively answered because of the lack of response by the composer on the subject. He also puts forth the idea that the reason for the success of the Second Symphony and its interlinking material was found in the fact that the two movements were thematically distinct.20 Thus he concludes that this movement can only be viewed as a single movement. As far as a form of the work, Gray stops short of placing a label. He discusses the single germ on which the theme (and by extension, the movement as a whole) is generated. He does concede that the second half of the movement could be conceivably viewed as a scherzo – however, that label is arbitrary as it is not a true descriptor of the musical motion.21

In the same year as Gray penned his book, Donald Tovey was at work compiling scores of program notes he had written into a series of books entitled Essays in Musical Analysis. In the entry concerning the Fifth Symphony, Tovey has no real discussion on a formal analysis of the

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid, 48.
first movement in regards to either a single or dual movement. However, he does list the work as a three movement symphony. Like Gray, he does not try and apply any type of formal label, again limiting the discussion to the motive in the opening of the work and its transformations. Unlike Gray, he labels the second half of the movement as a “dance-like tune in B Major,”22 but goes no further beyond that statement.

In 1947, Gerald Abraham, another noted Sibelian scholar offered up another view of the work, and was one of the first musicologists to try and begin to formally define the movement. Early in the section concerning the Fifth Symphony, he does take note of the fact that “no one seems to be quite sure whether it should be regarded as one movement or two”23. He then goes on to quantify his belief that the movement does constitute a single movement based on the tempo relationship between the triple meter section and the opening of the movement. He gives the following rough outline of the movement:

\[ \text{Tempo molto moderato}^{24} \]
Exposition: mm.1-35
Repeat of Exposition: mm. 36-70
Development: mm. 71-114

\[ \text{Allegro molto} \]
(Beginning of triple meter section)
Scherzo: mm. 115-209
Trio: mm. 209-297

Section corresponding to scherzo-repeat and recapitulation: mm. 297-596

In the above diagram, Abraham suggests that Sibelius has embedded a scherzo based on the theme of the exposition in the development of the movement. Further, that this scherzo (and its resulting trio and \textit{da capo} movement) spills over to the recapitulation of the work. The

\[ \text{\small 22 Donald Tovey, Essays in Musical Analysis, London: Oxford University Press, 1935: 498.} \]
\[ \text{\small 24 Ibid, 30.} \]
problem of this assertion is in the treatment of the melodic material and whether it constitutes a repeat of the exposition and if the label of a true scherzo and trio holds up to formal analysis.

Eight years later another Sibelian scholar, Simon Parmet, discussed the Fifth Symphony in his book *The Symphonies of Sibelius: A Study of Musical Appreciation*. This book marks one of the first major attempts to collate the scholarship previously written and answer to the best of its ability the question of the form of the first movement. He contradicts Gray when he writes: “The two parts together forming the first movement are in fact two quite different, but nevertheless related, worlds. Furthermore, their formal structures follow quite different principles.” He also cites a letter from the hand of Sibelius in 1918 as definitive proof at the dual movement classification of the music in question:

The Fifth Symphony in a new form – practically composed anew, I work at it daily. Movement I entirely new, Movement II reminiscent of the old, Movement III reminiscent of the end of the first movement of the old. Movement IV the old motifs, but stronger in revision.

He finally calls upon the program of the premiere in 1915 to justify his assertion of the dual movement idea. However, the flaw in this final point is the evidence that this program does not correlate to the final version of the work in 1919 – further, in regards to the above letter, Parmet does not take into account that Sibelius could be writing about the lost second version of the symphony which was premiered in 1916. In fact, none of the scholarship up to and including this time seems to take into any consideration at all the existence of the revisions in 1916 or 1919; the authors speak of the work as a final product beginning in 1915. This omission does not make sense in the case of Gray, Abraham, and Parmet – each were present at the 1915 premiere as well as the 1919 revised premiere.

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26 Ibid, 67.
Parmet goes further by writing: “… we [referring to himself and Erik Furuhjelm] were both present at the first performance in December 1915, and at the first performance of the second version in 1916.” He goes on to talk about the addition of a “discreet bridge” between the movements in the 1916 performance which was carried through to the 1919 version. Beyond mentioning in passing that there seemed to be a reworking of the themes in the final movement, there is no further discussion of an acute awareness of any other substantive changes.

Parmet also dives in to a formal classification of the movement. He dismisses Abraham’s classification of the second half of the movement a scherzo because, beyond the triple meter of the section, the section has little to do with the definition of the form. He instead tries to classify it as a toccata with the claim that the scope of the melody does not have the characteristics of the playful nature found in the scherzo. As far as the form of the first movement, he claims that the section shows the sonata form “in miniature,” but does not clarify beyond the statement; like the previous scholars, he limits himself to discussing motivic placement within the section and not anything in a larger scale.

