SIBELIUS’S SEVENTH SYMPHONY:
GENESIS, DESIGN, STRUCTURE, AND MEANING

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This study explores Sibelius’s last and, perhaps, most enigmatic Symphony from historical (source-critical), Schenkerian, and transtextual perspectives. Through a detailed study of its genesis, musical architecture, and meaning, the author maintains that the Seventh, its composer, and its generative process, can best be understood as a series of verges: conceptual points of interaction between two or more forces. Verges between Sibelius’s nature mysticism and the dramatic biographical circumstances of the period (1914-1924), between inspired and reasoned modes of composition, between genres (symphony and fantasy), between various form types, between tragic despair and hopeful yearning, between innovation and classicism, and between a host of other seeming oppositions, all define the Seventh Symphony and illuminate various facets of the composer’s life and thought.
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By

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Finally I would like to acknowledge the continual inspiration I receive from all those artists, from Jean Sibelius to Johnny Cash, who created without compromise.
What are your forms to me? This is nothing to do with form: it has to do with life and death.

Jean Sibelius

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CHAPTER 1
SIBELIUS ON THE VERGE:
NATURE MYSTICISM AND DOMESTIC DRAMA

Am worn out and worried about my work – the new piece! Alcohol, which I gave up, is now my most faithful companion. And the most understanding! Everything and everyone else have largely failed me. Can I hold out until next February, that’s the question?¹

These words, written in November of 1923, betray the deep anxiety Sibelius felt about so many facets of his life during the final years of the Seventh Symphony’s lengthy genesis. Numerous diary entries from this period bear witness to a profound crisis. Indeed, the occasional surrender to alcohol only increased Sibelius’s already high level of anxiety over his own mortality, his ability to provide emotional and financial support for Aino (his wife) and their daughters, his place in the musical marketplace, his lack of confidence in his own compositions, an obsession with finding the “true” musical setting for his themes, and any number of other matters. Each of these matters functioned as both cause and effect of the general malaise that colored Sibelius’s life in the late teens and early twenties. Heroically, he was also able to rise above this debilitating self-criticism to produce his final series of masterpieces (the Fifth through Seventh Symphonies, Tapiola, and the Tempest). Though it had been like this earlier in his career (in 1907, for example, amid work on the Third Symphony), the dark days preceding the Seventh’s completion – he would call them his darkest – ushered in an intensity of self-doubt unknown in the past.

While Aino had always sacrificed so much to keep her husband on his artistic path, she now – no doubt inspired by her embarrassment over his drunken appearance on the podium in early 1923 – vowed, through the veil of a hand delivered formal letter, to excuse herself from the premiere of his new Symphony (slated for March of 1924 in Sweden). She also warned him that

¹ Diary entry dated 11 November 1923. ETL III, 241.
such excesses would lead only to artistic paralysis and further alienation from family life. His remarks on drinking and self-criticism often betrayed a deep sense of guilt and a desire to improve his lot, as two confessional diary entries from this period reveal:

[3 October 1923] Life for me is over. If I’m in good spirits and have a glass or two I suffer for it long afterwards. That dreadful depression – which Aino cannot understand but which I have inherited. It’s this timidity, or the fact that I lack self confidence, that means that Aino and the children never get enough support in life.

[6 January 1924] Aino has been badly ill for some time. She is at the end of her tether. I won’t get my pieces ready now. Hope that at least one of them will be finished. That is imperative. But I am on the wrong rails. Alcohol to calm the nerves and state of mind. How dreadful old age is for a composer. Things don’t go as quickly as they used to, and self-criticism grows to impossible proportions.

All of this not only colored daily life at home – the considerable tension between husband and wife piled atop the pressures of finishing a Symphony – but it also insinuated itself into the very fabric of the Seventh Symphony itself.

But the domestic drama unfolding within the rustic walls of Sibelius’s rural villa “Ainola” – literally “the place where Aino dwells” – was not the only semantic force that found musical expression in the Seventh Symphony. Instead, the natural drama of the surrounding forest – the changes in season, the imagery of the night sky, the natural cycles of birth, decay and rebirth, and so on – flowed freely into the semantic universe of the Seventh. In part, this imagery informs the unique sound world of Sibelius’s late music: “When we see those granite rocks [of Finland],” he once exclaimed, “we know why we are able to treat the orchestra as we do!”

More importantly, however, Sibelius was well attuned to the processes of the natural world more than the raw “Still-life” images themselves. A life of committed meditation on these processes imbedded his late masterpieces with a nature-mystical philosophy on life and the very nature of

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2 Ibid, 240.
3 Ibid., 243.
musical form and structure. Indeed, not only was nature a semantic force in the Seventh Symphony, its processes were the inspiration for the musical processes themselves. This theme was emphasized in numerous letters, interviews and diary entries. Later in life, for example, he confided the following thoughts to his personal secretary, Santeri Levas:

> It is often thought that the essence of symphony lies in its form, but this is certainly not the case. The content is always the primary factor, while form is secondary, the music itself determining its outer form. If sonata form has anything that is lasting it must come from within. When I consider how musical forms are established I frequently think about the ice-ferns which, according to eternal laws, the frost makes into the most beautiful patterns.5

In light of this, in order to broach the subject of Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony – its genesis, form, structure, and meaning – we must view both nature and human drama through the windows of Ainola – from both the inside looking out and the outside looking in. By continually moving between domestic drama and nature mysticism we may come closer to the vantage point from which Sibelius composed his best music; the place where, or the moment in which, nature mysticism and domestic drama become one indivisible entity.

Daniel J. Boorstin, an eminent American historian, has hypothesized that creativity in American life – in its art and social/political institutions – has typically taken place on what he terms the “Fertile Verge.”6 In his words, a verge is “a place of encounter between something and something else.”7 The first centuries of American history witnessed “all sorts of verges, between kinds of landscape or seascape, between stages of civilization, between ways of thought and ways of life” and we “experienced more different kinds of verges, and more extensive and more vivid verges, than any other modern great nation.”8 While all of this may seem out of place in the present Sibelian context, it is, in fact, directly relatable. The essence of Boorstin’s theory

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7 Ibid., xv.
8 Ibid., xv.
forms the heart of this study on Sibelius and his Seventh Symphony. Indeed, both composer and composition can best be understood from the vantage point of the verge – or any number of verges, for that matter. Verges between nature mysticism and domestic drama, between inspired and reasoned modes of composition, between genres (symphony and fantasy), between any number of form types, between tragic despair and hopeful yearning, between innovation and classicism, and between a host of other seeming oppositions all define the Seventh Symphony and illuminate various facets of the composer’s life and thought. It is the express purpose of this study to visit these verges, isolate their constituent strands and, ultimately, come to view the Symphony not as a paradoxical series of “both-ands,” but as a beautiful, unified utterance, the expression of a composer on the verge.

Boorstin’s theory of American creativity is also particularly useful to the present context because Finland, during Sibelius’s lifetime, was very much a nation on the verge. In fact, Sibelius’s generation played a major role in the creation of a new nation with its own distinct cultural accomplishments. As is well documented, the creativity inherent in such accomplishments grew organically out of any number of “fertile verges”: between Swedish-speaking and Finnish-speaking Finland, between the rule of Sweden and Russia (which eventually gave way to self-rule), between continental European cultural establishments and idiosyncratic domestic institutions and folkways, and so on. Boorstin identifies three characteristic ways of thinking and feeling on the verge: an “exaggerated self-awareness,” an “openness to novelty and change,” and “a strong community-consciousness.”

While the first two categories are certainly pertinent to the Seventh Symphony, taken as a whole they fit the early years of Sibelius’s maturity (the 1890s) when he, along with a number of distinguished peers, were forging a unique, Nordic brand of Symbolism.

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9 Ibid., xvii.
It is now imperative that we revisit those early years before turning to the nature of the Seventh Symphony because, as Sibelius scholar Veijo Murtomäki has argued:

...Sibelius’s output as a whole forms a cycle, an arc returning to its origins. The same features which at first glance seem to be closely associated with the younger Sibelius’s “national romantic” works – Kullervo, En Saga, the four Lemminkäinen legends for orchestra – come to the surface once again in the composer’s late music.10

In 1894 the Helsinki cultural establishment was somewhat scandalized by the appearance of Akseli Gallen-Kallela’s infamous painting Symposion: The Problem.11 Depicted here we find three of Finland’s most promising and notable artistic sons drunk and bleary-eyed, mesmerized by a winged apparition whose identity lies beyond the canvas’s left border. Amidst realistically depicted half-full glasses and empty bottles and set against a highly evocative Symbolist background, sit (from right to left) Jean Sibelius, the composer-conductor Robert Kajanus, an already passed out figure (probably the composer Oskar Merikanto), and standing among them is the painter himself. The title, of course, stems from the ancient Greek gatherings made famous by Plato where intellectuals were brought together by thoughtful discussion and alcohol.12 It was this same confluence of cogitation and drink that accounted for so many legendary nights amongst Helsinki’s young artistic elite between the years 1892 and 1895. Sibelius, Gallen-Kallela, and Kajanus formed the center of this group that often included the writer Adolf Paul and composer-conductor Armas Järnefelt (also Sibelius’s brother-in-law). A deep and lasting community-consciousness was forged during these liquid evenings.

Far from being a mere scandal provoking caricature, Gallen-Kallela’s painting may be viewed as nothing less than an intoxicated manifesto of the conceptual aims shared by the

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11 This painting is reproduced in many Sibelius biographies. Most recently, James Hepokoski included it in his Sibelius article in The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, 2nd ed., 324.
12 This connection is made in Kirk Varnedoe, Northern Light: Realism and Symbolism in Scandinavian Painting 1880-1910 (New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1982), 118. The homo-erotic connotations of the original Symposium were not part of this later group.
Symposion artists. The painting’s constituent ideas and attitudes form the major conceptual threads that each individual artist would weave into his own highly expressive texts. These interrelated conceptual threads: symbolism, nature mysticism, Eros philosophy and national romanticism – which for the Finns was closely bound to the Kalevala and Karelianism – would find synthesis in the most profound utterances of Gallen-Kallela and Sibelius. In essence, the Symbolist project was marked by a bold determination to move beyond the recent Naturalist trend of portraying the natural world mimetically to a more imaginative approach whereby natural imagery was employed to project personal feelings. An “exaggerated self-awareness” on the most intimate psychological level naturally grew out of this new attitude. Corresponding to this was a shift in emphasis from depiction of nature as it exists to a focus on nature as process. The influential Swedish painter Richard Bergh summed up the ideals of the Nordic Symbolists as follows:

To interpret this intractable nature with the brush one must not only open one’s eyes but also understand the importance of sometimes closing them, to dream about what one saw, to poeticize it...

Along with a unity of nature meditation and personal reflection, there was an emphasis on Eros philosophy – gleaned from the writings of Schopenhauer, Stanislaw Przybyszewski, and the music and writing of Richard Wagner – among these artists. The young Finns came to view, as art historian Salme Sarajas-Korte has observed, “sexuality as the creative and cohesive force of the universe and, as such, the prerequisite of both life and art.” While Sibelius was working on his abandoned Kalevala-inspired opera project, The Building of the Boat, in 1893 and while he was anxiously struggling with the influence of Wagner, he wrote the following

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13 Scandinavian approaches to Symbolism are discussed at length in Michelle Facos, Nationalism and the Nordic Imagination: Swedish Art of the 1890s (Berkley: University of California Press, 1998), 117-135.
14 Quoted in Ibid., 131.
16 Sarajas-Korte, Gallén’s Swan Symbolism, 55.
overtly Wagnerian statement: “Music is like a woman; it must be impregnated by a man. This man is Poësis.”¹⁷ Similarly, Gallen-Kallela wrote the following to his mother-in-law in 1894: “How I will take pleasure in the opportunity to create art again; it is like – pardon the expression – a thousand wedding nights to come. Whoever knows that art and religion are one will understand this.”¹⁸ Indeed, as we will see, the erotic and the religious were two sides of the same coin and coexisted in many works by these artists. In Gallen-Kallela’s Symposion painting, redemption and artistic creation are superimposed upon each other. The great wings on the left side of the table belong to a sphinx (a Symbolist signifier of artistic creation) but the entire image – deemed too graphic by the artist – was cut from the final conception of the composition, leaving only the wings.¹⁹ In a late caricature-like sketch for the finished painting, one finds a rising spirit in the background, which through its *ad astra* motion strongly suggests redemption.²⁰ Working in concert, the sphinx and the rising figure – or the celestial imagery in the finished work – clearly point to the notion of redemption through art.

To Sibelius, the creative act was directly related to the creational processes of nature and it was through this act that God’s existence was revealed: “This wonderful logic – let us call it God – that governs a work of art is the forcing power.”²¹ Of course, these attitudes manifested themselves in the content as well as in the creation of Sibelius’s texts. He grappled with these ideas throughout his life. His probable infidelity to his wife Aino in the earlier years of their marriage was a painful though constant source of inspiration for many of his works. The long Symposion evenings – which sometimes lasted well into the following day – encouraged

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¹⁷ Ibid., 55; and ETL I, 141.
¹⁹ Varnedoe, *Northern Light*, 118.
²⁰ It should be noted that Gallen-Kallela was working on a painting entitled *Ad Astra* at the time. For a reproduction of the oil sketch see Ibid., 118.
²¹ Karl Ekman, *Jean Sibelius: His Life and Work*, trans. Edward Birse (London: Alan Wilmer, 1936), 239. It is extremely difficult to pin down Sibelius’s religious beliefs. In essence, there seems to be both a pantheistic nature mysticism combined with some Christian ideas.
Sibelius’s propensity towards drink and his inclination to succumb to temptations of the flesh. While this biographical side of the composer has been somewhat exaggerated in the literature and in the composer’s own writing, it was a very real and significant aspect of the context from which many of his compositions emerged. As Murtomäki and Timothy L. Jackson have argued, Sibelius’s sexual drives were expressed in his musical structures and echoed in the subject matter he chose for his explicitly programmatic works. *Kullervo, En Saga, Skogsrået (The Wood-Nymph),* the *Lemminkäinen Suite,* and *Pohjola’s Daughter* (to name but a few) were all early works centered around sexual impropriety or yearning. Alongside this sexual misconduct was an appeal for some form of pantheistic redemption, which was either granted or denied to the protagonist of each specific narrative.22

Unlike Symbolism on the continent, which predominantly manifested itself in rather solipsistic endeavors, Scandinavian Symbolism was very rooted in place and national identity. Art historian Kirk Varnedoe describes the National Romantic brand of Symbolism as follows:

> In Scandinavia, Symbolism’s general concentration on nature mysticism and the inner life of pre-civilized man received a special impetus by linkage to a collective mythologizing of Nordic national identities.23

In Finland the linkage between Nationalism and Symbolism manifested itself most clearly in texts based on the legends collected in the national epic, the *Kalevala.* Published in 1835, the *Kalevala* was an arrangement of ancient folksongs handed down from generation to generation and collected by Elias Lönnrot on his travels through the Karelian region of Finland. Though the folksongs themselves were largely authentic, the epic as a whole did not exist until Lönnrot arrived on the scene – his work is very much a verger of primitive folktale and sophisticated epic

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verse. Like the tales of Ossian, the Kalevala instantly became the national epic and launched a strong nationalist movement that strove to replace centuries of Swedish and Russian influence with a new emphasis on all things Finnish – especially language. In the 1890s Sibelius, Gallen-Kallela and many others discovered the expressive potential of the Kalevala as a rich source of artistic subject matter. Indeed, the Kalevala proved to be the ideal text for the Symposion circle for it was here that nature mysticism, symbolic imagery, myth, raw sexuality, paganism, Christianity, the Finnish landscape, and national identity all collided. By entitling his painting Symposion, Gallen-Kallela explicitly linked Finland with the Grecian roots of European civilization and, in so doing, sought to endow the Finnish artists with a cultural legitimacy denied them in an earlier age.

Located on the frozen fringe of European civilization, the Finns were not restricted by the closed-mindedness typical of the shifting fashions and “-isms” of the continent. This enabled them to be influenced by the artistic currents of France and Germany without being swept away completely. If this opened them up to new ideas and change – thereby realizing one of Boorstin’s characteristics of the verge – it also alienated them, to a large extent, from the European marketplace and prevented them from gaining favor with the self-appointed cultural elite of central Europe. But as the members of this fertile community headed down their own, separate, paths upon the dawn of the twentieth century, its most prominent members, like Sibelius, would continue to find, through cultural distance, new creative freedoms with a new degree of self-awareness. Distance unfettered Sibelius from the trends of Germany and Austria on the one hand and Russia on the other, and afforded him – like the American Colonists’

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24 Many Finns born with Swedish last names were inspired by nationalist sentiment to change them to the Finnish language equivalent. Most notably, Akseli Gallen-Kallela changed his name from Axel Gallén.
distance from England in Boorstin’s model – the opportunity to carve out his own path. The pressures born from his inability to achieve the commercial success of his contemporaries such as Strauss and, to a certain extent, Mahler, both strengthened his anxieties in later years and bolstered his resolve to make his own way.\textsuperscript{26} As he confided to Aino in 1911:

\begin{quote}
Let’s let the world go on its way. If you, my dear love, want things as I do, let’s not allow anything to drag us away from the path on which we now must go. I mean the direction of my art. Let’s leave the competition to the others. But let’s grasp our art with a tremendous grip.\textsuperscript{27}
\end{quote}

This Sibelian difference did not arise from the desire to be different per se, but from his historical position on the verge and the desire to realize, through nature-mystical contemplation, the inner essence of his themes (recall the quote above about the formation of ice-ferns). By the late works, the semantic ideas of nature mysticism first explored in the 1890s became intense personal philosophies about how to go about the act of composition and how to structure the processes within the composition itself. The detailed examination of the Seventh’s genesis in Chapters 6 through 8 of this study show that Sibelius, after gathering an impressive cache of thematic material during the early stages of the Fifth Symphony’s genesis in 1914-15, contemplated each musical idea obsessively over the course of the next decade in order to find what he believed to be its true essence and proper context. This process, which mirrored the nature-meditative practice of contemplating nature until its deep secrets were revealed, resulted in the composition of the last three Symphonies and the tone poem \textit{Tapiola}.\textsuperscript{28} The challenge, however, was to assemble this multitude of fragmentary ideas into continuous and logical

\textsuperscript{26} This topic is dealt with in detail in James Hepokoski, \textit{Sibelius: Symphony No.5} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-18.

\textsuperscript{27} Letter dated 10 November 1911 translated in Ibid., 16.

\textsuperscript{28} For more information on this productive period see Ibid., 31-41; and Kari Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony: An Introduction to the Manuscript and Printed Sources,” translated and revised by James Hepokoski in \textit{The Sibelius Companion}, ed. Glenda Dawn Goss, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 239-70.
structures. Sibelius was well aware of this during the composition of the Fifth Symphony, as a well-known diary entry from 10 April 1915 reveals:

…In the evening I [worked on] the symphony. Arrangement of themes. This important task, which fascinates me in a mysterious way. 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. Maybe [this is] a good definition of ‘composing’. Maybe not. How would I know?  

In many ways Sibelius’s mosaic approach to composition might suggest a finished product with a fractured surface design, but his works are most often anything but sectional. The central problem, then, of the Sibelian creative process was to reconcile the need for continuity mandated by the above-mentioned philosophy of allowing the music to determine its outer form with the sectional – or mosaic – approach to formal construction. To ensure a sense of large-scale organic unity, Sibelius created structures that pass through the divisions of formal design and endow a given work with a great sense of forward motion. As Kari Kilpeläinen has shown in his pioneering study of the Seventh Symphony’s genesis and as I will elaborate on in Chapter 7, this was absolutely essential because the Symphony proves to be a fusion of the second and fourth movements from a discarded four-movement plan. To achieve success, it was essential that the formal units themselves were not treated as rigid building blocks, but were instead used as malleable entities that Sibelius could reshape and string together in a fashion that would assure cohesiveness. Shot through with a large-scale teleological structure, the Seventh transforms the potentially fractured surface of a mosaic design into a highly unified and continuous aural canvas. The whole of this process is steeped in the nature-mystical principles from the early years of his career.

Perhaps the primary site of Sibelian difference was the combination of his newfound classical economy (from the Third Symphony on) and his innovative formal patterns and large-

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29 Jean Sibelius, diary entry 10 April 1915 quoted in Hepokoski, *Symphony No. 5*, 32.
30 Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 239-70.
scale tonal structures. In Chapter 3, the complex nature of the Seventh Symphony’s unique one-
movement form is explored as a verge between a variety of traditional *Formenlehre* models and
various sonata deformational principles as defined by James Hepokoski.\(^{31}\) By understanding its
form as both a verge and four-voice conceptual counterpoint (there are essentially four
simultaneous formal forces at work), some of the fog shrouding the Symphony’s organization
can be lifted. In the end, we may discover that the nature of the form reflects the very nature of
the compositional process (Chapters 3, 6, 7, and 8 all touch on this idea from a variety of
viewpoints).

Chapters 4, 5 and 8 build upon recent literature to offer a new, detailed analysis of the
Seventh Symphony’s structure from a Schenkerian perspective. As Jackson and Murtomäki
discuss in their preface to *Sibelius Studies*, Schenkerian analysis has – despite Schenker’s own
conservatism – become a dominant force in Sibelius analysis.\(^{32}\) The analysis presented here
explores the Symphony’s structure on its own terms in order to reveal the classical economy and
inner logic of its motivic organization. Furthermore, innovative features of the large-scale
structure are discussed in addition to the coordination of structural levels with levels of design.
Ultimately, the analysis presents a narrative reading of the Symphony’s syntactic and semantic
drama. The unfolding structure and design trigger any number of expectations that are either
met, delayed, denied, or otherwise transformed. While they imbue the Seventh with an abstract
dramatic narrative, these musical techniques also link up to specific nature-mystical and
biographical events and concepts in order to endow the text with a specific meaning. In the
analytical model present in Chapter 3, meaning is seen not as extra-musical, but as a musical

\(^{31}\) These are defined clearly in Hepokoski, *Symphony No. 5*, 19-30.
\(^{32}\) Murtomäki and Jackson, *Sibelius Studies*, xviii-xix.
property on par with design and structure. Indeed, the study will show how Sibelius made seemingly extra-musical properties purely musical.

Contrary to certain long-held beliefs about Sibelius’s music – namely, that the symphonies are absolute music, while the tone poems are programmatic – I postulate that the composer infused the Seventh Symphony with several layers of musical meaning. Recent – and some earlier – literature has pointed to two possible narrative interpretations. The first, whose most vocal advocate is Hepokoski, maintains that the Seventh is part of a series of works concerned with Sibelius’s nature mysticism. Hepokoski bases this compelling argument on evidence gleaned from study of the work’s structure as well as source material. The Seventh is part of a series of works “the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, and the tone poem Tapiola, all of which, consequently, may be heard as sharing a deep kinship.” At the heart of Hepokoski’s argument is the notion that these works share a “deep kinship” with each other because they were all born out of material created – or “revealed” to Sibelius – during the time of the Fifth Symphony’s composition. That Tapiola is concerned with nature is indisputable (Tapiola refers to the place where Tapio [the Lord of the forest] dwells), and Hepokoski has shown through source studies and analysis that the Fifth and Sixth symphonies are a form of nature meditation, but the Seventh Symphony is much more problematic in this respect.

Let us now turn to the second programmatic interpretation of the work. Jackson has recently proposed that the Seventh presents a “theologized domestic drama” that centers on the relationship between the composer and his wife, Aino. For Jackson, the Seventh –along with other works of Sibelius – is a continuation of an ideological and sociological tradition in which composers (Schumann and Brahms in particular), artists, and writers have portrayed what they

34 Hepokoski, Sibelius: Symphony No. 5, 33.
35 Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization,” 175-272
have understood to be the dual nature of woman, namely as temptress/redeemer (for example, the Eve-Mary dichotomy in much Christian art and thought). However, contrary to Jackson, I maintain that the Seventh deals with the notion of Aino as redeemer, and Sibelius as the transgressor because of his drinking and lack of support for the family, not for sexual infidelity. In the earlier works from the Symbolist period, infidelity and redemption were closely related. Now, later in life, Sibelius returned to the confessional atmosphere of the 1890s to atone for his excessive drinking.

This argument centers on evidence culled from the sketches, a rich network of references to other compositions and the structure of the published score itself. In the sketches Sibelius often labeled certain themes as Aino or after one of his daughters, Ruth. Jackson’s argument receives much of its persuasiveness from this fact, though it is possible to view the labels as what Hepokoski has termed “cognitive signifiers.”36 In other words, instead of labeling themes and motives with letters such as ‘A’ or ‘B’, Sibelius – perhaps playfully – uses the names of his wife and (on fewer occasions) his daughter. In the final analysis, we may come to view the labels as both cognitive signifiers – this is undeniable – and as semantic markers. The famous trombone theme and its continuation, for example, can be understood as a musical reference to Aino.

In order to wade through the many references to other compositions found in the published score and the many programmatic references found in the sketches, I will appeal to literary critic Gérard Genette’s theory of transtextuality. Comprised of five distinct categories of textual relationships, Genette’s transtextuality – essentially his theory of poetics – is defined as

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“all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts.”  Three of these transtextual categories (paratextuality, hypertextuality, and architextuality) will be employed in a variety of ways in the present study. Paratextuality – the study of all that frames a given text, be it the title, author’s name, sketches, letters, diary entries etc. – informs the study of genre in the Seventh (Chapter 2) and the study of meaning through an examination of a rich body of pre-textual sources (Chapters 6 through 8). The examination of structure and meaning is undertaken through a hypertextual lens. Hypertextuality is essentially cognate with typical definitions of intertextuality; it is the presence of an allusion to one text within the space of another. The Seventh Symphony draws on a number of hypertexts – Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* and Sibelius’s *Luonnotar* and *Valse Triste* – to internalize musical meaning (Chapters 4 and 8). The broadest of Genette’s categories is the architext, which binds texts together in terms of their more abstract commonalities such as genre and topoi. Through this mode of thinking, we can come to view the Seventh as an open-ended textual space through which course various musical and semantic forces. These help connect the Seventh to the earlier works of the 1890s by imbuing it with what I term the composer’s “Bacchic Topos,” that is the musical expression of his excesses in alcohol and other temptations (Chapter 5).

The deep connections between the Seventh Symphony and the early texts of the 1890s make it very apparent that the work’s meaning must be understood as a verge between nature mysticism and domestic drama. Hepokoski’s and Jackson’s respective ideas on meaning are not mutually exclusive. On one hand nature-mystical modes of thought inform the syntactical strata

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38 Intertextuality (literal quotation with quotation marks etc, or plagiarism) – for Genette a far more specific term than for other writers – and metatextuality (a text that offers commentary on another without specifically naming it) are the remaining categories of transtextuality which do not apply to the Seventh Symphony. See Ibid., 1-4.
39 Ibid., 1. For more on the architext see Chapter 2 below.
of the composition. This is elucidated in detail throughout the study. However, pre-textual references make it abundantly clear that natural processes and images can also be pulled out of the Symphony’s semantic fabric. This fabric, however, is woven not out of nature alone, but also out of human drama, as other pre-textual and transtextual clues reveal. Therefore, nature mysticism and domestic drama are blurred into one semantic and syntactic verge –one unified symphonic utterance. In one sense, natural processes and human actions serve as metaphors for one another – hardly surprising – and in another sense they exist as two voices in one unified drama. The Symphony’s structural and formal processes continually strive for one raw, overarching truth (the C major tonic), which – through its elemental, earthy permanence – swallows and renders insignificant the text’s particular human drama (see Chapter 8).

This ending mixes the tragic with the triumphant, for here, nature’s sheer power is celebrated as the symphonic quest for redemption is pessimistically cast aside. Indeed, like the explicitly programmatic texts of the 1890s, the Seventh represents a quest for redemption and forgiveness through the love of Aino. Perhaps this is why Sibelius once proclaimed that, “these symphonies of mine are more in the nature of professions of faith than my other works.” Truly in the midst of a profound personal and marital crisis during the late stages of the Seventh’s genesis, Sibelius was likely moved to rework the piece’s ending to reflect a vulnerable and pessimistic sense of despair over his devotion to the bottle and a deep profession of faith in the majesty of the natural world (see Chapter 8). Aino’s letter, excerpted below, would have likely scored a crushing blow to the notion that he could achieve redemption through her. Indeed, she would pull away and leave him to find his way back to her and his artistic path on his own:

Dear Janne! – Are you dear to me? – Yes. When I recall the beautiful moments in our lives when we were able and wanted to gaze into each other’s eyes, from heart to heart. Now there is a layer of grief between us. I can’t help it. I find it

40 Ekman, Jean Sibelius, 256.
so difficult to live when I see the dead-end into which you, once so strong, have drifted. Do you really value the work you do with artificial inspiration? …Unless you change, you are sure to destroy yourself. And is that all there is to the beautiful great work of God I have inwardly come to call sacred? Try to shake off what is dragging you down. Can’t you see where it is leading you? Even if you do manage to finish a composition, it’s not worthy of what you could be doing…If only you knew what you were like when you are not entirely clear in the head. Then your own judgment is paralyzed, trust me, believe me when I say you cannot achieve anything lasting then…I couldn’t come to Sweden with you, because I couldn’t stand anything like that [previous drunken appearance on the podium] any longer, and I notice that you no longer give a fig for the advice of your only real friend. Me and your past works, we will remain over here. This is how I console myself, otherwise I would fall into despair…you could wrench yourself away from this vice again. After all, you have been blessed with the strength of a great man. Can’t your sense of honor unleash it? Take heed of all the great and sacred you possess. I beg you on my knees, and I believe you can do it if you will. Your Companion in Life.41

Aino followed through on her refusal to travel to the Seventh’s premiere in Sweden, but her predictions about the quality of that work could not have been more wrong. Indeed, Sibelius managed to compose through the crisis with a miraculous clarity of vision. Of course, the bulk of the work was likely done in the more lucid moments before the whisky flowed too freely. He described the situation as follows: “Gradual reaction to the terrible atmosphere and strain here. As if one was in the wilderness. Misery, depression and gloom. And it’s in this atmosphere I’m trying to compose. But I will simply have to make a stand.”42 Instead of handing himself over completely to alcohol, he managed to sort through the situation in the confessional and nature-mystical sounds of the Seventh Symphony.

Many view any study that seeks to explore the relationship between a composer and his creation as outmoded or methodologically impossible. But through a responsible approach to issues of design, structure, meaning and genesis, we can gain valuable insights into the nature of Sibelius’s compositional philosophies as well as issues of biography. Indeed, more than anything, this study reveals just how much Sibelius composed himself – his anxieties, hopes, and philosophies about life and the world around him – into the Seventh Symphony. To shy away

42 Diary entry dated 12 November 1923. ETL III, 241.
from this simple truth for any reason would not only violate the achievements of the composer, but would rob the music of its essential message about the universal themes of human and natural drama. It is vital that music like the Seventh Symphony not be reduced to an abstract succession of tones that does or does not conform to some dry academic theory. Instead, as I attempt herein, theories must be used freely to elucidate the artistic triumph and grandeur of such compositions and the heroic creativity and human vulnerability of such composers.

On the verge, Sibelius and the Seventh Symphony exhibit incredible freedom. Here, at the outer limits of one form or one genre, he could freely incorporate traits from other forms or genres without violating musical logic. He could create something new without entirely abandoning the old models. On the verge, he could compose a narrative of both nature mysticism and domestic drama. On the verge, he felt the intense pressure of not fitting in with the established critical, economic and cultural mainstream of the continent, but he also exhibited an inspirational determination to “grasp [his] art with a tremendous grip.” On the verge, we can celebrate the Seventh’s uniqueness and isolate its indebtedness to tradition. By studying the Seventh as a series of verges, we can come to find a multi-faceted unity; a true masterpiece of twentieth century music that deserves the place in the canon it has only recently come to inhabit. Indeed, the Seventh, like all of Sibelius’s best music, sends running and bloodies the lips of chauvinistic cultural bullies like Theodor Adorno and the closed-minded creators of university music curriculums who either fail or refuse to acknowledge its worth.43 Finally, to understand the Seventh as a verge, we may find inspiration in its determined freedom as we struggle to deal with a world of increasing cyber-inflexibility and unthinking conformity.

43 Here I am referring, of course, to Adorno’s damning and overly influential diatribe “Glössse über Sibelius,” in Impromptus (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1982), 247-52.
CHAPTER 2

BETWEEN SYMPHONY AND FANTASY:
GENRE RECONSIDERED

Worked on a symphonic fantasy. How intimate I have become with this form!
Sibelius (17 December 1914)

Nearly a decade after confessing this formal intimacy to the pages of his diary, Sibelius mounted the stage in Stockholm to lead the orchestra through the unveiling of his *Fantasia sinfonica No 1*. Those first audiences, gathered to hear this new music in March of 1924 (the premiere took place on the twenty-fourth), were unaware that the composer was actually guiding them through the glorious musical terrain of his Seventh Symphony. Indeed, this was not to be the first in a new series of symphonic fantasies, but the final member of the composer’s small family of symphonies. Though the words above were written while Sibelius was immersed in the initial planning stages of the Fifth Symphony, they are of singular importance to any meditation on issues pertaining to form and genre in the Seventh Symphony.

In order to gain insight into the nature of formal design in the Seventh we must first explore issues of genre. When Sibelius did finally change the work’s title (and with it the genre!) several months after the premiere, he did so without altering the musical text itself. How could he move so freely between Symphony No. 7 (*In einem Satze*) and *Fantasia sinfonica No. 1*? Furthermore, if he was so “intimate” with the genre of symphonic fantasy, why didn’t he produce more than one of them? I believe the answers to these questions lie in the nature of the music itself and in its generative process. Consequently, when considered within the context of

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design, the simple historical fact of titular alteration may lead us toward a new and multi-
dimensional understanding of design, structure and narrativity in late Sibelius.²

Paratextuality

We must pause momentarily on the threshold of our examination of title and genre to better define the methodological parameters in which our study will unfold. The structuralist poetics of literary theorist Gérard Genette will serve as a useful point of departure. Namely, his theory of the paratext, which forms the second category of his theory of transtextuality, will prove quite useful in our examination of the Seventh Symphony.³ We may understand the paratext as all that stands at the threshold of the text itself – it is neither outside the text nor inside it, but mediates between the two worlds – and serves to better direct the reader. Titles, genre indications, opus numbers, the author’s name, prefaces, dedications, and all other similar framing devices belong to the paratext. In his full-length treatment of the topic, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, Genette thus defines the function of this paratextual space:

…this fringe, always the conveyor of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author, constitutes a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition, but of transaction: a privileged place of a pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that – whether well or poorly understood and achieved – is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies).⁴

Before we delve into the heart of the matter, one further aspect of paratextuality deserves consideration. Genette’s paratext is the sum of two constituent parts: the peritext and the epitext. Titles and the other elements listed above all form the peritext, or all of those literary devices that

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² In the present context I will focus on the two titles given to the completed composition. Titles from earlier stages of the Seventh’s genesis will be considered only partially at this point, while a more detailed account of pre-textual paratexts will be provided in subsequent chapters as our attention shifts toward matters of musical genesis.
literally frame the text. The epitext, on the other hand, consists of elements that lie outside of the presentation of the text, but ultimately – as is the nature of the paratext – lead readers into the text itself. Authorial utterances that pertain to a given text such as interviews, letters and diary entries all fall within the epitext’s domain. For the time being we will concern ourselves primarily with the peritext, though epitextual evidence will be called upon and, in due time, our study of the Seventh Symphony will focus a great deal of attention on the epitext (the sketches and early drafts of the Symphony perform a variety of epitextual functions).

In his systematic exploration of titles in *Paratexts*, Genette separates out three possible elements in a title, though all three need not always be present: title, subtitle and genre designation. Our task is made easier by the presence of only genre indications in the Sibelius example, but, as Genette warns, genre indications can be rather problematic. Indeed, they communicate an authorial intention to the public, which must always be taken with a measure of caution.\(^5\) Of course, music and literature can be very different with respect to titles and the literary model outlined by Genette only works in certain cases. That Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is in fact a symphony and the fifth in his cycle is open to little debate, but the genre indication standing before Sibelius’s final symphony is more problematic. Each genre indication brings with it a host of implications designed to guide our experience of the text. These titles perform their transactional functions by linking the text to what Genette terms its architext. Forming the fifth and most abstract transtextual category, the architext is defined as “the entire set of general or transcendent categories – types of discourse, modes of enunciation, literary genres – from which emerges each singular text.”\(^6\) Sibelius’s two titles call forth at least two very different architextual strands. When examined through a paratextual lens, the changes in

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\(^5\) Ibid., 94-95.

\(^6\) Genette, *Palimpsests*, 1.
title can bring us closer to an understanding of authorial intent with regard to form and genre in the Seventh Symphony; we can come closer to learning how Sibelius wanted this text to be heard.

This last point is, in many respects, a stark contrast to the very brand of structuralist criticism that Genette’s theories so eloquently and effectively advance. Indeed, structuralist thinking celebrates the unstable “lives” of texts (their meaning arising through the very act of reading and the reader’s ability to link texts to architexts), while the intentionalist aims outlined above imply a textual stability not recognized by Genette or his followers in which meaning is fixed by the author in the moment of creation. This collision of competing philosophies requires some explanation. Throughout this study Genette’s concepts will be employed in the “readerly” spirit in which they were originally advanced. However, despite the deeper philosophical goals of transtextual poetics, concepts like paratextuality, hypertextuality and architextuality can also be used to great effect in an exploration of an author’s own relationship to a text. After all, the author was the first of many readers in a text’s existence. In other words, the author – like the modern reader or critic – also moved freely between a text and its architexts. While attempting to map this authorial reading is speculative in nature, it is not beyond the reasonable bounds of scholarship. Indeed such an attempt can only enrich our own transtextual reading of Sibelius’s Seventh. In this model the text remains unbound (as the structuralists would have it), but the stability of the work and the primacy of original authorial voice are also emphasized in a fashion inconsistent with structuralist thought as generally practiced.
Fantasia sinfonica

Blurred over the course of the nineteenth century, the lines of demarcation between symphony, or sonata, and fantasy were anything but clearly defined for Sibelius and his generation. As history has revealed, those composers born in the 1860s did little to redraw those generic boundaries. Though the Sibelian fantasy has received a great deal of critical attention in recent years, it is imperative that we undertake to clear these muddy waters once again in the present context.7 For Sibelius, the genre indication “fantasy” could evoke any number of meanings and was considered for a variety of projects throughout his career. By mapping these various meanings and by showing how they interact with particular architextual strands, we will be able to better define the paratextual functions of the Seventh Symphony’s original title.

A good working definition – let alone a universally accepted one – of the fantasy has never really existed, we would thus do well to approach this intrinsically flexible genre without recourse to rigid definitions or too many a priori expectations. Indeed, we may find that the fantasy’s essence, described by Felix Salzer as “organized improvisation,” lies somewhere in its seemingly spontaneous presentation.8 Because of this improvisatory disposition, it is as if each new piece claiming membership in the generic family is forced to redefine the genre as its structure unfolds. To hear the fantasy is, in one sense, to hear musical creation in progress even though the music may have been written centuries ago. While working in the realm of the musical fantasy, the great masters have always managed to achieve a sense of boundless freedom through modes of formal expression that resist easy Formenlehre categorization. It was this sense of freedom that so appealed to A.B. Marx, whose writings on form would eventually

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7 James Hepokoski and Veijo Murtoniemi have been particularly interested in such study. While all of Hepokoski’s Sibelius writings deal with form and genre, the most beneficial discussion of the fantasy issue can be found in Sibelius: Symphony No. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 21-23 and 39-40; The most complete examination of the topic to date can be found in Veijo Murtoniemi, “Symphonic Fantasy,” 147-163 passim.
influence Sibelius and countless others. As Hepokoski has pointed out, Marx’s notion that the fantasy was “the renunciation of all [previously] determined form” and reserved for those composers who “know all the directions and paths” would have appealed to Sibelius’s formal philosophy.

A diary entry from April of 1912 that reads, “The musical thoughts – the motives, that is – are the things that must create the form and stabilize my path” expresses an attitude toward form that would become something of a mantra for Sibelius from the early 1910s on into his lengthy retirement. Freedom from traditional Formenlehre models compelled Sibelius to surrender to the will of his themes, or in his words: “I am a slave to my themes and submit to their demands.” From this philosophy, which illuminates the fantasy elements that characterize so many of Sibelius’s compositions (whether or not they “officially” belong to the genre), we may regard the composer as a medium through which artistic inspiration passes from some primal force – be it God or nature – to the final score. Herein lies the source not only of Sibelius’s fantasy impulse, but also of his much-discussed nature mysticism. This fantasy impulse is inextricably bound to so many aspects of late Sibelius that we must confront it head on. Many writers have found the essence of Sibelius in the following comment made to biographer Karl Ekman:

The final form of one’s work is, indeed, dependent on powers that are stronger than oneself. Later on one can substantiate this or that, but on the whole one is

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9 Tawaststjerna reports that the young Sibelius, prior to his university years, had gone through Marx’s Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition in ETL I, 22. Glenda Dawn Goss also discusses the issue of Sibelius’s early formal training in her introduction to Sibelius: The Hämeenlinna Letters: Scenes from a Musical Life 1874 - 1895, trans Glenda Dawn Goss (Esbo Finland: Schildts Förlags, 1997), 27-28. Here she also mentions the importance of Johann Christian Lobe’s Lehrbuch der musikalischen Composition to the young Sibelius.

10 Hepokoski discusses Sibelius’s relationship to Marx and provides these translations of the theorist’s words in Symphony No. 5, 22.

11 Quoted in Hepokoski, Symphony No. 5, 21.

merely a tool. This wonderful logic – let us call it God – that governs a work of art is the forcing power.¹³

I propose that this statement serves the composer so well not only because of the comments on the “wonderful logic” or the mystical overtones, but also because lurking behind these ideas we find his strong fantasy impulse. Far from an inactive receiver of inspiration, Sibelius – as the sketches reveal – worked long hard hours in order to create the fantasy-like effect of spontaneity. But no matter how the effect was achieved, it was the primary aesthetic principle by which Sibelius judged his final compositions.

Hepokoski’s remark that “Marx’s widely known discussion could serve as a grand apologia for the deepest aims of Sibelius’s post-Fourth Symphony works” helps locate an important architextual strand connoted by the genre label “fantasy.”¹⁴ On the surface, Sibelius’s abandoned symphonic fantasies of the early-twentieth century seem far removed from the keyboard fantasies of the classical era, but a transtextual approach can illuminate a deep kinship between the seemingly disparate styles. The fantasies and fantasy-like compositions of Mozart and Beethoven prove to be a rich architext for the Sibelian symphonic fantasy. Of course, that architext extends farther into the past than the classical era and was transmitted to Sibelius’s generation through the compositions of the Romantics – Schumann in particular – and through the writings of Marx. In addition to an improvisatory sense of freedom, the classical fantasy is distinguished by a number of other characteristics worth considering.

One of the genre’s primary qualities that would have resonated well with Sibelius was its potential for unfolding a particular musical narrative. Edward Laufer has written about a number of fantasies in which “the composer seemingly loses his way, goes astray, and returns to the crossroads, so to speak, to try again. This procedure may be expressed through a kind of motto, ¹³ Ibid., 256-257. ¹⁴ Hepokoski, Symphony No. 5, 22.
or middleground motive, which, restated and transformed, is the carrier of the musical dénouement."¹⁵ In the Seventh Symphony, Sibelius employs this type of structural narrative to great effect. As subsequent chapters will discuss in greater detail, the Symphony proves to be a search for its tonic (C major) and the famous trombone theme first heard at m.60. The thematic and tonal stability achieved at m.60 is fleeting, as the music quickly goes “astray” only to renew its quest for stability. In one sense, the Symphony articulates this aspect of the fantasy by coming into and out of harmonic and thematic focus several times.¹⁶ Structural narratives of this type often articulate a specific semantic or programmatic content. Indeed, for Laufer, it is a “poetic or programmatic idea which underlies the musical continuity, not a specific formal design” in these fantasies.¹⁷

By furnishing the new symphonic text with the title Fantasia sinfonica, Sibelius was practically leading listeners down a road toward programmatic interpretation. As a paratextual designation, the word fantasy – or its equivalent in any number of languages – often appeared as a subtitle or genre indication alongside a specific programmatic title. Murtomäki has discussed the architext conjured up by this appellation, citing the precedent of Russian composers in particular.¹⁸ For musicians like Tchaikovsky, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, “fantasy” was often included in the paratext for orchestral texts to encourage a hearing informed more by the music’s literary underpinnings than whatever traditional formal pattern(s) may or may not exist beneath its surface. Of course, the nineteenth century abounds with examples of this, as

¹⁶ Sibelius, in the Finale of the First Symphony (1899) employed the Beethovenian subtitle “quasi una fantasia” to, in all likelihood, point to the movement’s large-scale search for its tonic. Timothy Jackson discusses this aspect of the movement in “Observations on Crystallization and Entropy in the Music of Sibelius and Other Composers,” in Sibelius Studies, ed Timothy L. Jackson and Veijo Murtomäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 189, 198-200.
¹⁷ Ibid., 100.
¹⁸ Murtomäki, “Symphonic Fantasy,” 150-152.
Murtomäki suggests, but we can also find traces of this architext in Sibelius’s own oeuvre.19 *Pohjola’s Daughter* of 1906 is subtitled “symphonic fantasy.” Here we find Sibelius using this genre indication for the first time in connection with a one-movement orchestral text. Along with the generic subtitle, Sibelius furnished *Pohjola’s Daughter* with an explicit poem describing the literary content of the music. Though there is much truth in Murtomäki’s assertion that the label is used because of the music’s “exceptionally rich” orchestral color, it is likely that Sibelius also employed the subtitle to downplay the work’s sonata design.20 Because the title *Fantasia sinfonica* leads the listener into an architext of programmatic compositions, it is possible that Sibelius’s decision to settle on the title Symphony No. 7 stemmed from his desire to dissuade critics from making extra-musical assumptions. Indeed, critics of the first performances called for literary explanations for the new symphonic fantasy and such requests, argues Murtomäki, would have been enough to change the master’s mind about its title.21 In light of a number of factors (discussed in the introduction and to be explored in detail in subsequent chapters), we may amend Murtomäki’s thesis by suggesting that Sibelius wished to keep the true meaning of the music hidden from the world at large because of its highly personal nature.

A close parallel may be drawn between the early tone poem *En Saga* (1892, revised 1902) and the *Fantasia sinfonica*. In the 1940s, Sibelius confided the following to his personal secretary-turned-biographer, Santeri Levas:

> *En Saga* is one of my most profound works, in psychological meaning. I could even say that it contains all my youth. It is the expression of a state of mind. I had undergone a number of painful experiences at the time, and in no other work

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19 Ibid., 150.
20 Ibid., 151. While Sibelius’s orchestration is always highly colorful, to say the least, he seems to have employed more overt coloration in his tone poems and highly programmatic compositions. *The Swan of Tuonela, Lemminkäinen’s Return, Pohjola’s Daughter*, and *Tapiola* all stand out in this regard.
21 Ibid., 152.
The tone poem’s famously illusive and evocative title presents a fascinating paratextual study worthy of full treatment itself, but it can also help shed some light on the issue at hand. As a title, *En Saga* functions as a genre indicator, but it points toward a literary rather than a musical genre. It pulls the listener into the musical text with expectations for a certain style of musical narration, but it remains silent as to the subject of that narrative. To encounter a symphony or symphonic poem without an autographically supplied subject matter is one thing, but to encounter a saga with no specified story is quite another. Sibelius’s discourse without subject provoked—and continues to provoke—readers to supply their own idea about what the saga of *En Saga* is. Perhaps the most famous readerly response came from the painter Axel Gallen-Kallela, who created a diptych that juxtaposed a fantastical landscape with a portrait of Sibelius. Beneath the landscape, which was derived from the painter’s impression of *En Saga*, a space was provided for Sibelius to include a quote from the music. This space was to remain blank however, as Sibelius never fulfilled Gallen-Kallela’s request. Tawaststjerna is probably correct in concluding that the landscape imagery was alien to Sibelius’s own, more personal conception of the music.

The case of *En Saga* is, in the end, rather helpful to the current investigation despite the fact that the two pieces date from the opposite ends of Sibelius’s compositional career. Programmatic meaning is evoked by the earlier text’s paratextual apparatus, but remains unarticulated by the author. Similarly, the title *Fantasia sinfonica* carries listeners from the

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23 Discussed in ETL I, 130. For an in depth account of *En Saga* see Murtomäki, “The Problem of Narrativity,” passim.
threshold into the text and into an architext where symphonic fantasies often express some specific literary idea. By changing the later work’s title, Sibelius could potentially avoid some of the fanciful allographic programs like those that were imposed upon *En Saga*. Furthermore, as a symphony the new work would be regarded by most as “absolute” music and the new title/genre indication would ensure the privacy of the music’s true program.

We will return to the complex issues of meaning and narrativity in the Seventh Symphony later in this study, but now let us resume our examination of the fantasy issue. Freedom, as has been discussed already, was a key concept to composers of fantasies. Indeed, the ability to move through musical space and time with a sense of improvisatory freedom attracted many composers to the genre. But there was another kind of freedom inherent in musical fantasies that would have been particularly desirable to a composer and a personality like Sibelius. Borrowing from Harold Bloom’s theory of influence, we can regard Sibelius as a highly anxious composer who was almost hypersensitive to the weight of musical tradition.\(^{24}\) If paratextual utterances serve, in part, to link a given text to a given architext or set of architexts, could they also serve the more subversive purpose of drawing attention away from certain features of a text? We have already observed some instances where Sibelius’s titles purposely lead listeners away from hearing certain architextual traces. Perhaps the following statement written in 1905 best revealed this strategy, born in large part out of an anxiety of influence:

> I’m no longer writing a symphony, rather a symphonic fantasy for orchestra. This is my genre!! Here I can move freely without feeling the weight of tradition.\(^{25}\)


\(^{25}\) ETL II, 37.
The decision to move into the less defined genre of symphonic fantasy may have been motivated by a desire to avoid the inevitable and potentially unfavorable comparisons between his own music and the earlier masterpieces of symphonic writing. Sibelius, at one point or another, considered placing each of his last three symphonies in the category of the symphonic fantasy. All three of these symphonies depart from the standard symphonic design in a number of ways and it is possible that he wanted the title to account for those differences. Beethoven’s Opus 27 piano sonatas come to mind here because of their famous subtitles “quasi una fantasia.” The addition of this subtitle begs listeners to be wary of the differences between these texts and earlier sonatas. Similarly, the Sibelian symphonic fantasy calls attention to those aspects that distinguish these texts from the rest of the symphonic architext.