Finally, there is the most recent scholarship on the Fifth Symphony from James Hepokoski. Unlike any previous major writings on the symphony, Hepokoski takes into consideration in a detailed fashion all three versions of the work, but only places formal labels on the 1919 version. In his analysis, he does not consider the issue of a single movement or double movement with linking material; rather, he ventures into a completely new realm of analysis of the work – namely, rotational form. Groves Music Online defines rotational form in the entry on Jean Sibelius as “cumulative meditations – recurrent revisiting of past cycles, transforming and gathering new ideas as they proceed – which may or may not be set in tension with the

27 Ibid, 70.
28 Ibid, 71.
expectations of sonata expositions, developments and/or recapitulations.\textsuperscript{29}” In his writings, Hepokoski claims that the Fifth Symphony is completely in rotational form. In the same Grove article, Hepokoski elaborates further:

Sibelius typically coupled rotational form with the principle of teleological genesis: the gradual awakening of a climactic goal-utterance (telos) – the more fully awakened ‘Being’ of nature – near the end of the piece. The free-rotational principle offered maximal formal freedom while encouraging new, coherently disciplined shapes. In most cases, the thematic ordering of the initial rotation remained relatively constant throughout the later cycles, though elements could be expanded or deleted or new ones added.\textsuperscript{30}

The problem with this assertion is in Sibelius’s own words in 1907 when, in an oft quoted conversation with fellow composer Gustav Mahler, Sibelius said that he considered the essence of the genre of the symphony to be its “severity and style and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motifs.”\textsuperscript{31} It seems strange that a composer could completely change his attitude within a period of eight years to become a polar opposite to his original intentions.

Within five noted scholars – Gray, Tovey, Abraham, Parmet, and Hepokoski – there are five differing views on the form of the first movement and whether it is a single movement or a double movement with linking material. Even with the removal of Tovey, the four remaining Sibelian scholars disagree on the form. And while three (Hepokoski, Abraham, and Gray) all agree that the section in question does in fact comprise a single movement, only Hepokoski actually tries to define the formal analysis of his argument. The remaining author (Parmet) argues that there is a two movement setup with linking material – but does not define beyond basic labels on each of the two movements (sonata and toccata, respectively). And all four make the basis of their claims solely based on the 1919 version, either ignoring outright the existence

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
of the 1915 version (Gray, Parmet, and to a degree Abraham) or not using it in comparison with
the final version (Hepokoski) to see if any additional clues could be found to help codify the
form and movement questions.

It is my belief that Parmet is correct in his assertions: the Fifth Symphony is best
classified as a four movement work, and by extension – that the first movement is indeed two
separate movements with linking material. Further, the assertion that Parmet makes in labeling
the second movement a toccata I believe is also correct, but not for the reasons he states.
Ultimately, understanding the form of the 1919 version is reliant on the study of the 1915 version
– which provides clues to classifying the final version.

The 1915 version begins with the motivic cell that spurs the basis of the melodic material
for the rest of the movement, as well as providing the basis of the thematic material for the
second movement (Ex. 9).

Ex. 9 – Flutes, m. 1, First Movement, 1915 version.

\[\text{Ex. 9 – Flutes, m. 1, First Movement, 1915 version.}\]

It appears in m. 1 in the flutes and is passed to the oboes in m. 2. Immediately, Sibelius
begins to expand the theme from a three note gesture to a four note gesture in m. 3 (again,
immediately echoed by the oboes in m. 4). This call and answer between the flutes and oboes
continues with successive unfolding of the germ motive: in mm. 5-6 the motive unfolds into a
nine note gesture, in m. 7-8 it becomes an eleven note phrase. By m. 10 (Ex. 10), the germ has
developed into a complete melodic gesture – again, first in the flutes and echoed in the oboes.
Ex. 10. Flutes, mm. 10-11, First Movement, 1915 version.

\[\text{Ex. 10. Flutes, mm. 10-11, First Movement, 1915 version.}\]
Beginning in m. 15 (Ex. 11), the horns enter on a separate unfolding of the germ into a chorale/fanfare figure that will figure more prominently later on in the 1919 version. The brass statement in mm. 15-17 also acts as a small transition, leading to the second section of the exposition of the movement. Like the opening section, the thematic material of the section is generated from a single germ motive found in the flutes.

Ex. 11. Flutes, m. 19, First Movement, 1915 version.