In the nineteenth century the sectional nature of the fantasy became closely bound to the conception of cyclicism in multi-movement compositions. For example, the great and easily perceived sense of continuity in the Opus 27 sonatas probably had much to do with Beethoven’s decision to employ the “quasi una fantasia” subtitle. Similarly, Schumann once considered calling his Fourth Symphony, Op.120, which contains no breaks between movements, a Symphonistische Phantasie. Nicholas Marston, writing on the Schumann Fantasie, Op. 17, explores the overlap between the fantasy and multi-movement compositions – sonatas and symphonies – in the nineteenth century.26 His findings are particularly revelatory within the current Sibelian context:

If the nineteenth-century fantasy tended to take on the multi-movement character of the piano sonata, the reverse was also true: composers tried replacing multi-movement structures with something more continuous. Favourite techniques were the avoidance or weakening of formal breaks between movements; an increasing unification of the musical material; and the recall of specific passages at different points to create a cyclic effect.27

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27 Ibid., 27.
As has often been noted, Sibelius’s symphonic oeuvre represents a logical terminus to this long tradition of genre blurring. His penchant for fusing movements together – as in the Third, Fifth, and Seventh Symphonies – has been discussed a great deal in the literature and we need not further explore the issue at the moment. Though his career was marked by formal integration from the beginning, his struggle with genre issues seems to have intensified in the later years of his active career. For Sibelius, the label “fantasy” was best suited to single-movement texts that, despite their great sense of continuity, gave the impression of multiple movements. While the Seventh Symphony is the most noteworthy example of this, he did consider naming the Fifth Symphony a fantasy at one point. Late in the final stages of the Fifth’s revision, Sibelius contemplated removing the last two movements from the score! The first two movements had been fused together by this time and he was seriously considering the possibility of allowing this highly integrated complex to stand alone. On 28 April 1919 he recorded the following in his diary:

Have cut out the second and third movements. The first movement is a symphonic fantasia and does not require anything else. That’s where it all began. Shall I call it symphony in one movement or symphonic fantasy, or perhaps Fantasia sinfonica I?\footnote{ETL III, 150; see also Hepokoski, Symphonies No. 5, 57; and Murtomäki, “Symphonic Fantasy,” 150.}

Fortunately, he quickly rejected this new vision of the piece, but the very act of asking these questions proved to be a harbinger of things to come. The restoration of the second and third movements seems to have secured the title of Symphony No. 5, but this precedent cannot fully explain the case of the Seventh Symphony, which remained forever in einem Satze.

The architext of effaced boundaries, which encompasses texts like the later piano sonatas and string quartets of Beethoven, Schumann’s Fantasie, Op. 17, and Fourth Symphony, and Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique – to name but a few – is defined by the simple question that
lies at the heart of the present line of inquiry and the very question that must have weighed heavily on Sibelius’s mind as he prepared his new symphonic text for publication in 1924-25: fantasy or symphony/sonata? It is perhaps rather telling that our investigation of the musical fantasy would lead us to the same generic space through which Sibelius moved so freely. It is the indefinable space – or verge – between genres where the borders between symphony and fantasy are seen to be the abstract, artificial constructs that they really are. Sibelius’s music – his later work in particular – asks us to view these boundaries as the migratory bird views the lines between two countries; as mere lines in the sand easily and freely traversed.

Symphony

Before we can truly understand how it is possible for the Seventh Symphony to move between genres, we need to locate its specifically symphonic elements and try to understand Sibelius’s approach to the symphonic genre. This is neither an easy task nor one with which we should expend too much energy, since the defining features of the symphony are well known and much discussed in the literature. Instead we will concern ourselves with those aspects of the Seventh Symphony and its composition that are particularly symphonic.

Though Sibelius’s comments on the general nature of the symphony were often cryptic, it is still possible to detect a central thread running through them all and through all of his music. His symphonic project can best be characterized as a stubbornly determined struggle to achieve profound unity through classical economy. His praise of Mozart’s symphonic style is particularly revealing:

To my mind a Mozart allegro is the most perfect model for a symphonic movement. Think of its wonderful unity and homogeneity! It is like an
uninterrupted flowing, where nothing stands out and nothing encroaches upon the rest.29

While on another occasion Sibelius expressed his reluctance at defining the symphony in words, he did not fail to underscore the need for unity:

I do not wish to give a reasoned exposition of the essence of symphony. I have expressed my opinion in my works. I should like, however, to emphasize a point that I find essential: the directly symphonic is the compelling vein that goes through the whole. This in contrast to the depicting.30

Sibelius’s faith in the overriding principle of unity has been well documented – it has always been the central theme in the analytical literature and forms the core of this study – but how is this aesthetic construct specifically symphonic? After all, was unity not a central aim in most tonal music and art in general (Sibelius certainly did not subscribe to the twentieth century tendencies to shy away from unity in art)? If anything, the high degree of continuity in the Seventh Symphony would point more toward the fantasy genre than that of the symphony. To deal with this potential confusion we must separate the specific idea of symphonic unity – to use Murtonäki’s term – from the more general notion of musical unity.31

Diversity of instrumental forces, musical styles and techniques, and harmonic color have always defined the symphony, and the ability to present and reconcile such a wide range of musical factors over the course of a few movements has always characterized the genre’s masters. Symphonic unity was born of the desire to create the effect of diversity and breadth of musical experience through the use of a limited pallet of thematic and tonal resources. On its surface a traditional symphony might appear variegated, but upon careful reflection surface variety quickly yields to structural unity in the middleground and beyond. The disparity between foreground diversity and deeper level unity is perhaps most pronounced in the symphonic

writing of Gustav Mahler. In his famous encounter with Sibelius in 1907, Mahler took issue with Sibelius’s admiration for the symphonic genre’s “style and severity of form, and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motives” and countered his Finnish contemporary by saying, “No! The Symphony must be like the world. It must be all-embracing.”32 Through this classic encounter we may come to gain a better understanding of how Sibelius’s notion of symphonic unity differed from that of his continental contemporaries. By relating this story to Karl Ekman, Sibelius was pitting himself against the prevailing symphonic climate and in so doing he revealed not only what he deemed important in symphonic composition, but also what he understood as superfluous.

For Sibelius, it was unity that needed to be thrust to the foreground. Whatever diversity occurred in the later symphonies – and there is quite a bit – grew organically out of what came before. In the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies there is certainly a great deal of variety, but the presentation remains continuous and uninterrupted. Instead of depicting worldly topoi or attempting to create all-embracing experiences in the symphonies, Sibelius was concerned with musical processes – processes that mirrored those of human life and nature at large. Products of the symphonic process itself, the contrasts that exist in texts like the Seventh Symphony develop as themes and motives evolve and reveal themselves in new guises. While this central feature of the Sibelian style is discussed in subsequent chapters, it is an important aspect of his concept of symphonic unity and his tendencies towards nature mysticism.

The brand of unity on display in the Seventh Symphony is symphonic, not only because of instrumentation, but because of the breadth of musical experience contained over the course of its duration. A sense of contrast and diversity persist despite the high degree of structural unity

and surface continuity. All of the contrasting themes and sections in the single-movement structure are woven together seamlessly as will become clear in the analysis, but the diversity exists nonetheless. But more than contrast and diversity alone, Sibelius delivers surprises at every turn.33 Those moments that initially sound so shocking eventually reveal their place in a coherent whole. Though the Seventh is far more compressed than the earlier Symphonies, it still shares with them a sense of symphonic unity and this was likely one of the primary factors that motivated Sibelius to settle on the symphonic title.

The titular confusion was inevitable due to the success of the one-movement design and the fantasy-like characteristics outlined above. Because the Seventh Symphony began its life as a planned multi-movement entity (see Chapters 6 and 7) and because the generative process consisted largely of weaving together the second and fourth movements of the initial plans, Sibelius probably regarded the music as a Symphony from the beginning. However, once the one-movement form took shape his initial thoughts on genre were shaken. In all likelihood it was only after experiencing the music from the podium as he conducted its premiere and subsequent early performances that he became fully aware that this was not a new genre for him, but was the result of a lifelong quest to achieve symphonic unity.34 Though it is difficult to document the date of the official change in title, Kari Kilpeläinen has surmised that Sibelius may have ordered the change in a letter to publisher Wilhelm Hansen in February of 1925 – nearly a year after the score’s completion and premiere.35 While inquiring as to whether or not Hansen

could have the *Fantasia sinfonica’s* score ready in time for concerts later in the year, Sibelius finally conceded: “Best if its name is *Symphonie Nr. 7 (in einem Satze).*”\textsuperscript{36}

By bestowing the new text with the title of Symphony No.7, Sibelius united this new music with an extensive architext of symphonic literature and with his own, more personal, architext of symphonies. At the same time, however, the subtitle – *in einem Satze* – thrusts the differences between this text and the symphonic architext to the forefront of the listener’s consciousness and conjures up the more specific architext of multiple movements compressed into one continuous structure. The subtitle’s paratextual functions do not stop there, however, but ultimately lead, full circle, back to the architext of musical fantasies and the historical trend discussed by Marston above in which the stylistic space between symphony/sonata and fantasy was quickly diminishing. And so despite the change in title, the idea of fantasy still persists in the paratext and helps us to hear and better experience all of those fantasy elements that exist within the text itself. Of course, the original title is often preserved as a paratextual element in program notes and liner notes and will, in all likelihood, be found in the scholarly apparatus affixed to the complete-works edition of the Symphony when it is published.

From this exploration of genre and title, we may conclude that there is no either/or situation, but that the piece may be comfortably read as both symphony and fantasy. But more than this, it demands to be read as both simultaneously, as a verge, and the final title, along with its subtitle, promotes such an approach to genre. As Murtomäki has suggested:

Because of the ease of motion from one symphonic genre to another and because of the emancipation of form from the conventions of tradition, the final titles of these pieces are neither the ultimate nor the only criteria by which to define the genres of such works by Sibelius.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., 260.
\textsuperscript{37} Murtomäki, “Symphonic Fantasy,” 152.
Sibelius’s own paratextual struggles with this music reveal that he was truly a slave to his themes—so much so that he did not know what to call his latest symphonic text until a year after its completion. In wrestling with the paratextual possibilities brought forth by the Symphony, Sibelius was simply the first in a long line of interpreters to struggle with the generic, formal, and structural challenges of this music. Just as the genre resists easy categorization, the Seventh’s structure and design refuse to submit fully into any traditional *Formenlehre* categories or any preconceived notions of tonal organization.

In the autumn of 1914, a decade before the Seventh Symphony’s premiere, Sibelius recorded his anxiety over genre indications in his diary:

> But—to me it seems that the real Jean Sibelius is only just beginning. Wonder whether the name “symphony” has harmed my symphonies more than it has helped them. Have determined to let my inner self—my fantasy—have its say.  

The composer’s determination paid off and the symphonic trilogy that sprang forth from the earliest phases of the Fifth Symphony’s genesis not only gave voice to his inner self and his fantasy impulse, but was a product of that very same impulse. *Fantasia sinfonica* and Symphony No. 7 (*in einem Satze*) perform their respective paratextual functions, but, as the composer revealed in this diary entry and in many other cryptic messages to be discussed later, the most important paratextual element may be the composer’s name itself. If neither title can describe the genre, if no preconceived formal paradigm captures the essence of the Symphony and if no well-established tonal scheme quite fits, we may do well to understand the music and meaning of the Seventh Symphony as pure Sibelius. Where traditional explanations break down, Sibelius’s unique compositional voice is to be heard loudest.

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38 ETL III, 6. For more on this entry see Murtomäki, “Symphonic Fantasy,” 150 and Hepokoski, *Symphony No. 5*, 40.
Sibelius’s well known and somewhat sarcastic remark that: “When a work of art which is intuitively created is scientifically analyzed it reveals amazing requirements,” could be understood as a cautionary flag aimed at would-be analysts approaching music like the Seventh Symphony.1 Armed with nothing more than standard *Formenlehre* paradigms and traditional tonal patterns, those wishing to study late-period Sibelius quickly find themselves ill equipped for anything but retreat. Both form and structure in the Seventh have elicited a number of critical interpretations, but – remarkably – there exist almost as many interpretations as interpreters.2 While most of these readings do reveal a deliberate organization beneath the music’s surface, few convincingly capture or reflect the essence of the creative intuition that spawned the its form and structure. “Amazing requirements” abound not for the music alone, but for analysis and interpretation as well. By accepting Sibelius’s words as both a testament to intuition and as a subtle warning to analysts, we need not back away from the Seventh Symphony and admire it from afar as some have suggested. Instead, we must proceed without too many *a priori* assumptions about how a symphony *should* be put together.

Despite the many reservations of earlier writers with regard to drawing conclusions about the design and structure of the work, the listening experience is infinitely enriched by such endeavors – provided they are supported by the music itself. Tovey prefaced his brief description of musical events in the Seventh with the eloquent, but unfortunate, claim that “An

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2 Veijo Murtomäki provides a thorough and critical exploration of analytical literature on the Seventh Symphony in *Symphonic Unity: The Development of Formal Thinking in the Symphonies of Sibelius*, trans. Henry Bacon (Helsinki: University of Helsinki Press, 1993), 242-80. In light of this, I will not offer a complete overview of the literature, but only single out relevant examples. I will however build upon Murtomäki’s work by assessing more recent literature – including Murtomäki’s work itself.
adequate analysis of this noble work would be too subtle to be readable.” Following in this tradition of reluctant analysis, Burnett James argued that “Since conventional analysis of the Seventh Symphony can only have the effect of breaking apart what was intended to remain an indissoluble unity … it is probably best to attempt no more than a broad description of the music’s evolutionary progress.” Marc Vignal, along with countless others, also expressed considerable uneasiness in discussing form. And all of this discomfort is certainly understandable, if by form one means a rigid, spatial organization of themes and theme groups. Surely, it would be unfortunate to lock something as organic and continuous as the Seventh Symphony in the shackles of analytical convention. In fact, it would be impossible.

But then, how are we to broach these delicate topics of form and structure? From the exploration of genre in the previous chapter, it is evident that the same flexibility in reasoning must be brought to bear on issues pertaining to form and structure. Just as the music can only be heard against both generic traditions simultaneously (fantasy and symphony), its design and structure must be understood as the complex interaction of several conceptual layers. In the present chapter I will attempt to ease some of the discomfort surrounding the Seventh’s form through a multi-layered approach in which no one form will be privileged over all others, but in which form is seen as the result of a number of processes. In the next chapters the focus will shift to structure and its relation to the formal principles described below. Though I do not claim any degree of definitiveness for this approach to form, I do hope to reveal that we can understand

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3 Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis VI: Miscellaneous Notes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 91.
the Seventh as a truly unique, individual form without eschewing all conventional notions of
design and without imprisoning the music in some strict traditional model.

On Formal Design in General

Throughout this study I have made and will continue to make the distinction between
design and structure. Perhaps some clarification of these terms is called for at this point. From a
Schenkerian point of view, design and structure are the two primary forces that govern any
musical text. Following the ideas put forth by David Beach in a recent article, I will regard
“structure” as consisting of music’s voice leading and tonal organization. While there has been
little or no disagreement about the meaning of this term in Schenkerian circles, the term design
has historically been rather nebulous. Again, I will follow Beach’s lead and come to regard
“design” as an umbrella term that covers, among other things, formal, rhythmic, timbral, registral
and motivic organization.

The course of the musical text is governed by the complex counterpoint between design
and structure. Though many Schenkerian studies appear to place more weight on musical
structure, it is my belief that neither design nor structure should be privileged over the other.
Instead, they are the two interdependent conceptual voices that form the syntactical strata of the
musical artwork. At present design will not be treated as any number of surface characteristics,
but as a collection of musical properties as fundamental as structure itself. “And the boldest
prolongations of structural progressions without convincing thematic and rhythmic design,”

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6 David Beach, “Schubert’s Experiments with Sonata Form: Formal-Tonal Design versus Underlying Structure,”
7 Kofi Agawu voices valuable concerns regarding the traditional Schenkerian conception of design and the musical
wrote Felix Salzer “will never be an expression of living art.” If this is true – and I believe it is – how could design be regarded as anything, but fundamental? In a recent article, Nicholas Cook, while discussing those elements that fall under our domain of design, drew the following conclusion:

The answer, clearly, is to think of them as autonomous structural agents, interacting with the fundamental structure through some kind of dialogical relationship. In other words, we would seek to make sense of such phenomena not simply to the extent that they conform to or concretize an underlying, abstract structure, but equally in terms of how they oppose, contradict, or otherwise interact with that structure (and with one another).

It is precisely this interaction of design and structure that lies at the heart of this study. Like most contrapuntal relationships, design-structure counterpoint is defined by points of consonance and points of dissonance. That major changes in design often coincide with important structural junctures is a well-known aspect of Schenkerian theory. Likewise, analysts have devoted attention to those moments when design and structure appear to be out of synch with each other. As Cook stated, such dissonances are also possible between different levels of structure or different aspects of design. Not only will design-structure counterpoint inform this study, but the desire to perfect this conceptual counterpoint was surely one of the primary forces that pulled Sibelius down the Seventh Symphony’s generative path.

But consideration of design and structure were not alone in dictating Sibelius’s compositional process. A third – and equally fundamental – voice must be added to our conceptual counterpoint: meaning. My aim here is not to dig up the well-picked bones of Hanslickian aesthetics or philosophize on music’s ability to narrate or express something beyond structure itself. For purposes of this discussion, I will proceed under the assumption that music,

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especially that of Sibelius’s generation, is capable of evoking meaning through any number of
techniques. My techniques for mapping meaning in the Seventh will be both analytical and
musicological. The pre-textual paratexts – sketches, drafts, etc. – are rife with clues about
semantic content, as is the finished text itself. Biographical and historical data, in addition to
comments on the sketches, hint at potential meanings and these will be discussed in due course.
There is, however, a certain distance between the music itself and these clues. One could even
argue that they are extra-musical issues incapable of carrying any weight into the music itself.
As such they are akin to – and as useless as – those constrictive formal paradigms applied from
without. But to take this view of meaning is to perform a great disservice to both the composer
and his music. It is to rob a composer of his ability to internalize what was once external.
Subject matter may first appear as an external element, but in the course of composition and later
in the course of performance, listening, and analysis, it is internalized. What began its life as
extra-musical becomes musical. Now inseparable from the musical text, meaning can be
understood as another voice in our contrapuntal model: design, structure and meaning.11 In this
model, meaning, as a semantic layer, complements the syntactical forces of design and structure.

An essential methodological question still remains: how do we gain access to the
meaning embedded in the music itself? While there is no easy answer to such a question, I
believe the best approach would be to study the syntactical strata with those initially extra-
musical clues close at hand, in the backs of our minds. By following this path, the many fissures
in the design-structure relationship – the conceptual dissonances – become the locations where
meaning can be discovered. When musical expectations are denied, we are left to wonder why a
new direction has been taken. Often, the dissonances arise from the semantic content of a text

11 I have benefited from Nicholas Cook’s discussion in “Theorizing Musical Meaning,” where meaning is regarded
as one of music’s “emergent” properties, p.192
and represent anything from an obstacle to be overcome to a failure of sorts. In this same way, many other syntactical elements that seem out of place often guide us into a text’s semantic realm. All of these ungrammaticalities – to borrow Michael Riffaterre’s term for those elements of a text that first seem out of place, but ultimately direct the reader (listener) towards a semiotic interpretation – serve as so many points of entry into the text’s meaning.12 Ultimately, the ungrammatical elements help illuminate the programmatic content of an entire composition, its dissonant and consonant moments alike. One of the most important carriers of meaning is the transtextual (or hypertextual) reference, often set off from the text itself as if in quotation marks – in other words as an ungrammaticality. Sibelius’s transtextual references have profound consequences on design, structure, and meaning in the Symphony. As we map out the syntactical organization of the Seventh Symphony, our decisions and findings, like Sibelius’s, will be informed by programmatic concerns as well. In the end, a narrative model for the Symphony can be constructed based on information gleaned from the type of multi-layered analysis outlined above.

Though I will begin my analysis by trying to isolate certain aspects of formal design, I do not mean to contradict my contention that the triumvirate of design, structure, and meaning is indivisible. The discussion of large-scale formal organization in this chapter will serve as a point of departure and a way to gain some sense of the Symphony in its entirety. Once this task is accomplished, formal details can be filled in as the study of structure and meaning – not to mention genesis – builds steam. Furthermore, the bulk of this chapter will be descriptive in nature, while subsequent chapters will illustrate the specific ways in which this formal design functions and interacts with other elements.

Just as the design-structure-meaning counterpoint looms in the background of music, a counterpoint also exists between various principals of musical form. Formal design counterpoint is the relationship between the two main levels of all formal design: architectonic/spatial organization and temporal process. Each of these levels is experienced differently and in different ways, but ultimately an understanding of one must be wedded to the other in order to gain insight into the true nature of a given text.\(^\text{13}\) The temporal aspects of form are experienced directly as the music unfolds in time. An architectural understanding, on the other hand, is largely an a posteriori evaluation of what has just been heard. Of course, the more experience one has with performing or listening to a given composition, the more readily these two interpretive layers are able to interact. In the end, the balance between the temporal and the spatial will be unequal. In an exploration of form in Wagner’s music, Anthony Newcomb has stated that temporal issues weigh more heavily in the music’s outcome.\(^\text{14}\) Sibelius’s own studies of Wagner in the 1890s probably led him to reach similar conclusions about the nature of Wagner’s formal language. More importantly, this approach to form exerted considerable influence over the young Finnish composer and it was an influence that would persist until the end of his career. The Seventh Symphony, described by James Hepokoski as a form “constantly in the process of becoming,” certainly belongs to this tradition of music in which temporal processes outweigh the importance of schematic organization.\(^\text{15}\) It is precisely for this reason that so many attempts at formal analysis have fallen flat.


While temporal issues might guide a large portion of the musical form, there is no lack of architectural organization. Instead, we can only really understand the temporal side of this formal coin by examining how it animates and breaths life into the spatial side. In order to successfully approach the often-mysterious topic of spatial organization in the Seventh Symphony, we must appeal to numerous formal schemata simultaneously. Once again, we may discern a type of formal design counterpoint in the Seventh in which four form-types contribute to the overall shape of the music. The Symphony is not so much a synthesis of elements from each of these forms, but rather a space in which each formal principle exists amongst the others and interacts with them to produce a truly unique text. The four voices in this particular contrapuntal setting are teleological genesis, sonata form, super-sonata/fusion form, and rotational form. Over the course of the Symphony, other forms are evoked, but ultimately denied, as Sibelius toys with the expectations of his listeners. Even the forms and structural devices that are present rarely behave according to conventional expectations. Newcomb followed this same pattern of raised and subsequently frustrated expectations in Wagner’s operas: “A unit may imply one form at one point, then not allow that form to complete itself, forcing the listener to reinterpret the initial passage as part of a different process with new boundaries.” These shifting boundaries in Sibelius, Wagner, and others, represent one example of the temporal processes in music. Before we can understand these, let us examine the music’s architectonic organization from an a posteriori perspective. That is to say, we must engage in what Edward T. Cone has referred to as a Second Reading. This stage of analysis divorces the composition from its temporal side in order to treat it as “a static art-object that can be

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16 Each of these terms will be defined and discussed at length below.
contemplated timelessly.”\textsuperscript{18} While a First Reading is purely experiential and “innocent of analysis,” a Third Reading is an “ideal” First Reading enlightened by the analytical observations culled from the Second Reading.\textsuperscript{19} Let us undertake our Second Reading of formal design by examining each of the four form-types in turn.

**Sonata Form**

When confronted with a symphonic entity like the Seventh Symphony, one is tempted to categorize the design as sonata, rondo, or theme and variations. After all, the larger movements of the traditional symphony usually conformed to one of these paradigms. Though there are many factors that distinguish Sibelius’s Seventh from tradition – the overall one-movement form being the most obvious difference – the temptation to hear the music in one of these formal categories remains. While there are those who eschew *Formenlehre* models in favor of more ad hoc designs, there is a body of analytical literature that attempts to place the Seventh in either the sonata or rondo formal families. Recently, for example, Edward Laufer has made a compelling case for rondo design while Timothy Jackson has argued for a kind of sonata design.\textsuperscript{20} Both Jackson and Laufer avoid strict applications of sonata and rondo principles and allow for a considerable amount of formal deformation in their analysis. Murtomäki and Hepokoski, on the other hand, have recently contributed readings to the Seventh Symphony’s analytical literature that rely heavily on ad hoc formal ideas and less on traditional models.\textsuperscript{21}

\textsuperscript{18} Cone, “Three Ways of Reading a Detective Story,” 80.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 80.
\textsuperscript{20} Edward Laufer, “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” in *Sibelius Studies*, eds. Timothy L. Jackson and Veijo Murtomäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 353-5. Laufer’s formal paradigm is reproduced in Fig. 3.1. From the same volume, Jackson’s article describes the Seventh as a super-sonata form (a term I will explore in depth below). See “Observations on Crystallization and Entropy in the Music of Sibelius and Other Composers,” 261-66.
\textsuperscript{21} Hepokoski briefly outlines the formal design in his New Grove article, “Jean Sibelius,” 337-8. Murtomäki’s reading of the form can be found in *Symphonic Unity*, 278-80 and in “Symphonic Fantasy: A Synthesis of
My own approach to the Symphony stems from a careful consideration of all of these authors and in many ways attempts to synthesize some of their findings. Ultimately, I find that the sonata principle is at work in the background of the Symphony’s design. This is not to say that it is in sonata form in the usual sense, but rather to suggest that the music is in dialogue with the sonata tradition as it opens new formal ground. In this way, we may apply Hepokoski’s much-discussed term, sonata deformation, to the Seventh.\(^{22}\) As Hepokoski has written, formal deformation was a major component in the compositional “game” played by Sibelius and his generation. It was a game whose goal “was implicitly or fragmentarily to refer to the generic formal conventions, perhaps as lost gestures or the founding gestures of the game, but then to override them.”\(^{23}\) These “lost gestures” etc. pull the Seventh Symphony into a vast transtextual space and unite the enigmatic composition with the symphonic tradition at large. They, along with the paratextual apparatus discussed in the previous chapter, help create a wealth of formal, structural and, ultimately, programmatic expectations by opening up this transtextual dialogue. In the course of the Symphony’s unfolding there are moments where the sonata design reveals itself quite clearly and then there are others where it fades into the dark recesses of formal space and exerts little influence. To describe this situation in which traditional forms recede into the background of new formal shapes, Hepokoski writes:

Sibelius’s new shapes are invariably heard against the background of what in many ways they no longer are. In a sense the old formal categories are still “there,” still conceptually present through their conspicuous acoustical absence.\(^{24}\)

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\(^{22}\) Hepokoski has explored the issues of deformation in a number of articles on Sibelius, Strauss and Elgar. The term was first explored in relation to late nineteenth century instrumental music in “Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero?: Strauss’s Don Juan Re-Investigated,” in Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and his Works, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 143.


Traces of sonata from do remain in the Seventh (see Fig. 3.1a). If there is one thing that virtually all commentators agree on, it is the importance of the trombone theme first unfurled in m.60. Indeed, most readings of the Symphony regard this and its two subsequent appearances (m.221ff and m.476ff) as the cornerstones upon which the entire formal edifice is built. Just what the rest of this building looks like is, of course, the subject of much disagreement. In the sonata form model presented here, I have (following Jackson’s reading) posited that the trombone theme represents the first group’s main theme. Its arrival proves to be one of the most significant design-structure consonances in the entire composition. Not only does the design change in m.60 signal the arrival of the exposition, but it also heralds the first emphatic arrival of tonic harmony (C major). The lengthy two-part introduction that precedes this moment alludes to, but never fully establishes the tonic sonority. Instead, the introduction prolongs dominant harmony as it slowly accumulates energy before it sinks into the exposition. Though a detailed analysis of the introduction is presented in the following chapter, it is important to bear in mind just how strongly marked the arrival of the trombone theme is from the standpoint of structure. Following sixty measures of increasing tension, the trombone theme comes as the Symphony’s first real moment of release. In addition to its structural role of leading to the tonic, the introduction lives up to its name by subtly referring to the Symphony’s primary themes and motives. Though the exposition’s beginning is strongly marked structurally, it emerges almost imperceptibly from the introduction’s thematic material. By blurring the boundaries in this fashion, Sibelius could create the much-desired sense of continuity in his music (and create problems for analysts to boot).

Figure 3.1a

Sonata Form in the Seventh Symphony

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part I</td>
<td>1st Group.</td>
<td>Scherzo</td>
<td>1st Group.</td>
<td>&quot;Aino&quot;</td>
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<td>Part II</td>
<td>2nd Group.</td>
<td>Trio</td>
<td>&quot;Catastrophe!&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Aino&quot;</td>
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<td>Closing</td>
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Figure 3.1b

Rondo Model (after Laufer – see note 20)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction.</th>
<th>Main Section I</th>
<th>Developing Episode</th>
<th>Main Section II</th>
<th>Developing Scherzo Episode</th>
<th>Developing Scherzo Episode</th>
<th>Developing Scherzo Episode</th>
<th>Retransition</th>
<th>Main Section III</th>
<th>Coda.</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>242.</td>
<td>285.</td>
<td>320.</td>
<td>343.</td>
<td>407.</td>
<td>449.</td>
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<td>509.</td>
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None of this, however, presents a truly compelling argument in favor of sonata form. The introduction, while appropriate in a large-scale sonata form, could just as easily lead to a rondo design, as Laufer has posited.\textsuperscript{27} In order to understand how the Symphony conforms more readily to the expectations of sonata form, we must first consider the restatements of the trombone theme and then examine the contrasting thematic material. The third, and final, full appearance of the trombone theme (m.476ff) marks the return of the tonic after a long absence. Partially undermined by the obsessive rising eighth note figures in the strings, the formal stability of this return is ensured by the return to familiar thematic material and its pure C major harmony. In a sonata reading this would have to be the first group’s recapitulation, but just as the exposition’s first group could serve as the main theme in a rondo, m.476 could easily mark the beginning of a rondo’s third A section. In either form – sonata or rondo – this passage serves the expected dramatic and rhetorical functions of return and temporary resolution.

With the trombone theme’s first and third presentations fitting comfortably into either formal paradigm, the answers to our questions – if they exist at all – must be found in its central presentation (m.221ff). The trombone theme heard in m.221ff breaks from the model first heard in m.60 and confirmed in m.476 in a number of important ways. Instead of C major, the theme returns in the tonic minor. In addition to this, it emerges from, and is heard against, rather turbulent string figuration. While the recapitulation also coincides with an agitated accompaniment, the theme is still able to assert itself clearly.\textsuperscript{28} The central statement, on the other hand, is not only incomplete, but it drowns in its turbid accompaniment and is unable to bring any real stability. Instead of a central A section, the trombone theme at m.221, rendered unstable by many factors, is the beginning of a sonata’s development section. Even Laufer’s

\textsuperscript{27} See note 20 above and Fig. 3.1b.
\textsuperscript{28} The string figuration does eventually come to the fore in the recapitulation, but the initial stability and prominence of the trombone theme and its tonal underpinning is quite sound. See Chapter 8 below.
own description of this passage sounds a lot like a development as opposed to a central theme zone:

In terms of the larger formal plan, this section is transitory – an intermediate point of arrival: the real, definitive return, with the “correct” notes, is still to come. The “wrong” notes of the minor mode imply this, as does the incomplete presentation of the main theme and the unresolved agitato character, opposing the earlier serenity, as if calling for that serenity to return…

Of course, amidst a backdrop of formal deformation, the developmental nature of the passage does not preclude it from being a rondo’s central A section, but the structural processes launched here deeply engage sonata expectations (see Chapter 5).

Beginning in m.93 the trombone theme and its satellite motives have clearly given way to something new. Characterized by a highly unstable tonal environment, quickening tempo and increased surface activity, this new passage fulfills all of our expectations for a post-Beethovenian second group. Jackson places it in a tradition – Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms, and Bruckner etc. – where the second subject often composes out a search for its tonic, which is usually the structural dominant. Here, Sibelius offers, not only the traditional contrast in thematic material, but also this kind of determined quest for V (G). Once found, the dominant harmony initiates the closing group (the dominant arrives in m.149) and sets up the development’s arrival on C minor. The boundary between second group and closing group must not be drawn too boldly. Indeed, it is somewhat misleading to label m.149ff as the closing group, for this music is really what the second group had been searching for all along. In many respects the closing group, with its scherzando character, is the ideal contrasting section as it is tightly organized, clearly in the dominant, and far more stable than the real second group.

31 Though V is reached in m.149, the closing group can also be read as beginning in m.156. Because of the nature of the music, its continual growth, beginnings of sections are deliberately underemphasized. To pinpoint the exact beginning of the closing group would be misleading and would fail to recognize the sense of continuity in this passage (see Chapter 5).
Despite these concerns, the closing group does ultimately function as such. Furthermore, it would be a mistake to regard the second group as a massive transition leading into m.149. It does have its own compositional logic and its unsettled nature has as much to do with meaning as it does with syntactical matters.

Upon its return in the development section, the materials of the second group and the closing group are significantly transformed. As Fig. 3.1 illustrates, an entire scherzo movement is inserted into the development.\(^\text{32}\) This is not, however, a breakthrough (*Durchbruch*) in which new thematic material tears through the formal fabric. Instead, this scherzo is derived from, and a development of, the second and closing groups. If the closing group only suggests a scherzo, then the development realizes that idea in full. In the end the development’s design, which cycles through the exposition’s material in its original order and eventually leads to a retransition over the structural dominant, is in line with traditional sonata practice. Of course, recomposing material associated with the second and closing groups as an inserted scherzo movement does represent a break with standard sonata practices. The weight given to the second subject in the development also throws the recapitulation off course. One of the most surprising suggestions made in Fig. 3.1 is the lack of a second group recapitulation. But this material is so thoroughly developed and realized in the scherzo, that its appearance in the recapitulation would be somewhat redundant from both a semantic and a syntactic viewpoint. In its place Sibelius leads the recapitulation into what Jackson has termed a “catastrophe” (mm.500-510).\(^\text{33}\) Though this is mostly a structural failure – as is explained in Chapter 8 – it also helps bring about a serious deformation in the recapitulation space. Following the catastrophe, Sibelius composes a “design

\(^{32}\) Jackson and Laufer also read this section as a scherzo: Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization”, 266; and Laufer, “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” 354. For Jackson, it is inserted into the development, while for Laufer it usurps the place of a rondo’s contrasting C section.

coda” (mm.510-525). From a Schenkerian perspective, a true coda can only begin after the structure has resolved. Here, however, the coda commences before the final Urlinie descent and therefore must be regarded as a thematic or design coda. The many breaks with standard sonata practice – which, of course, was never all that standardized to begin with – do not militate against a sonata-oriented reading of the Seventh as much as they promote a free dialogic relationship between this music and the expectations of sonata form. When the second group fails to appear in the recapitulation, or when it tries to blossom into a full-fledged movement within development space, sonata form is not destroyed, but is expanded and made expressive in new ways. All of these deformations, or ungrammaticalities, arise from the Symphony’s musical and programmatic content, and it was a deep attention to content, not form, that fueled Sibelius’s compositional fire. Composing at the outer limits of what sonata form could be, Sibelius was blessed with the freedom of the “Fertile Verge.”

Super-Sonata and Fusion Forms

Any discussion of Sibelius’s formal language must ultimately address the topic of fusion forms. A technique first practiced in the Third Symphony and subsequently employed in the Fifth, the compression of two movements into one – not a surprising strategy from a tone poet – paved the way for the Seventh Symphony’s complex design. The impulse to join movements emerged from the same historical current responsible for the ever-increasing degree of cyclicism in multi-movement texts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see Chapter 2). Sibelius, as a willing participant in this tradition, inherited many cyclic techniques from the likes of Beethoven, Berlioz, Liszt, and Schumann and was determined to not only use these techniques, but also to extend and refine them. By the time of the Seventh Symphony, Sibelius
was a seasoned master of this tradition and was ready to make his most radical contribution to it. Each of his previous six symphonies – not to mention works such as *Kullervo* and *The Lemminkäinen Suite* – is the site of considerable cyclic thinking and organization. As these techniques are well represented in the analytical literature, we need not explore them further here. Some aspects of the fusion technique do, on the other hand, require careful consideration, as they are of great importance to the final version of the Seventh Symphony.

The easiest way to join movements – or just about anything else – is simply to butt them against each other, end to end. In music this is readily accomplished by proceeding from one movement to the next without pause. Of course, if this is to be successful, structural and motivic connections must also exist between the joined movements. Beethoven’s Opus 131 String Quartet provides a quintessential model of this technique, which was first attempted by Sibelius in his Second Symphony. Unlike the Beethoven example, in which all movements are linked, the Second Symphony only features this device between its last two movements. The effect, however, is awesome, as the Finale seems to grow directly out of the third movement and the Symphony concludes as if it were one sweeping, dramatic gesture.³⁴ Perhaps the success of this conclusion gave Sibelius the idea, if not the confidence, to join the Third Symphony’s last two movements. Here, for the first time, Sibelius had a true fusion of movements. The Scherzo (third movement), in the course of its unfolding, grows in intensity and plants the seeds of the Finale theme, which now assumes a recapitulatory role. While the interconnections are magnificently realized, the inseparable two-movement complex still proceeds as an ordered

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³⁴ Jackson has convincingly proposed a structural link between the final movements of the Second Symphony, whereby the two are linked by a massive auxiliary cadence. The Finale’s tonic serves as a structural goal of the preceding movement. See “The Maiden with a Heart of Ice: ‘Crystallization’ and Compositional Genesis in Sibelius’s *Pohjola’s Daughter* and Other Works,” in *Proceedings from the Second International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki November 25-29, 1995*, eds. Veijo Murtomäki, Kari Kilpeläinen and Risto Väisänen (Helsinki: Sibelius Academy, Department of Composition and Music Theory, 1998), 249-50.
statement of one movement after another. In the Fifth Symphony, Sibelius reached new heights in fusion form as he combined the first and second movements in an even more integrated fashion.35 Instead of butting the two successive movements up against one another, the second movement unfolds within the space of the first. As the inserted Scherzo progresses, the boundaries between first and second movements virtually disappear. Here then is not a simple welding together of two separate entities, but the creation of a single unity, which paradoxically suggests a multi-movement design. Though fusion form is absent in the Sixth Symphony, it, like the Fourth, is noteworthy for its highly cyclic organization.36 The compositional experiences gleaned from all of these Symphonies would inform and influence the creation and final form of the Seventh Symphony.

All of the above is not to suggest an evaluative diachronic approach to Sibelius’s oeuvre in which the earlier Symphonies can be regarded as mere stops along the way towards greater unity and originality in the Seventh. A diachronic approach has many merits and does reveal a logical line of development, but by approaching the Seventh in this way, I do not mean to rob the earlier texts of their status as musical masterpieces in their own right. But the historical evidence suggests that this logical line of development, of increasing formal compression, was not as neatly cumulative as the final versions of the Symphonies might suggest. Hardly an exaggeration of his compositional process, Sibelius’s belief that content should engender the outer form of a work was an idea he lived for. Both the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies began their lives as four-movement designs. It was a deeper understanding of their content that led him to join movements together, not the impulse to create something new or to better his previous

35 The most illuminating analysis of the Fifth Symphony to date is Hepokoski, *Symphony No.5*, 60-70. See also Murtomäki, *Symphonic Unity*, 142-92.
36 Hepokoski’s discussion of the Sixth reveals that, despite its four movement design, its formal organization was born of the same desire for musical continuity as is found in the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies: “Rotations, Sketches and the Sixth Symphony,” passim.
efforts. Surely the precedent of the Third influenced the Fifth as the Third and Fifth influenced the one-movement plan of the Seventh, but despite these and other historical precedents Sibelius did not need formal fusion to achieve unity. Fusion form was not a predetermined goal, but unity was – the Fourth and Sixth Symphonies clearly testify to this. The Seventh Symphony was built from the inside out, as the archival evidence makes explicit, with the personal and historical architext of fused forms as an outside influence.

In order to reconcile the Seventh’s multi-movement effect with its underlying sonata design, Jackson has proposed that it displays the characteristics of what he terms super-sonata form. Jackson introduced this approach to design, which began with Beethoven, as follows:

In super-sonata form (sometimes called a “sonata-in-one”), the three spatial divisions of sonata form – exposition, development and recapitulation – are superimposed upon the design of a unified – usually (but not always) continuous – four-movement macro-symphonic form. In this superposition, the first movement generally fills the exposition space…and the Finale is assigned to recapitulation space…The spatial envelope of either “developmental space” or “recapitulatory space” is then extended by interpolating spatial envelopes for the other movements, usually a slow movement and Scherzo, into the spatial envelope of the development or recapitulation.

By applying this formal archetype to Sibelius’s Seventh, Jackson arrives at a reading of form like the one presented in Fig. 3.1. While I believe that the super-sonata concept can be applied to the Seventh, I also find that it must be amended to better suit the many peculiarities of the music’s design. The Scherzo that fills a considerable amount of developmental space fits nicely into this super-sonata paradigm, but the remainder of the Symphony is a bit more problematic in this regard. In the model super-sonata, where there are actually multiple movements, the Finale does recompose elements of the first movement, but it is not a typical recapitulation. The themes of the recapitulation resemble and recall those of the initial movement, but they are not typically the

38 Timothy Jackson, *Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.6 (Pathétique)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 26-7. A central component of Jackson’s theory is that super-sonata design is coordinated with a “meta-Ursatz” that bridges the structures of each individual movement.
same themes as is the case in a normal sonata. As we have already seen, and as Jackson acknowledges, the Seventh’s recapitulation is a true return to the first group material (recall that the second group is cut out of the recapitulation). Instead of implying a four-movement design, the Symphony presents a slow alternation between a slow movement and a fast movement. Laufer, in his modified rondo analysis, claims that the stable A sections (the trombone theme etc.) act as a slow movement with the faster developmental episodes and Scherzo interspersed as a recurring and contrasting fast movement. Perhaps the best way to understand the Symphony’s multiple-movement effect would be to remove Laufer’s idea from its rondo setting and place it alongside a sonata frame of reference. Having accomplished this we can come to regard the entire form as a deformation of Jackson’s super-sonata paradigm. Figure 3.2 illustrates this spatial organization.

Ultimately, the multi-movement effect in the Seventh Symphony should be understood as a convergence of the formal thinking found in the Third and Fifth Symphony’s fusion forms and the, larger-scale, super-sonata designs discussed by Jackson. That this is the case is made clear by the nature of the generative process (see Chapter 7), in which Sibelius essentially combined elements of a slow second movement with a fast fourth movement. As this combination developed, the initial fourth movement material took on scherzo-like characteristics and the final formal shape was close to the Scherzo-Finale of the Third Symphony and the first movement-Scherzo of the Fifth. Unlike the earlier fusions, where one movement leads into and becomes the other, the Seventh alternates between the two. The first movement’s Adagio material leads to

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Figure 3.2

Fusion/Super-sonata Design
the closing group’s proto-scherzo by way of the transitional second group (see Fig. 3.2). Next, the agitated atmosphere of this scherzando passage leads directly into the development, which marks a return to the Adagio material, albeit deformed. Up to this point the fusion form is not unlike the Fifth where one “movement” leads to the next and, ultimately, this leads to a combination of the two (the trombone theme’s return in m.221 grows directly out of and is “contaminated” with elements from the proto-scherzo). After the first group’s development, the Seventh diverges from the Fifth’s precedent by recomposing the entire process. In this recomposition, the closing group emerges as the full-fledged scherzo found in m.285ff. Following a transition (m.409ff) and retransition (m.449ff), the Recapitulation arrives with a return to the Adagio material. What Sibelius was able to accomplish with this alternation was the effect of a full symphony, complete with changing affects and tempi. It is for this reason that we must maintain a dialogue between one-movement sonata form, super-sonata form and fusion form in order to begin to understand the Seventh’s spatial organization. The large-scale symphonic effect created by the alternation of potential movements allows the one-movement design to stand alone as a complete Symphony. Earlier, when he had contemplated publishing the Fifth’s opening movement-complex as a complete text, Sibelius must have realized that, despite its variety of material, it lacked the large-scale power of the super-sonata form provided by the two final movements (see Chapter 2).

Rotational Form

Thus far form has been examined from a couple of spatial vantage points. All the while I have placed an emphasis on the sense of continuity and the slow process of becoming that characterize the Symphony, but little attention has been devoted to how these processes really work. Such attention to spatial details is a good place to start, but in the end it is “only a game of
boxes,” to quote Murtonäki, “which tells very little about the internal life of the symphony.”41 There is of course a limit to what analysis can reveal about form’s temporal elements: ultimately they must be experienced to be understood. But, as Cone’s Second and Third Readings illustrate, informed experience must be preceded by the somewhat artificial information gleaned from “timeless” contemplation. Certain approaches to the Symphony’s design are more attuned to the temporal side of formal design counterpoint. These approaches, developed by Hepokoski to classify families of formal deformations, are rotational form and teleological genesis.42

In a series of writings on Sibelius, Hepokoski identifies rotational form as the primary means of musical organization employed by the composer in his later music (from Luonnotar (1913) on).43 While the technique can be witnessed as early as “Kullervo’s Youth” – the second movement of Kullervo (1892) – it was not until the later works that it became a central feature of all of his major compositions.44 Hepokoski defines the rotational principle in the following way:

By rotational form I mean a structural process within which a basic thematic or rhetorical pattern presented at the outset of a piece (the initial passing-through or “rotation” of thematic and harmonic materials) is subsequently treated to a series of immediate, though often substantially varied, repetitions. Rotational form may also be described as a set of rhetorical cycles or waves, in which the end of each rotation reconnects with (or cycles back to) its beginning – that is, to the beginning of the next rotation…45

Here is an approach to form that is able to conveniently capture aspects of both spatial and temporal design properties. Though rotational form differs greatly from piece to piece – it implies no universal pattern of spatial organization like sonata form – there are still certain

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41 Murtonäki, *Symphonic Unity*, 280.
42 Hepokoski, *Symphony No.5*, 6-7 and 19-30.
45 Hepokoski, “Rotations, Sketches and the Sixth Symphony,” 325.
normative expectations. Sibelius’s Seventh, as one might expect, challenges these expectations. Namely, its rotational form is surprisingly free and rather unbalanced. Of its six rotations, some are quite short while others are rather long. For Hepokoski, this represents a sub-type of rotational form that is defined by a short referential statement that “generates relatively unconstrained expansions and accumulations in the succeeding rotations.” This, like the way one thematic area naturally grows into the next, is a manifestation of Sibelius’s nature-mystical outlook. By freely rotating through the material, Sibelius created what Hepokoski terms a “meditative sway” in which deeper secrets are revealed with each pass through the material just as deeper secrets are revealed through prolonged nature meditation. This kind of cycling through material and “meditative sway” is also closely related to the slow-fast alternation discussed above. Sibelius was also attracted to the rotational design for its dramatic potential. As he wrote to Aino during the composition of “Kullervo’s Youth,” the increasing tension provided by rotating theme zones was rather appealing: “I have already written a lullaby and this theme will grow in intensity on each return.”

Amongst all of his Sibelius writings, Hepokoski only touches upon how the rotational principle might work in the Seventh. The first part of the introduction (mm.1-22) forms the first, or referential, rotation (I will label this RRef). Next, Hepokoski identifies mm.22-89 as the second rotation, but then offers no more information on the remainder of the piece form a rotational point of view. My own reading differs from Hepokoski’s in terms of the second

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46 A valuable study of rotational form in Classical and Romantic music can be found in Warren Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations,” in Bruckner Studies, eds. Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 264-271. Many of the techniques outlined by Darcy had a profound influence on Sibelius’s own compositional language.
47 Hepokoski, “Rotations, Sketches and the Sixth Symphony,” 327.
48 Ibid., 327.
49 ETL I, 100.
50 Hepokoski, “Jean Sibelius” in New Grove, 338. To be fair, Hepokoski, in this article was only seeking to show that rotational form exists in the Seventh, not to explore it in detail.
rotation. Figure 3.3 documents my reading of the rotational structure in the Seventh (this broad overview is fleshed out in subsequent chapters). In this proposed reading, each rotation is an ordered presentation of three thematic zones, labeled as a-c. Each theme zone can be loosely defined as follows: theme zone a consists of rising scale figures as at the opening of the piece; zone b is material related to the trombone theme; and zone c is the more chromatic, contrasting material which eventually blossoms into the second group and scherzo. Though the zones are usually presented in order, they sometimes overlap, as do the rotations themselves due to the circular nature of the form. While the specifics of each theme zone are discussed in detail in Chapters 4, 5 and 8, for now we must consider them within the larger context of the Symphony as a whole.