The pattern of development does not hold true to the first section; the thematic material is now traded off between the flutes in m. 19 and the violins in mm. 20-22. This is traded back to the oboes and clarinets in mm. 22-23. Also different from the treatment of the first germ is the rate of development – in this instance, the germ is unfolding much more rapidly as seen in the flutes (introducing the germ in a single bar) and taken up by the violins (in an unfolding gesture of three bars) and then passed to the oboes and clarinets (a new unfolding of two bars). The violins again take up what is now a fully developed theme in mm. 24-27 which, at least on the surface, appears to be a type of amalgamation of the statements found in the violins in mm. 20-22 and the woodwinds in mm. 22-23. In m. 28 the closing section of the exposition begins with a short transition to the closing theme which is heard beginning in m. 31 (Ex. 12).

Ex. 12. Closing theme, mm. 31-34, First Movement, 1915 version.
The instrumental texture throughout the second section of the exposition is a Sibelian standard – massed string sound against solo declarations in the winds and brass – and continues as the harmonic basis of the development section.

The development organizes the melodic development in the same order as the original presentation of the themes in the exposition. The first germ motive is put through a series of transformations. In mm. 36-45 the motive is embellished into the same four note theme heard earlier and elongated, with each statement lasting two bars instead of the single bar duration of the exposition. Also, each presentation is now dovetailed against the previous statement of the same theme, creating a further temporal elongation of the melody. In mm. 47-60 there is a further elaboration of the melodic figure – adding the 16th note runs found in the final presentation of the first germ in the exposition. Again, like the first section of the development, there is a dovetailing gesture between the flutes, oboes, and clarinets that seems to elongate the melodic gesture of the 16th note runs. The second section of the development begins in m. 60 in the clarinets. This section is firmly devoted to the second germ motive, and most closely resembles the presentation found beginning in m. 20 in the oboes and clarinets. Unlike the first section of the development, each statement of the melody is heard without any overlap or dovetailing effect. The retransition to the recapitulation begins in m. 70 with the same duple meter movement found in the closing theme of the exposition – but, in the vein of the development, the motive is elongated and occurs only on the last half of mm. 70 and 71. The recapitulation begins in m. 83, and moves directly to the second germ motive in a bassoon solo that lasts until m. 92. The first germ motive is not heard again in a complete fashion, there are small fragments of the theme heard in the horns at m. 99 and the strings at m. 104. Combining the two (although there is no overlap or aural connection between the two) does complete the
largest of the presentations of the first germ found in the exposition. However, with the music of the second germ motive coming in between the two sections, it is aurally difficult to place these two sections together into the larger whole.

The second movement of the 1915 version is more difficult to classify. The movement is in a quick triple meter, but does not display the obvious characteristics of a scherzo; there is no trio nor a definite return to what would be considered the “A” section material. In his analysis of the work, Abraham classifies the movement as a toccata. Groves Online defines a toccata as “a piece intended primarily as a display of manual dexterity, often free in form.” However, the same article in Groves cites that the form is primarily intended as a solo keyboard form. The article continues: “Its characteristics of display are found in such forms as the exercise and study, while its rhythmic and formal freedom are embodied in the capriccio and rhapsody. Its one more or less stable characteristic, that of continuous movement in short note values, is shared with the moto perpetuo as well as with numerous works and movements that have no special title.” The second movement does fit the second definition of toccata despite not being composed for keyboard solo. The eighth note figuration (which becomes quarter note figuration in the last section of the movement) remains constant throughout and forms a “dexterous” basis for the melodic accompaniment. Unlike the first movement, the melodic content of the second is presented as a full statement in the opening bars, no longer relying on the idea of unfolding a musical germ in order to present the melodic content and its development. The opening melody first appears in the violins (Ex. 13).

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33 Ibid.
A second melody (which is related motivically to the first) is found soon after, first in the cellos and then passed to the violins (Ex. 14). When comparing this theme to the final unfolding of the first germ motive in the opening movement there seems to be a definite relationship.

The two themes are repeated several times until m 113, when the bass line from mm. is repeated and expanded as melodic content in counterpoint to the first theme. In m. 125, the composer begins a curious process: he combines elements from the first two themes to form a new hybrid theme (Ex. 15).