The rising scalar figures (mm.56-59) that immediately precede the exposition recompose mm.1-2 and therefore constitute a return to a. But reading m.56 as a strong structural point would be counter-intuitive and hardly justifiable. As we know, the real point of arrival is at m.60 with the trombone theme’s entrance, but a new rotation (R₃) beginning in m.56 might imply otherwise. This implication is negated by the fact that zone a is introductory, its purpose is to lead into zones b and c. Therefore, the fact that many rotations begin prior to the major formal points illustrated in Fig. 3.1 should be of no concern. Perhaps the most abnormal aspect of this rotational design is the sheer size of R₄ and R₅. In both cases the extended duration arises from the great emphasis placed upon c material (the second and closing groups in R₄ and the scherzo in R₅). The final rotation (R₆) coincides with the sonata’s recapitulation and coda and – despite the second group’s absence from the recapitulation – includes references to c material. This overall rotational design, when superimposed upon sonata and super-sonata forms, breaths
Figure 3.3

Overview of Rotational Form

mm. 1. 7. 14. 22. 29. 50. 56. 60. 80. 90. 92. 93.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{b.} & \quad \text{c.} & \quad \text{a.} & \quad \text{b.} & \quad (\quad) & \quad \text{c.} & \quad \text{a.} & \quad \text{b.} & \quad \text{c.} \\
\left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right]
\end{align*}
\]

\[
R_{\text{ref}} \quad \left[ \right] \quad R_3 \quad R_4
\]

R_2

mm. 208. 221. 242. 449. 476. 495. 511. 525.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{b.} & \quad \text{c.} & \quad \text{a.} & \quad \text{b.} & \quad \text{c.} & \quad \text{b.} \\
\left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right] & \quad \left[ \right]
\end{align*}
\]

\[
R_5 \quad \left[ \right] \quad R_6
\]
considerable life into the Symphony, but all of the dramatic tension it creates ultimately serves
the large-scale teleological patterns that bind the whole formal design together.

Teleological Genesis

If each rotation implies a life cycle of birth – full flowering – decay – rebirth on a
middleground level, then the process known as teleological genesis realizes this paradigm on a
much deeper level. Defined by Hepokoski as “the concept of a composition as gradually
generative towards the revelation of a higher or fuller condition,” teleological genesis was an
overriding principle in many modernist compositions.51 Not reserved entirely for single
movements, the teleological principle often bound together multi-movement structures in which
the goal, or telos, was reached in the Finale. A quintessential example of this can be found in
Sibelius’s Fifth Symphony, where the end of the Finale serves as the thematic and structural goal
of the entire piece.52 Though Warren Darcy has defined four classes of teleological genesis
through his study of Bruckner’s symphonies, it would be best to approach Sibelius’s Seventh less
systematically.53 A long-time admirer of Bruckner’s symphonies, Sibelius was undoubtedly
influenced by the earlier master’s teleological structures, but had his own particular
understanding of the technique, which manifested itself differently from one composition to the
next.54 One of Darcy’s more general contributions to formal theory, “the rebirth paradigm,” is
rather useful for gaining insight into the Seventh’s teleological design.55 This process whereby

51 Hepokoski, Symphony No.5, 26.
52 Ibid., 83-4.
54 Though the Sibelius literature is full of references to Bruckner’s influence, the only sustained English-language
examination to date can be found in Phillip Coad, “Bruckner and Sibelius” (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University,
1985). See also Timothy Jackson, “The Finale of Bruckner’s Fourth Symphony and the Tragic Reversed Sonata
Form,” in Bruckner Studies, eds. Timothy L. Jackson and Paul Hawkshaw (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
1997), 201-3.
“a symphonic movement passes through a series of metaphorical “deaths” and “rebirths” on its way toward a final revelation” is difficult to differentiate from teleological genesis and rotational form, but it clearly is at work in most of Sibelius’s late masterpieces. Darcy’s outline of how this typically works in a movement, while valid for Bruckner, unsurprisingly needs revision in a Sibelian context.

In Figure 3.4 I have outlined the Symphony’s teleological organization. With the trombone theme serving as the initial telos, the text is comprised of four large-scale, overlapping waves (labeled as Phases I – IV), three of which crest with the three statements of the trombone theme. The final phase overrides the recapitulatory trombone theme, passes through the “catastrophe,” and eventually swells into the grand structural telos (m.522ff), the concluding C major chord. Though C major is established with the trombone theme’s first and third presentations, it is quickly undermined. Each phase represents an attempt, or a renewed attempt, at definitively gaining the tonic sonority, which is denied until the very end. Both Darcy and Hepokoski have noted that this was a common teleological practice. At the heart of this type of teleological endeavor was the desire to achieve the final tonic (telos) and revel in its pure sound, or Klang. Following in the tradition of Wagner and Bruckner, Sibelius took the idea of composing with slow moving sound sheets to new extremes. “At times,” writes Hepokoski, “Sibelius’s works strike us as proto-minimalist sound sheets, whose actively moving timbre surfaces are undergirded by a more fundamental, deep-current slow motion.” Here again, we find Sibelius in all of his nature-mystical glory. This nature-inspired attention to sound emerges

56 Ibid., 262.
57 This is, of course, related to the fantasy issues discussed in Chapter 2. Namely, the rotational and teleological aspects of the Seventh discussed here recall Laufer’s discussion of the fantasy that seems to go “astray” only to find its way again. See Laufer, “On the Fantasy,” Intégral 2 (1988), 99.
58 Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations, 276-7; and Hepokoski, Symphony No.5, 27-9.
59 Hepokoski, Symphony No. 5, 28.
Figure 3.4

Teleological Design

mm.1 → Telos I → Telos II → Telos III → Structural Telos! C major Klang

Phase I → Phase II → Phase III → Phase IV

V → I (DTA)

Massive Auxiliary Cadence
in the Seventh Symphony, though it is not as exaggerated as it was in the *Swan of Tuonela* or would soon be in *Tapiola*. Through the meditative experience of each rotation and of each teleological phase – the meditative sway – the music slowly reveals its deep secrets. Only after six rotations spread out over some five hundred and twenty-two measures is the truth, pure C major harmony, unveiled. At this moment the thematic goals that seemed so important earlier are distilled to their essence: a 9-8 suspension and a yearning resolution of 7 to 8 over C major. Once the tonic is achieved, the music ends without all of the rhetorical V – I affirmations found in other goal driven pieces like the Finale of Beethoven’s Fifth or in that of Sibelius’s own Fifth. Instead it briefly revels in C major *Klang* and then simply stops (see Chapter 8 below).

In light of the Symphony’s conclusion we can come to understand the trombone theme as a provisional telos, with the more elemental tonic as the true structural goal. A similar technique was employed in the Fifth Symphony’s last movement. As Hepokoski as suggested, the “Swan Hymn” (the movement’s main theme), which at first sounds like the main point of arrival, is ultimately undercut by a deep-seated drive towards the true structural telos, in this case E♭ major. From an analytical perspective, the teleological principal can be understood as uniting design and structure and the spatial with the temporal. Furthermore, by demystifying teleological design we can gain profound insights into a text’s narrative and dramatic structures. Of the drive towards a final *Klang*, Darcy has written, “much of the drama in the work arises from the way in which this drive is delayed, blocked, or hindered.” Much of the structural analysis herein will be concerned with detailing how this works in the Seventh Symphony, but only through an understanding of formal design counterpoint is such an analysis possible. Indeed, the structure itself composes out local rotational and teleological processes on a number

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60 Ibid., 84.
61 Darcy, “Bruckner’s Sonata Deformations,” 276.
of occasions that mirror and contribute to the overall effect of these forms. Structurally, the massive *Klang*-directed teleological thrust has the effect of a V – I auxiliary cadence that spans the entire Symphony even though the tonic is firmly established in mm.60 and 476 (see the bottom of Fig. 3.4).62

Summary of Formal Design Counterpoint

Figure 3.5 illustrates the interaction of all four of these concepts: sonata form, modified super-sonata/fusion form, rotational form and teleological genesis. From the perspective of a Second Reading, Fig. 3.5 goes a long way toward explaining the nature of the Symphony’s design. The multiplicity of ideas reflected in this analysis is neither a sign of indecision nor of a post-modern reluctance to arrive at any one answer. Instead, it is a flexible approach to a complex and unique musical language attuned to both tradition and innovation. Because Sibelius allowed the content to “create the form and stabilize [his] path,” each of the later works demands a multileveled approach to form.63 Both Hepokoski and Murtomäki offer similarly contrapuntal readings of the form, but my reading, unlike theirs, attempts to give voice to the music’s many deformational techniques while simultaneously reconciling them with more traditional aspects of sonata form.64 Towards the end of his chapter on the Seventh, Murtomäki poses the following question:

> Could form be a contrapuntal phenomenon in that the importance of the different levels on which the music exists keep on changing, thus forming a spatio-temporal organism of tones which can be understood in different ways at different moments?65

The answer, I believe, is an emphatic yes!

62 Jackson also reads the Seventh as a composed out auxiliary cadence. In his analysis the structural telos is labeled as the “definitive tonic arrival” (DTA). I will use both terms throughout this study. See Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization,” 260.
63 Quoted in Hepokoski, *Symphony No. 5*, 21.
64 See note 21 above.
Figure 3.5

Formal Design Counterpoint:

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Massive auxiliary cadence!

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There is one other essential aspect of form that has yet to receive any consideration, for the ideas of genesis and growth that are so important to the design of this text also give rise to this type of genesis on a metaphorical level. As the music unfolds it implies growth and creation in terms of form, structure, and meaning, but it also deals with the subject of genesis in another way. In an essay on the painting of the renowned twentieth-century American artist Richard Diebenkorn, art historian Ruth Fine writes that “to share the fullest experience of Diebenkorn’s art, a viewer must participate as closely as possible in a work’s evolution, deconstructing and reconstructing as a central part of the activity of looking.” If we replace Diebenkorn with Sibelius and “looking” with “listening,” we arrive at a statement that has enormous relevance for the Seventh Symphony. It is my firm belief that a true understanding of this music cannot be achieved without a thorough account of its genesis, for it is in this Symphony that the formal processes that govern the finished score are one and the same as the processes that produced it. Each time we hear the Seventh Symphony, we hear Sibelius improvising with the orchestra, fantasy-like, forging a continuous symphonic entity by welding together the remains of a discarded four-movement design. Here, then, form is genesis.

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66 The reference to Diebenkorn is not as random as it may first appear. He was an admirer of Sibelius’s music and would habitually listen to the music of composers like Mozart, Beethoven and Sibelius as he painted. See Ruth E. Fine, “Reality Digested, Transmuted and Twisted,” in The Art of Richard Diebenkorn, ed. Jane Livingston (Berkeley: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York with University of California Press, 1997), 94.
CHAPTER 4

STRUCTURE AND MEANING IN THE INTRODUCTION

Tonal music’s power to create a sense of future through the specificity of the expectations it can arouse has no parallel in any other kind of music of which I am aware; that its signals are perhaps as often contradicted as they are confirmed only serves to make musical time a more powerful symbolic representation of human temporal experience. And further, a piece that struggles to achieve its tonic presents a world of sound and feeling very different from one where the tonic is asserted as a given at the outset.

Carl Schachter

With an almost imperceptible timpani stroke on G, the Seventh Symphony begins its slow and subtly dramatic emergence from the preceding silence. At first glance it is a remarkably simple beginning to a remarkably complex symphony – a rising scale over the first two measures that makes its way from the timpani’s G up through the strings – but this simplicity betrays a deeper structural and semantic meaning. The ascending scale, in this case G mixolydian, is perhaps one of the most basic, yet most powerful means through which a composer can create dramatic action in tonal music. Whether stated directly in the foreground or spread out across larger structural spans as a rising linear progression, the scale is (or segments of it are) charged with expressive potential. Each new note in the series heightens expectations for the next and contributes to the cumulative teleological drive towards an expected final pitch. Of course, the scale is imbued with its own intrinsic sense of what Carl Schachter has referred to as “tonal rhythm,” or the impression of rhythm that arises from the patterned movement between referential and transitional tones. This rhythmic property in scales, first discussed by Viktor Zukerkandl and later elaborated by Schachter, constitutes both a motion away from the tonic pitch towards the fifth scale degree and a motion from the fifth back to the tonic albeit an octave


higher.\textsuperscript{3} In other words, though the succession of pitches remains in the ascendant, the actual motion of tones implies a departure and a return. This seemingly paradoxical phenomenon actually strengthens the forward thrust of the line toward the octave. Though the scale that opens the Seventh Symphony is mixolydian, these rhythmic properties still persist, but the point where motion away from G becomes motion towards G is C rather than D. In order to further dramatize the rising scale figure, Sibelius, through a cunning and subtle act of compositional brilliance, has the double basses unfold the scale an eighth note behind the pace established by the celli. “The effect,” as Lionel Pike has observed, “is one of continual upward resolution of a dissonance.”\textsuperscript{4}

Composers, as is well known, have enjoyed a long history of playing with the expectations inherent in scales and linear progressions – delaying, denying or realizing them – and Sibelius was no different. Here, the accumulation of orchestral sound combined with the forces of tonal rhythm and upward resolution creates an overwhelming sense of expectation and yearning for something higher. Indeed, when this scale comes to rest, as it must, one naturally assumes it will be on some high G supported by either G major (V) or C major (I) harmony. In light of all this, it comes as quite a surprise – and a rather jarring one at that – when, on the downbeat of m.3, the scale is abruptly halted on a \textit{fortzando} E\textsubscript{ß}. To make this chromatic slippage all the more shocking, the insurgent E\textsubscript{ß} is supported with an A\textsubscript{ß} minor \textfrac{3}{4} chord. Once sounded, this crisis chord deflects the hopeful yearning of the opening scale into a dark and chromatic digression (mm.3-6) that points toward an entirely new set of meanings.

The opening scale, by raising both structural and semantic expectations, creates that “sense of future” referred to by Schachter in the passage that prefaces this chapter. The structural expectations born of this seemingly simple scale – the attainment of G in the upper voice supported by C in the bass – and the quest to reach these goals serve as a musical expression of an extraordinary human drama. In the current chapter I will study the ways in which the introduction (the Symphony’s first teleological phase and first two rotations) establishes the structural, formal and semantic patterns and expectations that govern the entire text. As we will see, the Seventh composes out the kind of structural drama alluded to by Schachter, where the tonic is to be achieved only after considerable struggle and where musical events resonate well with human experience.

The Hypertextual Frame (Part One)

Thus far the opening measures have been described in terms of their abstract emotional properties, but one of my central aims in this study is to propose a reading of the Seventh that links these abstract observations – about hope, despair and other emotions – to more specific events. The nature of the music itself – its design and structure – made these general expressive properties accessible to our understanding and opened up a dialogue between the semantic and syntactical aspects of the Symphony. While some scholars view access into this kind of dialogue as a stopping point in analysis, I will attempt to broaden the dialogue to include historical and biographical information as a source of the music’s semantic voice. By allowing this voice to speak more fully, by listening carefully to what it has to tell us, we can learn much about Sibelius, the Seventh Symphony and his music in general. As I have already suggested in the previous chapter, this voice may first be found speaking through the many ungrammaticalities and transtextual traces that in part constitute a given composition. As these often-peculiar
moments are demystified, we can endeavor to find the semantic voice in the remainder of the
text – how it interacts with design and structure and how it composes seemingly extra-musical
phenomena into the very fabric of the text itself.

Sibelius, as one would expect, remained either silent or aloof when asked about meaning
in his music, yet despite this reticence, his music often invites and sustains deep hermeneutic
inquiry. One such invitation extended from the Seventh to the willing hermeneut comes in the
form of what I term the “Hypertextual frame.” Gérard Genette defines hypertextuality – the
fourth category of his theory of transtextuality – as “any relationship that unites a text B (which I
shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the hypotext).”5 The
Seventh Symphony is bracketed by strong hypertextual allusions that, in essence, create a
hypertextual frame, which conditions and guides the listening experience. The hypertextual
frame provides referential points of entry into and departure from a textual space. In this way, it
functions much like a paratext by begging that the text be received from a certain perspective and
with certain expectations.6

Drawing on several hypotexts, Sibelius constructed just such a frame around the Seventh.
Of course, this Symphony is hardly the only example of the hypertextual frame. It can be found
in any number of compositions by any number of composers.7 At present, we need not explore
the issue in exhaustive detail with myriad examples, but perhaps a couple are called for.
Brahms, in his G major Violin Sonata, Op. 78, established a hypertextual frame by alluding to
two of his own Lieder. Though references to two songs from his Opus 59 collection, Regenlied

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(Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 5. In many ways Genette’s hypertextuality replaces common uses of
the word intertextuality, which is used by Genette as his first transtextual category to describe exact quotations and
6 See Chapter 2 above for a discussion of paratextuality.
7 To achieve the same effect as the hypertextual frame, composers often place clear hypotexts at either the beginning
or ending of a composition to better direct the listener. Unfortunately, limitations of time and space do not allow for
consideration of these “incomplete” framing devices.
and *Nachklang*, can be found throughout the Sonata’s three movements, the third movement was clearly designed with this referential frame in mind. Here, Brahms began the movement with an explicit reference to the songs and concludes with a transformed version of this material. By incorporating these hypotexts, Brahms ensconced the movement in the semantic fabric of the song texts and in so doing demanded that the music be heard with these texts in mind. The ways in which these hypotexts become structuralized and transformed through the space of the hypertext provide vital information for unlocking the narrative course of a composition.

Sibelius also employed the hypertextual frame outside of the Seventh Symphony. One important early example can be found in the *Swan of Tuonela* from the *Lemminkäinen Suite* (1893, rev.1897, 1900). As Erik Tawaststjerna first noted, the *Swan* begins and ends with an explicit reference to the framing measures of Wagner’s prelude to *Lohengrin* where the tonic sonority is presented as rising through the orchestral texture. Sibelius’s movement in A minor may even be regarded as a minor-mode recomposition of the A major prelude. Both the *Lemminkäinen Suite* and *Lohengrin* deal strongly with such topoi as swan symbolism, love, desire, and transformation, which would have made the opera an ideal source of inspiration for the young Sibelius who was then struggling to come to terms with Wagner’s music. This allusion to *Lohengrin* is confirmed and bolstered by the main melody intoned by the English horn – to be understood here as the voice of the swan – throughout the movement. As Ex.4.1a-c suggests, the swan’s theme outlines and chromatically deforms the opera’s swan *Leitmotiv*.

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8 As is well known, Brahms alluded to the presence of the *Lieder* in a cryptic letter to Theodore Billroth. This, of course, is evidence that Brahms expected his devoted audience to recognize the hypertextuality of the Sonata. For a compelling study of how meaning can be deduced by reconciling the hypertextual and structural properties of the music see Dillon Parmer, “Brahms, Song Quotation, and Secret Programs,” *Nineteenth Century Music* 19/2 (1995), 167-77.

9 ETL I, 172.

10 In Ex.4.1b-c I have chosen to use the swan theme from m.36ff because it appears at the same pitch level as the Wagner and because it is harmonized with the *Tristan* chord. The theme appears at several pitch levels over the course of the music.
Example 4.1a:
Wagner: *Lohengrin*, Act I, Scene iii.

Example 4.1b:
Sibelius: *The Swan of Tuonela*

Example 4.1c:
Reduction of 4.1b.

Example 4.2:
Sibelius: *Luonnotar*

m.203ff.
Both of these Wagnerian allusions are furthered by the great emphasis Sibelius placed on the *Tristan* chord throughout the *Swan of Tuonela* (see the discussion below).\footnote{I have explored these issues in the *Swan of Tuonela* in greater detail in an unpublished paper: “‘like a gleaming, silver ribbon’: Some Thoughts Concerning Sibelius’s Swan Symbolism.”}

Having defined the hypertextual frame, we may now return to the Seventh Symphony. Three hypotexts are of primary concern here: Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde* and Sibelius’s *Luonnotar* (1913) in the initial measures and Sibelius’s *Valse Triste* in the concluding section (mm.518-22). The connection to *Valse Triste* will be explored below in the final chapter. Similarly, the reference to *Luonnotar*, though present in the opening, is made more explicit in the recapitulation and will therefore be examined here and in the concluding chapter.

Luonnotars

*Luonnotar*, as a hypotext, manifests itself in the Seventh Symphony in two distinct ways: as the source of a specific deep middleground motive and as the source of a closely related, though more general, motive that alerts us to the presence of a particular topos. Before identifying these motivic connections, let us consider the general nature of *Luonnotar* itself. Drawn from Runo I of the *Kalevala*, *Luonnotar*, a tone poem for solo soprano and orchestra, depicts the mythical creation of the world. There are several significant differences between Sibelius’s version of the story and the original. In the *Kalevala*, Ilmatar – herself a *luonnotar* or [feminine] air spirit – is impregnated by the surging waves of the sea. After many years (approximately seven hundred thirty-nine and a half!) and considerable effort on the part of her unborn child, she gives birth to Väinämöinen (the epic’s central figure). Before this birth takes place the *luonnotar* is joined by a duck searching for a nesting place. Ilmatar raises her knee from the water, where she has been swimming for seven hundred lonely years, and provides a
place to nest. Over time the duck’s eggs begin to heat up on Ilmatar’s knee causing her to jerk her leg. This reaction thrusts the eggs into the water below where they break, but in the processes are wondrously transformed into the earth, sky, sun, moon and stars. Sibelius’s representation of the luonnotar makes no mention of Väinämöinen or of her watery insemination. Instead, as James Hepokoski has observed, he focuses his attention on her prolonged isolation and loneliness as well as the creation of the natural world.¹² Rightly, Hepokoski refuses to settle on one interpretation of the tone poem’s meaning, but opts, instead, for a more inclusive approach that embraces the many contradictions and ambiguities inherent in Sibelius’s setting.¹³ Of course, the central question concerns the pregnancy of Ilmatar. While Sibelius clearly privileges the creation of the earth and cosmos over Väinämöinen’s birth, he cannot avoid the issue of pregnancy altogether. The transtextual bond between Sibelius’s tone poem and the Kalevala are simply too strong to allow the pregnancy to be forgotten. Listeners in Sibelius’s time and well-informed listeners of our own time know the rest of the story. This knowledge, along with some textual clues, keeps Sibelius’s Ilmatar pregnant. By concentrating on the creation of the natural world, Sibelius was surely offering one of his most potent nature-mystical expressions and it is quite possible that this complicated gestation and birth was meant to serve as a metaphor for the part of the story left untold, but known to all: the more human-like gestation and birth of Väinämöinen. It is also possible, as Hepokoski has suggested, that Sibelius wanted to make the human aspect of the story seem insignificant when compared to the creation of nature itself.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., 140-4.
¹⁴ Ibid., 143.
At present, we need not subject Luonnotar to an exhaustive examination. It is crucial, however, that the multi-layered relationship between human experience and raw nature at Luonnotar’s core be considered within the context of the Seventh Symphony. The presence of these topics is made explicit by hypertextual connections between the two compositions. Timothy Jackson has written that Sibelius represents Luonnotar’s creation through the use of an ascending octave motive. This octave idea spans the entire piece and is summed up in the vocal line’s final gesture as it finally reaches its ultimate goal of f♯2 in m.205 (see Ex. 4.2).15 The motive serves as an ideal tone-poetic device for depicting the rather difficult and circuitous paths traveled by the maternal figures. Likewise, each step of the ascending motive aptly captures the organic growth and development leading up to the actual moment of birth. In addition to these semantic and psychological implications, the ascending motive also serves the purely musical purpose of establishing a goal and ultimately attaining it (the pitch f♯2).

By now it is probably apparent that the rising scalar motive that opens the Seventh Symphony is closely related to this Luonnotar idea. Of course, at this point in the music this connection only exists on a very abstract level, though it will be confirmed by events in the recapitulation and by a host of pre-textual clues. The stepwise ascent is a motive that permeates the Seventh Symphony’s structure and points to the presence of what we may term a Luonnotar topos. Hepokoski has argued persuasively that Luonnotar should be read as a kind of starting point to the Sibelian masterpieces of the teens and twenties in terms of both meaning and formal/structural techniques.16 Collectively, these late works are a musical corollary of the nature-mystical attitudes expressed in several diary entries from this period that marry the

mysteries of nature and life. Likening late Sibelius to the grand mosaic mentioned above (see Chapter 1), Hepokoski describes the composer’s musical quest to uncover the essence of being as follows:

The *Kalevala* creation myth in *Luonnotar* takes up the problem quite literally from the perspective of the gestational *production* of being. Conversely, the mosaic’s other reassembled sectors (especially *Oceanides*, the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, and *Tapiola*) seem primarily concerned with the *uncovering* of being. In them, Sibelius accepted the notion of “pure nature” as a given, but then attempted through the process of music to work his way back into the earth, water and sky to unlock the animating forces believed to lie therein.17

The conspicuous presence of the ascending scale figure at the Seventh’s beginning opens up a vast textual space where a seemingly simple musical device can take on extraordinary semantic possibilities. The failure of that scale to reach its expected resting place furthers the connection to *Luonnotar* whose story is fraught with frustration. From a nature-mystical perspective, the Seventh, through structural devices like the ascending motive and large-scale auxiliary cadences and the formal devices outlined in the previous chapter, continually seeks to uncover the essential nature of being.

If we trace this hypertextual connection even further it becomes possible to locate an entirely new set of potential meanings for the symphony. As was stated in the introduction, the Seventh exists on the verge between nature-mysticism and domestic drama. By examining some parallels between the compositional histories of both *Luonnotar* and the Seventh, we can uncover some fascinating programmatic connections that illuminate the more autobiographical aspects of each composition. This discussion centers on the presence of references to Sibelius’s wife Aino and daughter Ruth in the sketch material. Because I will deal with this aspect of the Seventh’s genesis in subsequent chapters, we can now, briefly, focus on the prehistory of *Luonnotar*.

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17 Ibid., 140.
Unfortunately, the genesis of *Luonnotar* is as complicated and shrouded in mystery as the story itself. Little is known about the compositional process that yielded *Luonnotar* in 1913. However, during the first years of the century, Sibelius had begun composing an orchestral work based on the *Kalevala’s* first poem. Though this early attempt at setting the creation story was abandoned in favor of other projects, it can profitably be considered alongside the later version of the tone poem and the Seventh Symphony. The original *Luonnotar* is part of a constellation of interrelated compositions – some completed and some abandoned – from the early twentieth century. Major projects like *Luonnotar* and *Marjatta* (an oratorio based on the *Kalevala’s* fiftieth rune) would never reach completion, but their musical material and programmatic associations would be transformed into major works of the period like *Pohjola’s Daughter*, the Third Symphony and the second set of *Scenes Historique*. Timo Virtanen was the first scholar to convincingly connect these early compositions through detailed studies of the existing source material. He has concluded that the original *Luonnotar* was a major source for what would become *Pohjola’s Daughter*. Furthermore, both of these projects are also informed by material Sibelius gleaned from the discarded oratorio. *Marjatta* (the name is cognate with Mary) is essentially the Christmas story painted in Kalevalic colors. Its connections with *Luonnotar* are numerous. Not only do the two bookend the epic, but both are stories of unusual insemination (the waves for the *luonnotar* and magical berries for Marjatta), both tell of difficult births characterized by long periods of loneliness, and each pregnancy produces a powerful male figure (Väinämöinen and Jesus). In fact, Jesus ultimately proves to be wiser than old Väinämöinen and becomes the leading figure in the Karelian world. At first, *Pohjola’s Daughter* appears to have been

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little in common with these mystical stories of birth, but, as Virtanen points out, its story also centers on a frustrating act of creation.¹⁹ Väinämöinen, in order to gain the company of the Maid of the North (*Pohjola* = Northland), is given the task of building a boat in an impossible manner. Despite his ultimate failure, Väinämöinen is transformed by the experience of learning his limitations. Virtanen summarizes these programmatic associations as follows:

The creation process as described in all of these legends is difficult and painful; but all of them are also optimistic *per aspera ad astra* narratives. After suffering lonely birth pangs (Marjatta, Luonnotar) or a frustrating striving to solve an impossible task (the legend of Väinämöinen and Pohjola’s daughter), these legends project far-reaching visions of the future, the beginning of new life or transfiguration.²⁰

In addition to these overt programmatic connections, there are hidden, more personal, associations that likely connected all of the projects in Sibelius’s mind. On several pages, Sibelius wrote out his wife’s name (Aino) and two pages bear the name of his daughter Ruth. By 1906 Sibelius, according to his letters, had completed the sketches of *Luonnotar*, but the fair copy of the work (HUL 0163) was left unfinished.²¹ Once he decided to change the program for the composition from the creation myth to the story of *Pohjola’s Daughter*, Sibelius dropped the “Aino theme.”²² It is difficult and a bit dangerous to speculate as to why Ruth and Aino were present in these sketches, but there are some possibilities. It is quite probable that Marjatta and *Luonnotar* appealed to Sibelius as not only a composer drawn to the national epic, but also as a father and husband. This is reflected in a 1905 letter to Aino in which he refers to *Luonnotar* as “our mutual creation.”²³ In all likelihood the “mutual creation” mentioned here refers to the

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¹⁹ “L’aventure d’un héros,” 160.
²⁰ Ibid., 160.
²¹ Virtanen, “In Light of Sketch Studies,” 319.
²² This theme would later be tried out in the Third Symphony, but not find a home until 1911 where it wound up in the “Minnelied” section of the second orchestral suite *Scènes historiques*. Ibid., 320. The history of this theme is also discussed in Timothy Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization and Entropy in the Music of Sibelius and Other Composers,” in *Sibelius Studies*, eds. Timothy L. Jackson and Veijo Murtomäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 180-2.
²³ ETL II, 39.
children, though we may never know for certain why Ruth and not the other daughters was continually singled out in the sketches. It should be mentioned, however, that Ruth was seriously ill with typhoid fever in 1901 when Sibelius first started sketching the themes for *Luonnotar/Pohjola’s Daughter*. This highly anxious familial crisis may have informed his subsequent work on the project. In any event, this constellation of ideas seems to have been dropped from the final version of *Pohjola’s Daughter*. In the final version, Sibelius as father/husband is replaced by Sibelius as creative artist. Virtanen has successfully drawn a number of parallels between Sibelius and Väinämöinen as he appears in the episode with the Maid of the North: “In spite of its name, the focus of *Pohjola’s Daughter*’s program text – and the musical treatment of it – is not the feminine character but the ‘Finnish Orpheus,’ the creative man.”

The published version of *Luonnotar* is not musically related to the first attempt at setting the story, and its lack of emphasis on human creation certainly undermines its potential as a work inspired by the domestic theme of “our mutual creation.” If the published version lost some of its private, familial associations, Sibelius seems to have restored these themes to the *Luonnotar* topos in the Seventh Symphony. In many respects the Seventh revisits the topical universe of the original *Luonnotar*. The numerous references to Ruth and Aino in the sketches, the hypertextual connections to the published *Luonnotar* along with other transtextual factors yet to be discussed all contribute to such a reading. While the musical connection between the Seventh and the published *Luonnotar* may seem a bit tenuous at this point – ascending motives are hardly unique to these pieces – I hope the connection will become clear as this study progresses.

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**Tristan Chords**

By halting on $e^b$ in m.3, the opening ascent traverses the space of a minor sixth. Not only will this interval prove to be an important structural motive, but it also participates in the opening’s hypertextuality. As Ex.4.3a indicates the minor sixth is followed by a dark passage characterized by two *Tristan* chords (Ex.4.3b offers a clear view of the harmony). Of course, Wagner’s famous prelude begins with a rising minor sixth followed by the *Tristan* chord (henceforth, *Tr*). Sibelius’s recomposition of the opening to *Tristan und Isolde* clearly establishes another frame of reference through which we may hear the Seventh Symphony.

While the stories of *Tristan* and *Luonnotar* may seem worlds apart, there are some strong parallels that make their juxtaposition possible. Both stories contain intense yearning and transfiguration and each gave Sibelius the opportunity to explore aspects of his relationship with Aino. As stated in the introduction, the Seventh was composed during a critical and tension-filled period in the Sibelius marriage. In light of this, it is quite possible that the *Tristan* allusion refers to the tragic aspects of his home-life, the negative impact of his repeated irresponsible behavior and his desire for forgiveness.

The *Tr* sonority played an important role in Sibelius’s music since the early 1890s as both a structural entity and a carrier of meaning. In the recent published work of Veijo Murtomäki and Timothy Jackson, the chord is shown as a vital symbol in Sibelius’s aural iconography. In the early symphonic ballad *Skogsräet*, *Tr* signifies forbidden or deviant sexual desire and activity. Though Jackson and Murtomäki interpret the structural role of *Tr* differently in *Skogsräet*, both agree that it is this sonority that portrays the protagonist’s tragic sexual

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encounter with the wood-nymph. Murtomäki also maintains that the chord colors the incest scene in the third movement of Kullervo and plays a critical semantic role in such works as The Ferryman’s Brides Op.33 (1897), Scène de ballet (1891) and the original version of En Saga (1892). In addition to these pieces, Tr is also emphasized in The Swan of Tuonela (recall Ex.4.2) and the opening measures of Valse Triste. Murtomäki and Jackson have both shown that Sibelius clearly identified with the stories unfolded in each of these early works as they dealt with issues of sexual desire and infidelity. As was suggested above with regard to Luonnotar, it is entirely possible that Sibelius was revisiting these private/domestic themes of earlier pieces in the Seventh Symphony. His heavy drinking during its genesis would have likely opened old wounds in terms of his relationship with Aino. Of course, as Jackson has suggested, the two transpositions of Tr also represent a great sense of yearning and frustration in a Symphony that, from its first note, continually strives to attain something higher.

The Referential Rotation

The initial measures could not perform any of their hypertextual and semantic functions without also establishing the musical space in which the Seventh Symphony unfolds. The remainder of this chapter and the following chapter offer an analysis of the structural path laid bare by the Symphony. Because the first twenty-one measures, which constitute part I of the

28 The role of Tr in The Swan of Tuonela is discussed in Timothy Howell, Jean Sibelius: Progressive Techniques in the Symphonies and Tone Poems (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), 219-28; and Pavlak, “like a gleaming silver ribbon,” 15-19. I am unaware of any discussion of its role in Valse Triste, but the emphasis on Tr was even stronger in the original setting of the Valse as part of the incidental music to Kuolema. Here the first nine measures consist of nothing but a repeated half-diminished seventh chord (G-B-D-F). This manuscript is catalogued as HUL 0848. The presence of Tr in the Valse is of particular interest here, since Sibelius employed it as a hypotext in the Seventh’s final measures!
introduction, define the formula for the internal architecture of each of the text’s six rotations, it is essential that we first examine precisely how this referential rotation works. As expressed in Chapter 3, each rotation presents an ordered succession of three thematic regions that I have labeled a – c. Below, let us examine each of the referential rotation’s theme areas in turn.

Zone a is characterized by the ascending scale figure throughout the symphony. Since we have already exhausted the semantic and structural significance of the opening scalar passage above, it is only necessary to build on some of its essential features. The surprising halt on e♭1 in m.3 is not, as Ex.4.3a makes explicit, the stopping point of the initial ascent. Instead, the rise from the opening G, which was initially a foreground event, is now continued in the middleground until g1 is reached in m.21. It is, I believe, quite clear from the very outset that ♮^5(G) is the Symphony’s Kopfton. What is not clear, however, is the obligatory register of the Urlinie. Establishing this register is, from the outset, the central structural aim of the upper voice. By stopping on e♭1, Sibelius was able to add greater drama to the initial ascent, highlight the minor sixth as part of a Tristan allusion, establish the sixth as a crucial intervallic/structural motive and hint at the potentially subversive roles played by both E♭ and A♭ throughout the C major Symphony. As with the upper voice, the bass does not rest for long on the disruptive e♭ of m.3. Instead, a chromatic descent of a third to C at the end of the Tristan region prepares the arrival of f in m.5. This arrival results in an expansion of the opening sixth to an ascending seventh, thereby further frustrating the linear quest for g. Not only does this f not lead immediately up to the dominant, but its subsequent prolongation revalues the tonic – which we

30 Curiously, Laufer devalues the significance of the opening e♭1 by asserting the strong presence of an implied d2, which functions as the main note at this juncture. Such a reading, while making some motivic sense, as Laufer suggests, seems to me to ignore the commanding presence of e♭1 and all of its implications. Edward Laufer, “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” in Sibelius Studies, eds. Timothy L. Jackson and Veijo Murtonäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 360-61.
have yet to hear – from I of C to V of F. Like the sixth, the seventh will also become a crucial
interval for the remainder of the Symphony.

From a design standpoint, the *Tristan* region (mm.3-6) can best be regarded as a
digression from the a material presented in the first two measures. While such a digression may
seem unusual in the opening measures of what has been termed the referential rotation,
subsequent rotations prove this to be the case. Therefore, strictly speaking, this three measure
passage does not belong to the a zone. Instead, its chromaticism and emphasis of Tr align it
more closely with the material of theme zone c. By attempting to derail the Symphony’s
rotational organization before it has even established itself, the c material reveals itself as a
dramatic foil to the inter-related a and b zones. The structural role of this passage is equally
problematic. As Ex.4.3a indicates, e♭1 continues upwards through the *Tristan* region, but this
motion is undone with the arrival on d♯1 in m.6. The immediate effect of this arrival is to pull the
line back down to the level of the problematic e♭1, but its enharmonic revaluation points towards
an ascent to e♯1. Before this is allowed to happen, the structure first passes through a
parenthetical prolongation of F major (mm.7-13), which harmonizes the introduction of the b
material.

Though Ex.4.3a shows mm.7-13 as a parenthetical insertion into the structure, the
importance of this passage in terms of formal and motivic design cannot be underestimated.
With the flute’s entrance towards the end of m.7, Sibelius presents, for the first time, some truly
melodic thematic material. This woodwind passage deserves our attention for at least two
reasons. First, it introduces one of the primary foreground motives of the Symphony. Marked
on the graphs by a brace, the turn figure first heard in m.8 occurs in various forms as the
Symphony progresses and is also subject to some middleground enlargement. As it appears in
this passage, the turn figure is actually a retrograde statement of the more prominent type of turn figure to be heard later (hence the letter ‘r’ label attached to it). Example 4.4 shows some of the many forms taken by this figure as the Symphony progresses: a. shows the prime form; b. the retrograde; c. an intervallic expansion of the retrograde; d. the inversion; e. an intervallic expansion of the prime form; f. another type of intervallic expansion of the prime form; and g. presents the retrograde of this second type of expansion. In addition to these general forms, the turn figure proves an influential motive in other ways, but these will be discussed as they occur. While featured prominently in the b material, the turn figure at various times pervades all sections of the formal design.

The second noteworthy aspect of the woodwind theme is to be found in its middleground. Hidden within this series of turn figures the middleground twice unfolds the head of the Symphony’s central motive: the trombone/Aino theme. In Example 4.3a this motive (d¹ – c¹ – g) is highlighted by the brackets above the staff and clarified in Ex.4.3c. Not only will this motive in its entirety become significant later, but its components, namely the D-C neighbor figure and the fourth progression, also prove to be essential motivic features in their own right. Laufer, though his reading is different, also calls attention to this hidden motivic parallel between the introduction and the main theme. As he points out, the actual arrival of the trombone theme does not fall out of the sky, but is the result of a process of “gradual emergence.”31 Here is one example of how the meditative sway of the rotations and teleological phases slowly reveals the music’s deep secrets to the listener.

The problematic e² is regained in an inner voice above F in m.11 and is then transferred to the bass as an incomplete neighbor to F in m.12. Here it also functions as a misspelled upper

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31 Laufer, “Continuity in the Seventh,” 360.
Example 4.4:
Some Forms of the Turn Figure

Ex.4.4a:

Ex.4.4b:

Ex.4.4c:

Ex.4.4d:

Ex.4.4e:

Ex.4.4f:

Ex.4.4g:
third to b, which arrives in m.13 with d now on top. At last d is able to complete its motion to e. The bass also arrives on e at this point and descends by step to c in m.14. Instead of initiating a tonic prolongation, the c reached in m.14 should still be regarded as belonging with F. As Ex.4.3a indicates c becomes a passing tone on its way from f to G. In other words, the bass ascent of a seventh from the opening measures is unwound by the remainder of the first rotation. G is prolonged by first failing to ascend to its octave and then by sinking back down. Despite the fact that the music eventually returns to G, it is still characterized by this somewhat tortured path and its initial failure to reach the higher octave.

The c material (mm.14-21) in the referential rotation is characterized by the contrary motion dialogue between choirs of winds and strings. Though this is a feature to be found in other statements of c, it is not the principal feature of this theme zone. Instead, the primary purpose of this section is to contrast the more rhythmically and harmonically stable b sections. To this end the c zones typically feature faster moving and more rhythmically charged surfaces with a great deal of chromaticism. It is precisely a heightened sense of chromaticism that defines mm.14-17. The prevalence of diminished fourths and fifths in this passage as both vertical and linear intervals is illustrated in Ex.4.3a. By m.18 the chromaticism has largely been corrected or left behind and the Anstieg to g (reached in m.22) continues. Example 4.3d indicates that the falling thirds initiated by the upper voice in m.18 are actually constructed of a series of motivic rising and falling fourths. In Ex.4.3e the overall chain of thirds is shown to compose-out the motivic descending fourth between C and G!

The first rotation closes having reached G in both outer voices despite the rather circuitous routes taken. Of course, these winding paths establish the essential psychological, dramatic and structural issues contained within the course of the Seventh. The close of the first
rotation is after all only a stopping point along the way. The tonic has yet to establish itself and as the subsequent rotations will reveal, the Kopfton has yet to reach its hoped for obligatory register. That g¹ may not be the Kopfton in its proper register is alluded to by the sudden appearance of a¹ on the downbeat of m.22. It as if there is no rest for the upper voice and the line is anxious to climb ever higher.

The “Aino Hymn”/Rotation Two

Widely regarded as one of Sibelius’s most glorious compositional accomplishments, the hymnic string passage beginning in m.22 forms the second part of the introduction. In terms of temporal duration, this slow-moving section is a significant portion of the Symphony and it is rather unusual to consider that such a fully formed thematic area never returns later in the music. This, of course, adds to the multi-movement effect of the Seventh, but can easily be explained. While the seemingly complete passage implies a separate movement, it actually serves as a wellspring for the thematic and structural developments that follow. The passage does not need to be repeated or recomposed because of its completeness and because it is so thoroughly composed into the remainder of the Symphony. I have chosen to label this section as the “Aino Hymn” because of its close association with the first group’s Aino theme and because of the music’s affective properties, which hover in the same rarefied air of romantic contemplation as the Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth Symphony.

The structure and internal formal design of the Hymn is graphed in Ex.4.5a. Formally, it consists of two large sections: an antecedent (mm.22-37) and a consequent (mm.38-59). As the graph illustrates, the antecedent proper and consequent proper are each preceded by an

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Example 4.5a
Introduction: Part II (Aino Hymns) (Rotation 2)

Example 4.5a continued:
Exposition:

Example 4.5b: detail of rising lines leading to exposition as element of overlapping rotation!
introductory section (mm.22-29 and 38-45 respectively). At first hearing it is difficult to discern
this two-part design and the task is not made any easier by subsequent encounters with the
music. Sibelius artfully covers this underlying structure and design with music that sounds as
though it were continually growing towards some distant goal. To this end, Sibelius staggered
the string entrances and eventually (m.45ff.) added the remainder of the orchestra to reach the
section’s climax at m.50. After this point there begins a more concerted drive towards the first
group (m.60ff.). Let us now examine some details of the second rotation.

The introduction to the antecedent composes out material from theme zone a in order to
usher in the b-zone material of the antecedent proper. Here, the upper voice carries the first
rotation’s ascent up another octave from g¹ to g² which is reached in m.29. In keeping with the
upper voice, the bass also revisits the same motivic terrain established in the first rotation. While
the first part of the introduction imbedded an ascending minor sixth (G – e♭) within an ascending
seventh (G – f), here ascending and descending sevenths are nested within an enlargement of the
opening sixth (m.22-29). With the arrival of e♭ in the middle of m.29, the antecedent proper
commences. This section is essentially b-zone material overlaid with a-zone ascending motives.
Its upper voice is characterized by the turn figured nested within larger statements of the turn
figure in inversion. The bass also contributes two statements of the turn figure’s inversion. In
addition to this, it also unfolds a new and significant motive labeled on the graphs as X. Motive
X (e♭ – f – g) most often proves to be the first part of the bass for an auxiliary cadence pattern. In
the antecedent this pattern implies I⁶ – II⁶ – V in C, but in keeping with the nature of antecedents
it does not close on I. As Ex.4.5a shows a small foreground statement of X is nested within the

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33 This is directly related to Margaret Notley’s idea that historically the Adagio as a concept “came to supersede
traditional questions of form.” Any notion’s of traditional from were often covered by an expressive sense of
growth and unendliche Melodie. Margareta Notley, “Late-Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music and the Cult of the
larger progression. As this bass pattern progresses, the upper voice continues its *Anstieg*, climbing by step from $g^2$ to $d^3$. The antecedent’s end looks familiar to all Schenkerians: V supporting $\hat{2}$. Of course, the upper voice is approached from below not from above as usual. This quasi-interruption, as will be evidenced in later chapters, sets an important structural precedent.

One other feature of the antecedent deserves consideration before proceeding to the consequent. Almost lost in the slow-moving polyphony, the second violins from m.34-45 present the continuation of the trombone theme found in the first group (m.64ff. in the oboe).\textsuperscript{34} Much like the Aino theme hidden in the wind melody of m.8ff., this continuation theme will emerge from its current surrounding into a place of greater prominence in the exposition. Once again the deeper secrets of structure and thematic design reveal themselves as the rotational forces pull the music forward. This concealed theme is carried over into the introduction to the consequent and helps mask the division between the Hymn’s formal sections.

The consequent’s introduction essentially recomposes the introduction to the antecedent with the upper voice an octave higher. Towards the end of this passage the top voice reaches up to $g^3$ – a long way from the G that initiated the Symphony’s rising line – but fails to establish this as the *Kopfton* in its obligatory register. Instead, these two high $g^3$s represent anticipatory visions of the desired register. Their presence also reveals the intentions of the antecedent, which was stopped short on $d^3$. Upon the arrival of the consequent proper $g^2$ is still the primary tone and now initiates a new attempt at ascending the octave to $g^3$.

Climaxing in m.50, the antecedent’s upper voice reaches only as far as $c^3$, before being taken down to the lower octave through a motivic seventh. To be sure, the line continues its

\textsuperscript{34} Following m.45, the trombone theme’s continuation is resumed in the first violin part and the winds. The construction of this passage is discussed in detail in Chapter 7.
ascent toward the Kopfton, but the hopes for $g^3$ are temporarily replaced with those for $g^2$. The bass also lands squarely on $c$ at m.50, but this should not be read as the tonic. Instead, it is the upper fifth of the $f$ reached in m.52. The arrival at m.50 effectively closes the hymnic music and initiates the second rotation’s e-zone, which is transitional in nature. The $f$ reached in m.52 proves to be the middle pitch in a massive unfolding of motive X and the initiator of a large voice exchange between D and F that prolongs the supertonic from m.52 to m.59. Within the embrace of this large-scale statement of motive X, two smaller statements can be found along with a middleground inversion of the turn figure (mm.45-52). Though the consequent composes out a fairly straightforward auxiliary cadence in C major ($III - II^6 - \frac{3}{4} - V - I$), Sibelius was able to embolden the bass progression by incorporating each of its steps into a network of middleground motives.

Upon the completion of the large voice exchange in m.59, $f^2$ is reached in the upper voice. This proves to be the terminus of the introduction’s long quest for the Kopfton in the proper register. There is no grand statement of $g^3$; nor is there any consolation to be found in $g^2$. In place of such lofty goals, the upper voice can go no further than $f^2$. After fifty-nine measures of climbing, the line falls short on the incomplete lower neighbor to its goal! As Ex.4.6 indicates, the entire introduction can be summed up by the motivic ascent of a seventh in the upper voice and then the subsequent slippage down to the Aino theme’s $c^1$.35 If one thing is certain by the end of the introduction, it is that the quest for the obligatory register is far from over. The introduction reveals that this is a process that continually renews itself to reach higher and higher still. Whether or not the attainment of these goals is in the realm of possibility remains to be seen and from the hypertextual information discussed above, it is likely that this

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35 Jackson also reads a large-scale ascending seventh over the course of the introduction. “Observations on Crystallization,” 264.
structural narrative of frustrated hopes is directly linked to transtextual and biographical phenomena. These factors, however, can best be examined carefully in later chapters as the story of genesis and structure in the Seventh Symphony becomes clearer.

Frustration and failure are only part of the story at the introduction’s end. In fact, the upper voice’s inability to achieve the Kopfton in its longed-for register is largely offset by the structure’s ability to finally secure its tonic of C major. Beginning in the inner voices at m.56, ascending lines bring back the a-zone material and announce the commencement of rotation 3, which overlaps the conclusion of its predecessor (see Ex.4.5a and b). The arrival of this scalar material along with the completion of motive X strengthens the teleological drive towards the Aino theme and its tonic harmony at m.60. As the first teleological phase comes to a close, its successor begins (refer to Ex.4.6). For this reason, the Aino theme is simultaneously a beginning and an ending. It concludes the massive auxiliary cadence from the initial V of m.1 and temporarily closes the upper voice’s quest for the Kopfton albeit in an unexpected manner. In fact, as numerous commentators have noted, the theme begins like a perfect ending with 2 moving to 1. Closure is, of course, accompanied by an impressive and climactic arrival on the tonic and the foreground revelation of the Aino theme with its continuation. It is also, as discussed in the next chapter, the beginning of new octave ascents and renewed searches for the elusive tonic.

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So there is within these fairly simple structural and motivic devices a great deal of beauty and intensity, and towards the end of this introduction there is a measure of triumph, but it is accompanied by no small measure of tragedy. These are fleeting moments, however, and the
final measures of this Symphony lie in the distant future. It is perhaps only there that its true emotional and dramatic nature will be revealed. Of course, introductions, in addition to raising questions about the future course of a given text, also tend to be prescient entities capable of composing *in nuce* the essence of an entire composition. In other words, hidden within those questions may be the answers we seek. The primary question confronting the listener at the introduction’s end is elementary, but essential: is the Seventh Symphony triumphant, tragic or something in between? If the introduction or the information gleaned from the previous chapters is any indication, then the answer to this question is all of the above. Once more we find Sibelius on the verge. The Seventh occupies a space somewhere between nature mysticism and domestic drama, between fantasy and symphony, between one formal design and another and now between triumph and tragedy. In many respects it is all of these things simultaneously. As we will continue to find, it is precisely this conceptual messiness and this full embrace of both the tragic and the triumphant that endow this musical structure with a raw and sincere humanity.
CHAPTER 5

STRUCTURE AND MEANING
IN THE EXPOSITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Though it took sixty measures to reach, the Aino theme, along with its longed-for tonic sonority, dissolves within the space of only a few measures. Dissolution of stability, in keeping with the Seventh Symphony’s rotational and teleological impulses, only leads to new and multi-dimensional attempts at securing a variety of tonal and thematic goals. The chief of these is, of course, to return to the C major stability of the Aino theme. As the formal analysis in Chapter 3 made explicit (recall Fig.3.4), the arrival of these goals is the result of sweeping teleological phases. Just as the first phase led to the unfurling of the Aino theme in m.60, the second phase will pull the music toward its minor-key deformation in m.221. Phase three ushers in another tonic statement of Aino and the final phase re-evaluates the Symphony’s teleological course and ultimately leads to the final affirmation of C major as tonic.