Unlike the first two themes (which have, until this point been presented unbroken), Sibelius treats this third theme in a much more motivically, breaking it down into two two-measure blocks that he places in counterpoint against the first theme; then presents the blocks as a transitional figure (beginning in m. 135) that leads back to a strong restatement of the first theme in m. 148. A rhythmic variant of the first theme is presented for the first time in m. 169;
this is the first instance in the movement where either of the first two themes is presented in any sort of variant form while retaining the character of the original. This variant is used to begin a large developmental-like section that focuses primarily on the first and third themes. Again, the first theme is presented (whether in the original or rhythmic variants) completely, whereas the third theme is commonly broken down into the two-measure blocks established earlier in the movement. In m. 251, the music moves to a more stable platform, and returns to the key of E-flat; however, the first thematic statement is of the rhythmic variant of the first theme. This only lasts for a short time before delving back into a final developmental episode which begins in m. 303 and ends in m. 382 with a dominant key transition back to E-flat and the unvariated version of the first theme. At this point, the eighth note figuration has been replaced with a quarter note figuration – aurally very little has changed as the final transition also includes an accelerando that increases the tempo to almost double that of the opening. The last section presents the first theme only and places a greater emphasis on the figuration in the strings which emphasizes the melodic content of the woodwinds and brass.

In the 1919 version of the work the division of the two movements is eliminated and replaced by a bridge linking the two sections. However, they do retain their independence despite a closer proximity. This phenomenon of linking movements together has a strong president in both the genre as well as the composer’s output. In his own Fifth Symphony Ludwig van Beethoven links the third and fourth movement together with bridge material that later comes back in the retransition to the recapitulation of the fourth movement. In Sibelius’s own output, there is an additional example: in the Second Symphony, there is also a thematic bridge between the third and fourth movements; much like the Beethoven example, the bridge functions as a transition from one movement to the other in a harmonic sense. In contrast, the bridge is not
placed within the confines of either movement – it exists outside of the two, linking them together with elements from taken from each. This is the same technique Sibelius uses in the Fifth Symphony to link the first and second movements. Like the Second Symphony, it uses elements of both the first and second movements but is not to be placed within the confines of either.

Since this movement has been traditionally viewed as a single entity, looking at the 1915 version gives greater insight into the form of the two movements now that they can be viewed as distinct and independent. While the smaller scale details differ, the larger forms have remained the same.

The 1919 version opens with a two measure horn call that is not present at the opening of the 1915 version (Ex. 16).

Ex. 16. First Movement, mm. 1-2, 1919 version.

\[\text{Ex. 16. First Movement, mm. 1-2, 1919 version.}\]

This horn call is taken from a two measure transitional theme in the 1915 version (Ex. 17).

Ex. 17. First Movement, m. 17, 1915 version.

\[\text{Ex. 17. First Movement, m. 17, 1915 version.}\]
The material from the 1915 version is based on an unfolding of the original germ motive. In m. 3 of the 1919 version the same germ motive is presented, and it is unfolded in the same manner as its 1915 counterpart: in m. 3 the germ is presented in the flutes and oboes and then echoed in the flutes and clarinets. In m. 5 the oboes unfold the germ into a four note motive, which is echoed a measure later by the clarinets. The germ is fully developed into a melodic line by m. 9 where the flutes take up the theme, followed two measures later by the oboes; they are followed two bars later by the clarinets (who echo the second half of the melody played by the oboes). The second theme is presented in m. 21 by the flutes, oboes and clarinets over a four measure phrase. Unlike both the previous germ and the 1915 version, the second theme is presented fully unfolded and developed – however, it is based on the same germ motive found in the 1915 version; it is merely the full presentation found at the end of the earlier usage (in the 1915 version). The presentation is also truncated in comparison to the earlier version; the theme is not passed around the woodwind section, but merely stated in the *tutti* woodwinds. A transitional passage begins in m. 28 with a duple figure moving in the woodwinds brass and strings – however, the string duple figures are displaced by one sixteenth note to deny a stability to the passage. Like the 1915 version, a closing theme is included; the theme is the same in both versions (see Ex. 12). The development begins in m. 36 in a similar manner to the 1915 version – first breaking down and developing the first germ motive and then the second (the second can be found beginning in m. 52). Also like the earlier work, the string figuration underneath the melodic content is constant and primarily intended for harmonic support. In m. 62 the development seems to come to an end with the retransition, mimicking the duple figure transition of the exposition and once again including the closing theme. However, in this instance, Sibelius extends the development after the material that should be the retransition by including a brief
developmental episode on the closing theme, beginning in the strings in m. 72. The melodic motion in the strings breaks down in m. 80, and the theme is taken up by a lone bassoon which finishes the development of the closing theme and closes out the section. The recapitulation begins in m. 92 in the same manner as the 1915 version – with the second theme. Unlike the 1915 version – the first theme is not heard again in the movement. Instead of closing the movement with the brief figuration of the original germ (as he did in the 1915 version), Sibelius moves us away from E-flat with a passage in the brass that points to B Major.

Ex. 18. First Movement, mm. 103-106, 1919 version.