The present chapter is an analysis of the second and third phases, which correspond to the exposition and development sections of the Symphony’s sonata design or to the third, fourth and fifth rotations. While the graphs present a fairly detailed account of the musical structure in this extended portion of the Seventh, the present text will focus primarily on a number of the structure’s unique teleological features. As we will see, the structure, like the motivic and thematic design, is organized into a succession of rotation-like cycles. Each major tonal arrival can be shown to arise from the completion of a structural cycle. The completion and sometimes incompletion of various cycles is coordinated with the Seventh’s emotional, psychological and dramatic properties. In other words, the structure realizes Sibelius’s strong fantasy impulse as defined in Chapter 2. This approach to structure owes much to Timothy Jackson’s analytical focus on the presence and meaning of auxiliary cadence patterns in the Symphony and my
reading, though different in several respects, will build on these findings through a detailed analysis of the middleground. At the heart of these structural issues is, of course, Sibelius’s dynamic conception of form. Themes are not the springboard for further development as in typical classical sonata design, but gradually emerge from their continually developing surroundings.

The Third Rotation (First Group)

As described in the preceding chapter, the third rotation overlaps the second and bridges the architectural division between the introduction and exposition of the sonata design. In m.60 the rotation’s b material is initiated. Example 5.1 shows that as the foreground spins out the b-zone themes, the middleground composes-out an enlargement of a material in the form of an ascending upper voice. This closely mirrors the practice of the first two rotations and renews the upper voice quest for the Kopfton’s obligatory register. Sibelius also follows the precedent of the initial rotations by allowing 5 to assert itself in a more background sense. An arpeggiated ascent from c in m.60 quickly reaches up to g as a reminder of 5, but this does not exert much influence on the events in the middleground or foreground. Instead, it acts more like a cover tone or upper voice pedal point throughout the first group. The primary concern of the structure is the ascending line that is born in the Aino theme; it literally rises out of the collapse produced by the introduction’s upper voice failure. As one structural wave crests and collapses, another immediately begins to swell.

During the bulk of the Aino theme itself (mm.60ff), the bass establishes a kind of tonic stasis by slowly alternating between C and G. This changes in mm.67-8 as it arpeggiates

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Example 5.1
First Group (continuation of rotation 3).

Rotation 4
Bridge
up to G as the root of V. Instead of acting as an expected strong cadential dominant, this chord—which is prolonged through a brief motion to \( V^\sharp \) – seems to retard the bass’s forward motion. Above this G prolongation, the inner voice introduces motive Y, which is a simple upward semitone resolution (usually B – C). The motive neatly sums up the upward motion of the upper voice and will return throughout the Symphony. The G prolongation’s inability to return to C also begins the unraveling of the Aino theme’s tranquility. In the pick-up to m.70, the timpani’s understated \( \flat \) supplants G as the structural bass pitch and pulls the music toward the tonic minor. Once again, as in the opening measures, \( \flat \) assumes a devious role, and once again it arises through an ascending sixth from G and delays the expected arrival of c. By returning both g and c to the bass in m.71, Sibelius restored the potential for cadential resolution. The disruptive \( \flat \) could be overturned, but instead, the damage is already done and m.71 serves as a lead-in to F. This also recalls the opening where C is revalued as V/IV. Example 5.1 indicates that the bass of m.71 is part of a voice exchange that introduces F minor and the second part of the first group. The upper voice ascent also passes through G in m.71 as part of the voice exchange. The true arrival of \( g^1 \) is withheld until m.73.

The evaded cadences of mm.68-71 lead into a new passage that recalls the turn figure-rich atmosphere of the Aino hymn. Between mm.70 and 80, the bass presents a stepwise ascent of a sixth (E\flat – C) that features the turn figure in inversion. Above this the upper voice ascent reaches as high as c\(^2\) in m.80 through extensive use of the turn figure in prime form. Its first statement of the turn figure (mm.71-3) emphasizes a\flat as the chromatic upper neighbor to g. This neighbor figure, which will grow into one of the primary motives of the Symphony, has a few important precedents and sets another (the motive is labeled with an asterisk on all of the graphs). First, its place of prominence following the evaded cadences and its role in assisting \( \flat \) as an
agent of modal mixture connects it to m.3 where $\text{ab}$ served as the bass for the disruptive $\text{eb}$.

Second, the upper neighbor figure is, of course, at the heart of the Aino motive. The $\text{ab} – g$ motive is a kind of chromatic foil to the $d – c$ neighbor motion. This relationship is emphasized in m.73 where, following the resolution of the chromatic neighbor ($\text{ab}^1 – g^1$) through the turn figure, the line descends a fourth to $d^1$. The overall motion transposes and chromatically deforms the Aino motive ($d – c – g$ becomes $\text{ab} – g – d$)! Third, by reaching $\text{ab}^1$ through a voice exchange with F, Sibelius prefigures a crucial moment to come where F, F$\flat$, and A$\flat$ are involved in a significant chromatic voice exchange in a recapitulatory passage similar to this one. More immediately, though of far less structural significance, the chromatic form of this voice exchange is sounded in m.84.

Sibelius added further interest to mm.73-80 by composing the outer voices in such a way that they exist in an oblique relationship with each other (See Ex.5.1 and Ex.5.2). Each voice ascends by step to achieve C in m.80 and to avoid the sense of parallel octaves the upper voice anticipates the bass line. In other words, though $g^1$ of m.73 is sounded above f, it belongs with g in m.75 on a deeper level. Oblique relationships like these characterize Sibelius’s personal approach to contrapuntal composition and help pull the music forward.² Sibelius breaks up the potential parallel octaves through the upper neighbor gestures that yield tenths with the bass.

Example 5.2b sums up this underlying counterpoint. Though there are background octaves as B moves to C these are so hidden in the surface details and orchestration that they hardly matter. Furthermore, even though Sibelius may have gone to great lengths to avoid parallel octaves in

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² Edward Laufer also discusses these oblique relationships in this passage and others in “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” in Sibelius Studies, eds. Timothy L. Jackson and Veijo Murtomäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 355-8.
Example 5.2a:
Showing Oblique Relationships

Example 5.2b:
Background Counterpoint of above
this passage, his compositional language was not, by any stretch of the imagination, tied to all of the so-called theoretical “rules” of the past.

In m.80 the third rotation’s e material commences. Increased chromaticism and contrary motion dialogue between instrumental groups characterize this passage. Before the chromaticism becomes too intense, the structure closes the entire Aino theme and its associated material. Once c² is reached in m.80, it falls a motivic fourth to g¹ and is echoed an octave lower in an inner voice. The Kopfton, acting here as a cover tone, is prolonged through much of the e-zone through its motivic chromatic upper neighbor. A descending sixth from ab² to c² picks up c² from m.80 and carries the ascending line begun in m.60 forward into the bridge. Meanwhile the bass undoes the sixth composed-out from m.70 to m.80 by falling from c to E. Sibelius marks the arrival on E in m.82 as a significant moment by placing it in the lowest register of the string basses who were silent for the preceding two measures and prior to that presented their part in a higher register. At m.82 it is as if the structure temporarily becomes solidly rooted by the reappearance of this low register. The effect of this, as Ex.5.1 shows, is to connect E to the tonic pitch reached at m.60. From this arrival on I° in m.82 one expects the structure to complete a tonic arpeggio to G at the beginning of the second group, but these expectations are delayed until the beginning of the closing group. Sibelius once again dramatizes the structure by adding a stepwise ascending line. The details of this bass ascent will be documented below.

The Fourth Rotation (Part One):
The Second Group and the Bacchic Topos

By the end of the third rotation the b material has been subjected to extensive development and is heavily favored by the proportions of the symphony thus far. However, all

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3 Jackson also reads this as a strong structural arrival on E in the bass. See “Observations on Crystallization”, 262.
of this is about to change with the advent of the fourth rotation in m.90. In fact, the new rotation’s c material grossly overshadows its a and b-zones, which last only as long as the brief bridge section (mm.90-92). Despite this brevity – the b-zone takes up all of one measure (m.92) – many ideas from the first two theme zones are superimposed upon the third. The thematic imbalance of the overall rotational design can, of course, be explained by the fact that these rotations are closely coordinated with the Symphony’s sonata form. Beginning in m.93 the c material grows into a full fledged second group and closing group with the fourth rotation’s a-b zones serving as a bridge. As Ex.5.3 indicates, the bridge recalls the retrograde of the turn figure from m.8ff complete with a nested statement of the Aino motive in m.92! Structurally, the first group is open ended. Instead of arriving on the dominant at the end of the bridge, the structure passes through it. An implied G in the bass and d2 in the upper voice only serve to continue the cycle of ascending lines begun in the initial measure of the Aino theme and propel the structure headlong into the second group.

Though the introduction and first group had their share of unfulfilled expectations, the overarching affect of these first ninety measures is one of austere beauty, of nature meditation and of melancholic romantic contemplation. Standing in stark contrast to this, the second group confronts us with a barrage of surface activity, increased dissonance, and progressively faster tempi. This is not the Gesangsperiod type of second group so prevalent in the Germanic sonata tradition. Nor could it be described as a typically “feminine” second subject by those who wish to make such gendered claims for formal sections. As we have seen, the introduction and first group exhibit such “feminine” qualities to a great degree and this view is made all the more convincing by the pre-textual clues that link this material to Aino. Sibelius was not averse to labeling his themes according to gender. For example, while he was an advanced student under
Example 5.3:
Rotation 4 (beginning)

Bridge

Second Group

to D#(m.117)

to D#(m.119)

110. 114. 116. 117. 118. 119. 123. 126. 128. 130. 132. 133.

Second Group resumed

recalls m.93

recomposes

mm 113-118`

Upper voice avoids G

common D3

to G (m.156)

from A

(m.95)

Tr.
Karl Goldmark in Vienna, he wrote the following to Aino describing his current overture project: “I already have the overture in my head: it has an atmosphere of spring and of love. The second theme represents you, melancholy, feminine and yet passionate.” Here, already in 1890, we find Sibelius linking nature meditation and romantic yearning through music. While this is obviously an idea as old as music itself, it would gain a particular form of expression in Sibelius’s compositional career. One could easily carry the excerpted text – especially the second sentence – forward through the decades and apply it with great effectiveness to the Seventh Symphony’s introduction and first group. The femininity of the first ninety measures should not be read away as a chauvinistic and stereotypical portrayal of the feminine as inherently weak or fragile. Instead, there is a magisterial spirituality and strength to this music, which is made explicit through such ecclesiastical aural imagery as the sound of the trombone theme and the Aino Hymn’s ancient sounding polyphony. Sibelius’s opening music explicitly portrays Aino as a figure with feminine grace, but also – and more significantly – as one with quasi-religious redemptive powers.

While none of the above necessitates or implies a masculine second group, this is precisely what Sibelius provides. The nature of the second and closing groups does not recall some of the heroic masculine themes found in such early works as *Kullervo* and *En Saga*, but instead revisits the type of writing used to illuminate the darker sides of the early heroes. Lemminkäinen, Kullervo and Björn (the protagonist of *Skogsrået*) – not to mention other figures from Sibelius’s explicitly programmatic texts – all succumbed to negative temptations (usually sexual) with tragic results. Veijo Murtonäki has written at length on Sibelius’s self-

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5 The notion of Aino as a Mary-like figure in Sibelius’s life and music was first studied by Jackson and elaborated upon in the first and last chapters of the present study. Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization,” 177-83.
identification with these figures and their propensity for moral indiscretion. Identifying a host of characteristics – sexual deviance, heavy drinking and inattention to familial responsibilities – and labeling them as the composer’s “balladic” problems, Murtomäki has posited that Sibelius confessed his own indiscretions through the early ballads and tone poems. Though he would temper his proclivity for engaging in “balladic” activities as he aged, the composer continually struggled with alcohol and with fulfilling his financial and emotional responsibilities to Aino and the children.

Particularly acute during the long gestation of the final three Symphonies, these problems are given musical expression in the Seventh’s second group and related material (i.e. the \textit{c}-zone material). Several musical gestures and techniques came to signify the darker side of these musical heroes from the 1890s and many are employed in the Seventh. In fact, the presence of these devices – not necessarily all of them – often marks a uniquely Sibelian expressive topic. I will refer to this class of affective and stylistic properties as the Bacchic topos because of its reference to drunkenness and sexual promiscuity. The composer even acknowledged his own Bacchic impulse while working on the \textit{Maiden in the Tower} (1896): “Tried to compose but it has not been with \textit{schwung}. Why does it come so rarely these days? Perhaps my excesses in \textit{Venere} or \textit{in Baccho}.” The musical oppositions between the \textit{b} and \textit{c} materials, between the slow and faster moving music, is semantically reflected by the opposition between the redemptive topos of Aino as wife/mother and the Bacchic topos of Sibelius as the transgressor in search of redemption.

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8 I will use the phrase Bacchic topos instead of Murtomäki’s term “balladic” since it does not imply only the music of the 1890s.

9 ETL I, 183.
To arrive at a complete description of the Bacchic topos would require a separate and substantial study. Here, I will only outline its basic features and give a few examples. In reality, it is quite difficult to list any number of fixed features because the topos can often be evoked quite differently depending on context. One of the most common indicators of the Bacchic in Sibelius’s music is a pronounced use of Tr. Example 5.4 shows the beginning of Skogsrået’s scherzo section (m.70ff), which initiates a prolongation of Tr that will last – according to Jackson – until m.297 (the end of the scherzo).\(^{10}\) Significantly, it is in this passage that Björn’s sexual desires begin to lead him astray. As was stated in the previous chapter, Tr also harmonizes the climax of his forbidden sexual encounter as well as the moment of Kullervo’s incest and other such musical-poetic moments. Along with Tr the short repetitive theme of Ex.5.4 also points toward the Bacchic topos. Themes like this one often imply a great deal of surface activity, but conceal a fairly slow moving deep structure. This is clearly the case with the Scherzo of Skogsrået. Example 5.5 shows the main theme of Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island. Though this small theme is fairly benign as given here, it will acquire more sinister traits as the protagonist’s sexual exploits continue. Furthermore, Lemminkäinen’s adventures will ultimately lead to the Tr infested waters of the Lemminkäinen Suite’s second movement (The Swan of Tuonela). Another member of this family of themes is of greater significance to the present study for it is found in the National Archives Sketchbook (the probable birthplace of the Seventh Symphony) and dates from 1914 (see Ex.5.6). This was a provisional theme for the Fifth Symphony, but was discarded early on only to reappear in Tapiola many years later.\(^{11}\) Most importantly, the theme – and the movement it represents – is

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\(^{11}\) James Hepokoski notes the presence of this theme in Tapiola in Sibelius: Symphony No.5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 35-6.
Example 5.4:
*Skogensrăet.*

*Vivace assai*

m. 79

Example 5.5:
*Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of the Island.*

*Allegro Molto*

m. 44

Example 5.6:
*NAS, p. 11*

*Finalen / Bachusklaget [Finale / Bacchic Procession]*
labeled “Bacchic Procession”!\textsuperscript{12} In light of this it is then possible to include Tapiola in the long list of Bacchic works, for it also makes great use of $Tr$.\textsuperscript{13} In addition to the rapid moving surface figures, one usually finds dissonant and quickly shifting local harmonies that rarely lead very far from where they began.

The Seventh Symphony’s Bacchic music employs all of these features. Its themes feature short, energetic bursts of arpeggios or rapidly repeated notes followed by frenetic, disjunct eruptions. Harmonically this music features $Tr$ extensively and its highly dissonant surface and the rapidity of its harmonic changes cover a fairly circular slow moving middleground. All of this, along with the continually increasing tempo, aptly portrays Sibelius’s Bacchic impulses. Let us now examine some details of this music.

The first section of the second group (mm.93-106), through a dizzying alternation between $Tr$ and dominant ninth chords in a rapid succession of keys, quickly destroys the tonic tranquility and stability of the first group’s Aino material and immediately establishes Sibelius’s Bacchic music. Example 5.3 indicates that I read A as the implied bass note in m.93 instead of C, which is technically the lower pitch. I base this decision on two related factors; one motivic and one harmonic.\textsuperscript{14} Motivically, A continues the bass ascent begun on E in m.82. However, harmonic considerations led Sibelius to place C in the bass at m.93 (in the fourth horn). Namely, the C initiates a descending fifths sequence, which oscillates between the above mentioned $Tr$ and dominant ninth chords. The initial harmony is the only $Tr$ chord in this passage to be stated in inversion because – one may assume – of Sibelius’s desire to initiate the descending fifths. The C stands in for A in order to start the sequence, but it is really A that controls the bass’s

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., and ETL III, 21. The theme can be found in NAS, p.11.
\textsuperscript{13} For a reading of $Tr$’s role in Tapiola see Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization,” 233-38.
\textsuperscript{14} Jackson also reads A as the primary bass pitch, but an explanation of why is beyond the scope of his study, “Observations on Crystallization,” 262.
linear motion and it is also the root of the chord. In other words, one might say that Sibelius “has his cake and eats too” and this is reflected in Ex.5.3. As we will observe momentarily, C is subjected to an inner voice prolongation of its own.

Above the beginning of the second group the structure continues its ascent – now shifted to a higher register – by passing through $e_\flat^3$ and then $f_\flat^3$. The voice leading of the opening measures (93-101) is rather complex due to the active musical surface. Example 5.7a offers a simplified view of this counterpoint, which relies on common tone chords over descending fifths in the bass. In m.101 the sequence is broken as the expected $Tr$ built on $A_\flat$ is replaced by $Tr$ built on $D_\flat$. Sibelius essentially skipped a step as $D_\flat$ should have been the dominant function chord following $A_\flat$. Despite the break in the sequence, the alternation between $Tr$ and dominant ninth chords continues until m.107 (see Ex.5.3 and 5.7b). Example 5.7b illustrates the underlying harmonic organization of this passage – note that the example’s upper voice is written to highlight the common tone relationships amongst the various chords and is not intended to show the actual voice leading progression – which suggests the keys of $B_\flat$, $A_\flat$, $C_\flat$, and $F$.15

Significantly, by beginning in $B_\flat$ and concluding in $F$ (V of $B_\flat$), Sibelius prefigures the next step in the ascending bass motive ($B_\flat$’s arrival is withheld until m.119).

One of the Seventh’s most curious moments occurs when, between mm.107 and 109, the busy surface figuration is dropped and over the $C^9$ harmony the horns unfurl the head of the Aino motive. Though brief, the effects of this stunning breakthrough are many. The Aino motive’s 9-8 suspension is a striking linear realization of the many major and minor ninth chords just presented. While this is a significant local detail, there are more, deeper reasons for its appearance. The Aino motive’s presence signifies a reappearance or intrusion of first group

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15 Throughout the examples relating to this passage I have used enharmonic equivalents to emphasize the fifth relations.
Example 5.7a:
Voice Leading of mm.93-101.

Example 5.7b:
Underlying Harmonic Pattern of mm. 93-107.
material (see Ex.5.3). As Sibelius’s Bacchic adventures begin to gain steam, they are checked by the return of the slower Aino music. It is here, through a completion of motive Y (transposed) that the upper voice ascent finally reaches g\(^2\). There is a tragic duality in this passage. On the one hand, the Kopfton’s longed-for arrival is finally achieved and its appearance coincides with the main theme and the tonic sonority. On the other hand however, the majesty of the whole complex is entirely out of place; trapped as it is within the coarse confines of the Seventh’s “Bacchic Procession.” The Aino theme’s attempt to pre-empt the Sibelian descent into forbidden pleasures is itself cut short by the return of the second group proper. In one sense the bass arrival on C refers back to the first group and has an air of tonic stability, but in another sense its local function as V/F prevails. Once again, as was the case in several earlier passages, C is prevented from serving as tonic.

With the resumption of the second group a pattern of large-scale organization becomes evident. An auxiliary cadence initiates the passage beginning in m.110 and resolves to F. As this cadence completes itself, the structure recomposes the same descending fifths bass progression from m.93ff. This time, however, the pattern is complete with A\(_b\) moving to D\(_b\), which serves as the upper third of the goal tone B\(_b\) (reached in m.119). Example 5.8a indicates that the whole of the second group can be subdivided into two complementary pairs of structural cycles. The first cycle (mm.93-106) is interrupted in its attempt to secure B\(_b\) in the bass as shown by the interruption symbol on the graph. Of course the deflection towards the trapped Aino theme helps disrupt the cycle. The second cycle (mm.110-119) returns to the descending fifths in the bass and is able to successfully arpeggiate from f – through e\(_b\) – to d\(_b\) and on to B\(_b\). A design change that harkens back to the atmosphere of m.93 further emphasizes the arrival of B\(_b\), which now, like the A of m.93, serves as the bass of Tr.
Example 5.8a:
Summary of Second Group

Example 5.8b:
Showing Massive Enlargement and Expansion of Aino Theme in Bass.
The third cycle is initiated in m.126 and transposes the second cycle’s material from mm.113-118. This cycle is complete and incomplete simultaneously. Upon the arrival of d in the bass at m.130, the structure could have fulfilled expectations by proceeding in one of two ways. It could have continued the cycle of fifths progression and resolved the D\(^7\) to G. This of course would have finally brought the long-delayed arrival of the structural dominant, it would have completed the descending bass line from B in m.126 and it would have properly resolved the D\(^7\) harmony. Another – less likely – possibility would have been to continue the transposition of the second cycle and move to B in the bass. Instead of either of these logical possibilities, Sibelius cunningly composed d as the upper neighbor to c, which supports a dominant seventh chord. This move is then re-emphasized by its repetition in m.131.

With this decision, Sibelius accomplished four major things. First, the large-scale ascending sixth from E in m.82 is completed. Second, when d falls to c, not only is a local statement of the motivic neighbor pattern established by the Aino theme completed, but a large-scale expression of the Aino motive is uncovered. As Exs.5.3 and 5.8 reveal, the incomplete neighbor figure is expanded into a complete neighboring gesture in the bass’s inner voice. The bass C of m.93, the third of a Tristan chord, moves chromatically to d\(_\text{ß}\) in m.117, also the third of a Tristan chord. The connection between these two pitches is made all the more apparent when we consider the design similarities of their respective surroundings. Also, each pitch coincides with one of the main steps in the second group’s bass progression (see Ex.5.8b which makes this connection explicit). In m.130 d\(_\text{ß}\) is corrected by the arrival of d\(_\text{½}\) and the neighbor gesture is then closed by the appearance of c. The reference to the Aino theme does not end here however. It is now transferred into the bass itself, where c falls by step to G in m.149. In other words, the entire second group composes out a massive and chromatically deformed statement of the Aino
motive! I will explore the implications of this ingenious compositional feat momentarily. The third thing accomplished by moving from d to c in m.130 was the re-establishment of the tonic pitch in the bass – again functioning as a dominant. Fourth, the arrival of c initiates the fourth and final cycle of the second group. I will consider these last two points in more detail below.

Earlier, I noted the fact that the Bacchic topos often contrasts hyperactive surface motion with slow or nearly static middleground structures. Sibelius often achieved this effect of standing still and moving by placing a shifting series of pedal points beneath the surface. In the second group, however, he was able to accomplish a similar effect by composing a few marked returns to C. Namely, the arrivals on C in m.107 and m.130 can be linked to the tonic and also, in some ways, with the C of m.93. Despite all of the complicated harmonic motion between mm.93 and 130 and the several rapid-fire descending fifth progressions, there is a certain stasis lurking beneath the surface. It would, however, be a mistake in my view to read this entire passage as a tonic prolongation. Instead the recurring appearances of C suggest that the middleground bass composes out a compound melody in which the rising line alternates with C. Functioning as a deep structural pedal point, C alludes to the tonic sonority, but never faithfully reproduces it. Local harmonic function along with numerous design elements prevent this passage from suggesting anything that resembles tonic stability. In addition to the second group’s suggestive arrivals on C, there are numerous motivic connections with the first group. Along with the above mentioned statements of the Aino motive, the turn figure is featured in several forms and through various middleground expansions (see Exs.5.3, 5.8 and 5.9). The

16 Laufer also notes the motivic significance of the descending fourth from c to G, but fails to connect this to the preceding neighbor motion. “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” 372.
17 Though I reach different conclusions than Tim Howell, my analysis of the second group, particularly its multidimensional harmonic and temporal aspects, have benefited a great deal from his harmonic analysis presented in Jean Sibelius: Progressive Techniques in the Symphonies and Tone Poems (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), 92-4.
18 Laufer is, I believe, mistaken in reading the C in m.93 as a tonic prolongation. “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” 365-72.
second and third cycles prolong \( g^2 \) in the upper voice by composing out the sixth motive – now presented as a major interval – from \( g^2 \) to \( e^3 \) and back to \( g^2 \) (see Exs.5.3 and 5.8).