The recapitulation of the first movement is unfulfilled as there is no statement of the first theme – however, it is heard again in the bridge that links the first and second movements. The bridge begins in the key of B Major, and the melodic material is based off the first germ motive (Ex. 19). The fanfare in the trumpets mimics the first statement of the germ as well as the first unfolding. In m. T5, Sibelius begins to bring in elements of the second movement to begin the transition to that movement. These small motives appear in the flutes, oboes, and clarinets and are related to the first germ motive (specifically the final unfolding) but are distinct in pitch content and phrasing. The meter changes from 12/8 to 3/4 but the change is not immediately apparent because of the figuration in the strings – at the opening of the transition the string section move to a 6/4 duple pattern with the lower strings (cellos and basses) on the beat and the upper strings (violins and violas) on the off-beats. In the 3/4 section the pattern continues, but is now broken into four measure phrases until the beginning of the second movement at rehearsal
letter A in the score. The effect of this continuation of the figure is one of obscuring the shift from the larger quadruple motion of the first movement to the scherzo-like triplet motion of the second.

Ex. 19. 1919 version, m. T1-T6 (T=transition).

The second movement of the 1919 version is similar to the 1915 version with regards to form – the movement is still a toccata in the style of a scherzo. The thematic material is once again based on the motive found in Ex. 13 and can be seen beginning in m. 13 in the strings – mm. 1-12 are introductory in nature taking the finished transition from the bridge and replaying it in the correct meter. After cycling the opening theme through several keys, the movement returns to E-flat Major in m. 29. In this version, Sibelius does not use the second theme (Ex. 14), instead he moves to the “hybrid” theme (Ex. 15) and treats this theme in the same manner as he
does the first – breaking it down and processing it harmonically, ultimately using it to transition back to the key of B Major. At m. 89 he introduces a new theme, first heard in the trumpet (Ex. 20).

Ex. 20. Second Movement, mm. 89-101, 1919 version.

After the initial introduction and repeat of the theme by the horn section, there is a developmental episode in the style of the previous developments (fragmentation and harmonic development) until m. 165, where fragments from both the first and hybrid themes are reintroduced and combined with fragments of the second theme in a new developmental episode. He contrasts this in m. 225 with a contrapuntal section in the strings based on the opening of the second theme. This is the longest developmental episode of the movement, lasting until the beginning of the final transition which begins in m. 358. A brief quote of the opening fanfare from the first movement can be heard in mm. 364-367 in the trumpets. In m. 376, the first theme can be heard once more in the final presto section – this section closely follows the 1915 version and ends in the same manner.

When compared, the two versions show a larger relationship with regard to thematic material, and more importantly – the two versions correspond in the large scale form. In the 1915 version, there is a definite break between the first and second movements – a sonata and toccata form, respectively. In the 1919 version, when examined closely, the forms are still present and their application makes musical sense. The difference lies in the presence of a bridge that connects the first and second movements. This bridge is distinct and separate from the
movements it connects and while related to each movement, it does not factor into the individual formal analyses. What was considered one movement is actually two, and this can be shown from the above look at the 1915 version, which served as a basis for the final work.
CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY

The genesis of the 1919 version of Fifth Symphony has definite roots in the original premiered version of 1915 and the two are linked in a larger gesture – form. In each movement, there are benchmarks that correspond from each version: each of the first movements is in sonata form; each of the second movements is in toccata form; the third movements are both variation forms – the 1915 version a passacaglia, the 1919 version a theme and variations; the final movements are both in sonata form. Looking at the smaller details reveals a wealth of information about the compositional process of both the work and the composer in general. In most instances, the changes are shown to be revisional in nature. This is the case in the first movement – thematically both versions correspond and no new material is seen between the two. It is in the presentation that the two differ, with greater emphasis on certain aspects in each. The fourth movement can be seen as a larger revision, but it also stands as a good insight into Sibelius’s use of thematic material and how it is developed. A transitional theme in the 1915 version, when substituted for a previously written theme, changes the development and the recapitulation of the movement entirely. The ultimate point is that there is enough corresponding material found in both versions that the former can be used as a tool to help define the latter. In the 1915 version there are four distinct movements, each separated by a pause. In the 1919 version, there is no pause between the first and second movements, and it has been shown above that the two versions correspond in form. Therefore, the connecting material must be considered a distinct bridge that links the two, yet they still retain their individuality.
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--------- ------. *Symphony No. 5 in E-Flat Major, Op. 82*. 1915 manuscript, black and white reproduction from the Sibelius Museum. Used with permission of the Sibelius Family Collegium, Helsinki, Finland.