The fourth cycle, like the second cycle, completes its predecessor. As we have already seen, the third cycle sets up an arrival on G that is never heard. The fourth cycle will complete the third by extending its descending line one step in each direction and through chromatic/modal alteration: \( B^\flat – A^\flat \) becomes \( c – B^\flat – A^\flat – G \). An auxiliary cadence into \( A^\flat \) complements this descent and supports enlargements of the crucial upper voice neighbor motive between \( g \) and \( a^\flat \) (see Ex.5.9). As Ex.5.9a indicates the upper voice’s neighbor notes arise from an expansion of the turn figure. In this scenario ascending figures overstep their anticipated goals by one note, which then serves as an incomplete neighbor to the goal tone. The rise of a minor ninth form \( g^2 \) to \( a^\flat^3 \) foreshadows crucial events of the recapitulation. The structural dominant is finally reached in m.149, but by now a C minor key signature has supplanted the C major modality. With its arrival on G reserved for the end, the second group proves itself to be a model of post-Beethovian sonata practice where the second group’s unsettled nature composes out a large-scale search for the dominant (see Chapter 3 above for more on this idea). Taken together, the four cycles of the second group amount to a massive cyclic process that comes into tonal focus with the arrival on G. This process, of course, reaches back into the exposition whose initial bass note (C) triggers a massive tonic arpeggiation.

The Fourth Rotation (Part Two):
The Closing Group

Just as the second group hone in on G by coming into harmonic focus, it also leads into the closing group by coming into motivic and temporal focus. As was mentioned in Chapter 3, the closing group is more stable than the second group in terms of formal organization,
tonal structure, and tempo. While the second group represented a continual search for a variety of goals, the closing group’s identity is secured from its very beginning; just where to locate that beginning is a matter of considerable interest however. Example 5.10a shows how the closing group is constructed out of the repetition of a twenty-two measure pattern beginning in m.156. It is at m.156 where the increasing tempo reaches its peak speed (Vivacissimo) in order to mark the design change. However, if we refer back to Ex.5.9, we find that the final measures of the second group (beginning one measure before the arrival of G in m.149) correspond to mm.15-22 of the closing group. In other words, Sibelius brilliantly fuses the second and closing groups together by hiding their formal seams. The incomplete statement of the closing group’s material also emphasizes the second group’s process of coming slowly into focus. Furthermore, the beginning of the closing group (mm.156ff) recomposes mm.99ff of the second group at a faster tempo. As the Aino theme slowly emerged from the introduction into the first group, this new theme emerges in full with the arrival of the closing group.

The truncated first statement of the closing group’s structure and its third statement (mm.181-208) both unfold in G while the central statement (mm.156-180) unfolds in C. This harmonic organization can best be understood as a three part structure that prolongs G with an emphasis on its subdominant. The scherzo section of the development will also explore the possibilities of the tonic (C) trapped within the embrace of the dominant. The overall design and structure of the closing group foreshadow the scherzo; for this reason, I have labeled it as a proto-scherzo. Other writers, less enamored with a sonata reading of the Symphony, have gone so far as to label this section the first scherzo.19

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Each of the complete statements of the closing group’s theme consists of three formal units. The first (mm.1-8) begins with the familiar succession of $T\text{r}$ moving to a minor ninth chord. This progression initiates an auxiliary cadence into C and G respectively. Above this the upper voice unfolds an augmented fourth progression to the fifth of the goal bass note. The second section’s upper voice (mm.9-16) begins a half step below the first section and expands and corrects its ascent to a perfect fifth. Just prior to the goal tone’s arrival Sibelius nests the inversion of the augmented fourth within the perfect fifth ascent. The final – or closing – section (mm.16-22) elaborates the bass goal with the motivic neighbor figures of $a\flat$ to $g$ in the first and last sections and $d\flat$ to $c$ in the central one. Sibelius also employs the $a\flat$ to $g$ motive in the upper voices. In m.199 (m.19 of the third section) the pattern is changed in order to return the Kopfton to the upper voice. A variant of mm.20-21 are reiterated several times in order to strengthen the exposition’s close in m.208 (Ex.5.10). In order to lead into the minor Aino theme of the development Sibelius plunges the Kopfton from $g^3$ to $g$ between mm.200 and 208. Example 5.10b reveals that this descent unfolds in three stages, each of which compose out the $a\flat$ to $g$ neighbor motive. Like the second group, the closing group presents the listener with a series of incomplete and complete structural cycles that compel the music into the next large formal section.

Upon the first presentation of the Aino theme in m.60, the structure sank down into a lower register in order to recompose the upper voice’s inherent desire to ascend to the true register of the Kopfton. This process is reworked and greatly intensified as the closing group gives way to the development. The Kopfton’s brutal three octave descent – overlaid with its disruptive chromatic upper neighbor – drives home the fact that the Bacchic music has exacted a heavy toll on the Aino theme. As we have just observed, the Bacchic fourth rotation not only
rejects the thematic austerity and beauty associated with the Aino material, but it continually
denies the power of C as tonic and renders the Aino motive helpless when it is trapped in m.107
and when it is chromatically deformed and trapped within the second group’s unfolding bass
progression. The fourth rotation’s denial of the Aino theme – remember it only allowed one
measure for the presentation of its Aino-related b-zone – and its deflection toward C minor along
with the increased prominence of the aß neighbor motive results in the development’s somewhat
powerless minor key return to Aino. If redemption is to come through the Aino music, this
Bacchic fourth rotation and the minor key Aino theme it begets must be overcome.

The Fifth Rotation:
The Development and Scherzo

All of the momentum gained by the fourth rotation is channeled into the opening
measures of the development where turbulent string figuration obsessively rises and falls
between G and F – the crucial motivic seventh. The agitation of this beginning starkly contrasts
the initially hopeful ascents that began earlier rotations. Of course, the realization of C minor as
a secondary key area leaves little hope at the start of the new rotation. While earlier rotations
seemingly began with a clean slate, this one is so caught up within the Bacchic disappointment
of the preceding music that it must struggle from the outset to correct the slippage to C minor. In
this section we must follow the semantic path of this new rotation. Laufer’s analysis of this
entire section (mm.208-475) is particularly insightful about local voice leading details and has
provided me with a firm foundation.20 In addition, his reading eloquently shows how Sibelius
achieved continuity amongst its formal components. However, I have a different view about the
large-scale workings of the development section based upon my own theories of form, meaning

and the precedents I believe were set in the exposition. The following discussion will focus on these large-scale features.

With the turbid string figuration continuing in the lower registers, the Aino theme re-emerges in m.221. This entrance, which restores the initial Adagio tempo, marks the arrival of Telos II and serves as the close of the second teleological phase. Instead of the C major grandeur of m.60, this new telos unfolds in the tonic minor and struggles to assert itself against the churning strings. In the first telos the Aino motive (d\(^1\) – c\(^1\) – g) led immediately into the Aino theme’s continuation (recall Ex.5.3). Here the motive is stated a few times before the theme can slowly assemble itself. Furthermore, as Ex.5.11 asserts, the telos arrives over e\(\flat\) (the bass of a C\(^6\)) in the bass, which does not move to c until m.225. Like the turn to c in the second section of the proto-scherzo, this one is also caught within the larger prolongation of G. The thematic fragmentation, minor modality, dense orchestration and inability of c to function as a deep structural tonic all conspire to undermine the sense of arrival in m.221. In other words, though the telos theme is reached, it is hardly the goal we had been seeking. Instead it is the negative manifestation of all of the Symphony’s disruptive chromaticism (especially the continually problematic pitches A\(\flat\) and E\(\flat\)). The remainder of the third teleological phase, which m.221 initiates, can best be understood as an attempt to overcome the darker chromatic forces and regain the triumphant atmosphere of Telos I. This process is worked into the Aino theme itself, which picks up the ascending motive by climbing an octave at its end.

The fifth rotation’s c-zone is initiated in m.236 (see Ex.5.12) and, as with rotation four, c material will control the remainder of the rotation. In many respects this passage recalls the music of the second group. In m.258 a design change and new, increased tempo (Allegro molto moderato) announce the beginning of a transition into the forthcoming scherzo. This passage
Example 5.12:
briefly re-engages the bass’s prolonged G before a series of parallel fifths between the outer voices leads to the arrival of c (mm.258-61), the scherzo’s initial tonic. The upper voice of this parallel fifths progression picks up c² from the Aino theme’s ascent and carries it forward to g² (5). Continuing the organic ebb and flow of the Seventh’s structure, the Kopfton quickly falls back to c¹ and recomposes the upper voice ascent. Beneath this, the bass unfolds two auxiliary cadences into C in order to highlight C as the local tonic. Of course these cadence patterns also emphasize the overall pattern of growth, decay and rebirth that exists on so many levels throughout the Symphony. By m.285, the start of the scherzo, the Kopfton, along with C, is regained.

The scherzo, which increases the tempo to Allegro moderato, consists of four sections: scherzo – trio – false reprise – real reprise.²¹ Like earlier sections (the first group and proto-scherzo) its main theme is foreshadowed in the preceding music (ie.m.263-65 etc.). Its bid to function as a complete structure inserted within the development space is denied by the false return’s inability to secure C major as the tonic key. Instead of functioning as the overall tonic of the Symphony, the scherzo’s initial C major tonality is – as was the case elsewhere in the work – caught within the structural prolongation of G. Despite the apparent newness of the scherzo, it recomposes many motives found in the Symphony’s initial rotations. Example 5.13 shows the first main section of the scherzo. Its structure composes out the modal variant of the descending fourth figure (c – B♭ – A♭ – G) in the bass. Ultimately, this will prove to be only the beginning of a massive expansion of the motivic sixth between c and E (reached at the false reprise in m.343). The first three steps of the descending motive are counterpointed by the upper part’s descent from g² through f² to e♭². As the graph in Ex.5.13 reveals, this line functions as an

²¹ This formal reading is based on Laufer’s. “Continuity in the Seventh Symphony,” 375-80.
Urlinie within the scherzo structure. The underlying parallel fifths of this counterpoint between the outer voices is somewhat unconventional, though hardly problematic in Sibelius’s musical language. The arrival on G in m.310 supports a cadential $\frac{2}{4}$ and therefore leads one to expect resolution. However, the cadence is evaded – recall the evaded cadences of mm.68-71 – and this creates a sense of continual motion. According to Laufer it is “as if the music, in its growing haste to proceed, had no time to resolve the V.”22

Because the scherzo returns the Symphony fully to the Bacchic topos, it is hardly surprising that the inability of G to resolve properly in m.310 leads into an expansion of the chromatic neighbor motive (A♭ – G). The trio section commences in m.322 over A♭ in the bass (Ex.5.14). This pitch is enharmonically respelled as G♯ in m.327, but completes the neighbor motion by returning to G♯ in m.337. Above this motive the upper voice converts e♯ on d2 over the bass G♯. As in the opening measures of the piece, i$\frac{3}{2}$ is temporarily converted to i$\frac{4}{2}$. Here, however, it ultimately leads down to d$\frac{2}{2}$, not up to e$\frac{3}{2}$. The scherzo’s attempt at unfolding a complete C major Urlinie, which has just been threatened by the problematic appearance of e$\frac{2}{2}$, arrives on $\hat{2}$ (d$\frac{2}{2}$) in m.330. From this point forward, however, the Urlinie’s ability to assert itself, and C, major will completely dissipate. In m.334 it is shifted down an octave to d$\frac{1}{2}$, and by the end of the trio (m.342) the Urlinie quietly completes itself in an inner voice without root position tonic support.

The arrival of G in m.337 re-establishes the local dominant, which was last heard at the evaded cadence in m.310. In fact, m.337 resolves the abandoned V$\frac{2}{4}$ to V$\frac{4}{2}$.23 The damage has already been done, however, and whatever positive sense of completion m.337 could have

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22 Ibid., 375.
23 Ibid., 375.
ushered in is replaced by one of the Symphony’s most chromatic passages. In mm.337-342 Sibelius presents a dissonant sound field whose gestures recall and intensify the type of music first heard in m.14ff. Here, numerous leaps of augmented fourths and diminished fifths help divert the structure from its intended C major resolution of m.337’s dominant seventh. As Ex.5.14 indicates, the seventh (f²) of the dominant falls a motivic seventh to g¹ in m.343, but in another sense its required resolution is transferred into the bass in m.342. Instead of supplying the bass of Vⅆ, as one might expect, the F of m.342 supports an augmented sixth that leads into I⁶ in m.343. This gesture completes the large-scale descending sixth in the bass begun in m.285 and prevents the return of C in root position.

Semantically as well as structurally, the trio functions much like the second and closing groups of the exposition. It realizes the chromatic potential of the scherzo and prevents a true return to C major. The scherzo’s false reprise begins in C major – albeit over a I⁶ chord – but never firmly establishes the thematic or tonal stability of the initial scherzo section; it is simply impossible to undo the damage wrought by the chromatic trio. The return to Ĺ in m.343 is an octave lower than it should be and, once again, the structure will have to struggle to piece together another upper voice ascent. Beginning in m.359 the bass structure features a descending fifth motion from b♭ to e♭ that sets up the real reprise in m.375. The penultimate step of this descent (e supporting g♯²) implies an enharmonic re-interpretation (f♭ supporting a♭²) and recalls the conclusion of the trio. Like the trio, the false reprise concludes with an augmented sixth chord that leads into the next section – here, of course, the actual pitches are transposed a half step lower than the trio. The a♭² of the top voice picks up the G that initiated the false reprise and continues up to B♭ in m.375 at the real reprise. A massive expansion and chromatic deformation of motive X is begun with the arrival on E in the scherzo’s false return. Previously, motive X
took one of two forms: E – F – G or Eb – F – G. Here, in the closing sections of the
development, X is realized as follows: E – Eb – F – G. In this scenario, which mirrors the
aforementioned f↓♭ – e♭ motion, the initial E must be re-interpreted as an upper neighbor to Eb. I
will return to the particulars of this massive motivic expansion momentarily.

The false reprise’s inability to re-establish C major leads to the real reprise which has no
delusions of the tonic major. Instead, this section (see Ex.5.15) begins in the minor key (a 5 – 6
exchange over e♭ suggests C minor), which is graphically emphasized by the re-appearance of the
three-flats signature. Laufer considers the arrival on e♭ here as a Stufe supporting b♭ of the
Urlinie.24 As hinted at above, I do not read a descending Urlinie into the development. There
are at least two reasons for this notion. First, there is no strong arrival on 4 in the top voice.
Second, the thrust of the upper voice, in keeping with the precedent established from the very
outset of the composition, is undeniably upward in the remaining one hundred measures of the
development. The issue of finding the Kopfton’s obligatory register has yet to be resolved and
therefore it would be illogical for 5 to initiate an interrupted structural descent at this point.
Therefore, the structure is undivided in the traditional sense.25 Before examining the larger
structure of the development, let us explore a few more details.

The climactic concluding measures of the real reprise (mm.387-408) suggest the
possibility of a return to C, but such hopes are dashed by the shattering appearance of C♭ in
m.408. Immediately followed by a Luftpause, C♭ brings the Bacchic processional to screeching
halt.26 The scherzo’s Bacchic music began as a rather benign and sprightly scherzando passage.

24 Ibid., 379-80.
26 The passage leading up to the Luftpause recalls the problematic arrival of A♭ at the end of the first scherzo. Here,
however, the moment is exaggerated by the Luftpause and the surprising arrival on C♭.
Increasing chromaticism and failed structural expectations, however, reveal the dark ramifications of Sibelius’s excesses “in Baccho.” This semantic/structural process was also present in the *Lemminkäinen Suite* and *Skogsräet*. Taken together, the second group, the proto-scherzo and the scherzo amount to a Sibelian confession. The victims of this excessive lifestyle were Aino and the children, as the slippage to C minor for Telos II made explicit. The attempt at regaining C major in the Scherzo ends in a disastrous chromatic prolapsus as the putative tonic (C) leads to C♭. The scherzo, framed as it is by this sinking tonic, reverses the yearning inherent in the ascending upper voice motives and motive Y.

Wounded, but not slain, the Sibelian protagonist must recover from this tragic impasse and search for redemption and healing through the love of Aino. In m.409 the tempo increases to Vivace as the music struggles to recover from the climactic C♭ (see Ex.5.16a). Shards and fragments of thematic ideas slowly coalesce in this transitional passage (mm.409-448) until the retransition arrives in m.449. C♭ supports e♭2-3 in the upper voice, which serves as an upper neighbor to d♭3 (reached in m.446). Attained through a chromatic voice exchange, d♭3 continues the large-scale ascent in the upper voice. Beneath this arrival the structure lands on F and then proceeds to G in m.449 thereby completing the massive prolongation of motive X. Significantly, the devastating C♭ is caught within the unfolding of X; the successful completion of X is a testament to the fact that C♭ can be overcome. With the arrival of the retransition in m.449, the tempo increases to Presto and the structure regains V. G is prolonged as the bass of a cadential ♩ which resolves to ♩ in m.475. The driving figures in the upper voice compose out descending and ascending sixths (between g and e) in order to initiate the sixth rotation’s a material. As Ex.5.16b shows, these upper voice figures combine the motivic linear ascents and descents with
the turn figure. Overall, the upper voice prolongs e² as the upper neighbor to the goal tone d² (reached at m.475). This arrival marks the end of the development’s ascent and will slip into the Aino theme of the Recapitulation (m.476ff). Example 5.16c shows how the retransition transposes the overall neighbor figure of the preceding transitional passage. In Ex.5.17a I have provided an overview of the entire development section. From this example, we can observe how each step of the final ascending line is preceded by its upper neighbor. This amounts to a miraculous expansion of the very same pattern established in the ascending lines of the Aino theme itself (mm.71ff on Ex.5.1 and m.231ff on Ex.5.11!)

Though it ends on V supporting i, the development is not interrupted in the usual sense. Instead, it represents a large-scale structural antecedent akin to the antecedent of the second rotation (mm.22-37 see Ex.4.5a and Ex.4.6). Like that earlier passage, this one offers a challenge to the structure: can the ascent from G be completed at the octave? It is now up to the recapitulation to answer and resolve all of the questions raised by this structure thus far. If the recapitulation follows in the Bacchic footsteps of the exposition and development there is little hope for salvation. But the charged atmosphere of the Presto retransition, which drives headlong into Telos III, shows that the extreme devastation wrought by the Bacchic processions – their minor key tendencies and ultimate chromatic fall from grace to C♭ – may be a thing of the past.

Before we can explore the structural and semantic outcome of this Symphony, we must see how it came into existence. In the gestation of this unique text lie the answers to many deep structural, formal and semantic questions. Thus far the present analysis has shown how over and over again the Seventh comes into and out of focus. Its meditative sway brings answers and tranquility which soon dissolve into frenzied disorientation. Its structure reveals, on the one
Example 5.17a.

Example 5.17b.

Example 5.17c.

Example 5.17d.

Example 5.17e.

Example 5.17f.

Example 5.17g.

Example 5.17h.

Example 5.17i.

Example 5.17j.

Example 5.17k.

Example 5.17l.

Example 5.17m.

Example 5.17n.

Example 5.17o.

Example 5.17p.

Example 5.17q.

Example 5.17r.

Example 5.17s.

Example 5.17t.

Example 5.17u.

Example 5.17v.

Example 5.17w.

Example 5.17x.

Example 5.17y.

Example 5.17z.

Example 5.17aa.

Example 5.17bb.

Example 5.17cc.

Example 5.17dd.

Example 5.17ee.

Example 5.17ff.

Example 5.17gg.

Example 5.17hh.

Example 5.17ii.

Example 5.17jj.

Example 5.17kk.

Example 5.17ll.

Example 5.17mm.

Example 5.17nn.

Example 5.17oo.

Example 5.17pp.

Example 5.17qq.

Example 5.17rr.

Example 5.17ss.

Example 5.17tt.

Example 5.17uu.

Example 5.17vv.

Example 5.17ww.

Example 5.17xx.

Example 5.17yy.

Example 5.17zz.

Example 5.17aa.

Example 5.17bb.

Example 5.17cc.

Example 5.17dd.

Example 5.17ee.

Example 5.17ff.

Example 5.17gg.

Example 5.17hh.

Example 5.17ii.

Example 5.17jj.

Example 5.17kk.

Example 5.17ll.

Example 5.17mm.

Example 5.17nn.

Example 5.17oo.

Example 5.17pp.

Example 5.17qq.

Example 5.17rr.

Example 5.17ss.

Example 5.17tt.

Example 5.17uu.

Example 5.17vv.

Example 5.17ww.

Example 5.17xx.

Example 5.17yy.

Example 5.17zz.
hand, nature-mystical peace and, on the other, the Bacchic excesses of an untamed nature; for it was in the wild that Kullervo, Björn, and Lemminkäinen all traded in their morality for Bacchic excesses, and, as the similarities between the Seventh and those earlier texts make apparent, it was in this metaphorical wilderness that Sibelius succumbed to his darker inclinations. If the design and structure reveal a mediation between these two kinds of nature, then our study of genesis will show how, for Sibelius, composition was both a process akin to tranquil nature meditation and an intensive struggle to tame a vast wilderness of compositional ideas.
Anxiety – be it over his career, his place in musical history, his health, his family, or his finances – had always been a corrosive force in the life and personality of Jean Sibelius. By 1914, as the musical ideas of the final three Symphonies began to crystallize, the onset of world war and, as he perceived it, old age – he would turn fifty the following year – raised his anxieties to a fevered pitch. Sealed off from the marketplace of continental Europe, where larger publishers like Breitkopf and Härtel could afford to pay for large-scale compositions, Sibelius was forced to turn out trifles for smaller Scandinavian firms just to make ends meet. Needless to say, this kind of composition kept him from the symphonic ideas slowly evolving in his sketchbooks and did nothing to ease his mind. Work on the Symphonies was one of the few activities that could potentially calm his frayed nerves. He expressed this in one of many similar diary entries during this period:

The symphonies are developing slowly. But I’m still uncertain about them. My small pieces for various publishers are wearing me out. How best to proceed? I am now really anxious about my artistic future. There seems no end to the amount of insignificant trivia I have had to occupy myself with since the outbreak of war. Oh well! And how happy I am with my symphonic work.¹

On the other hand, the symphonies could also bring their share of tension. The immense struggle to bring the Fifth Symphony to its final form between 1915 and 1919 bears witness to this. “Have battled with God,” wrote Sibelius of this process as it neared its long-desired conclusion in the spring of 1919, and when the manuscript finally had been sent to the copyist – as if an exasperated sigh of relief – “Now it is good. But this struggle with God.”² The first

¹ Diary entry dated 12 January 1915. ETL III, 33.
² 22 April and 2 May 1919 respectively. See ETL III, 150. The events leading up to the final version of the Fifth are also described in James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No.5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 53-7.
known mention of a Seventh Symphony, a diary entry dated 18 December 1917, is particularly gloomy and laden with paranoia:

I see everything in the blackest terms at present. Misery and Barbarism. And I fear things are never going to be better. Have Symphonies VI and VII in my head, together with the reworking of Sym 5. If I become ill and can’t work any more, what will become of them?3

Drawing on the many anxiety-filled diary entries of the 1910s and the fact that the Fifth Symphony was the only major composition completed between the autumn of 1914 and 1922, Erik Tawaststjerna has concluded that this eight-year period represents a personal and compositional crisis that, in many respects, parallels the so-called crisis experienced by Beethoven a century earlier (1813-18).4 While for Beethoven this crisis resulted in angry outbursts and a general disregard for his physical upkeep, Sibelius withdrew further from the outside world and became notoriously concerned with his appearance. His well-known penchant for the finest clothes was intensified and he spared neither time nor expense in his personal grooming as he acquired a nearly obsessive-compulsive desire for neatness. Coincident with this, his aforementioned anxiety over the need to earn a living from small compositions and worries over his place within the modern musical world conspired to retard his compositional process where the Symphonies were concerned. Like his obsession with neatness, it was his obsession with attaining symphonic perfection, coupled with self-doubt, that forced him to take so much time with the Fifth Symphony.

Contrary to Tawaststjerna’s theory, James Hepokoski has located Sibelius’s crisis in the years 1909-14.5 For him, this crisis was governed by Sibelius’s reaction to musical modernism and by a critical reassessment of his own compositional mission. Hepokoski identifies four principal components to this reaction and reassessment: 1. a classicist response to the perceived

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3 ETL III, 112.
4 Ibid., 4-5.
5 Hepokoski devotes a chapter to the topic in Symphony No.5, 10-18.
excesses of modernism – especially as exemplified by Mahler, Strauss, and later, the Schoenberg circle; 2. an insistence on the “inner logic of his own best music”; 3. the extreme anxiety concerning his position in the continental marketplace; 4. “a resolute declaration to continue pursuing his increasingly unique musical path.” The immediate fruits of this crisis – *Luonnotar*, *The Bard*, *The Oceanides*, and the Fifth Symphony – all betray signs of Sibelius’s struggles with these issues.

Neither Hepokoski nor Tawaststjerna fixes his dates for the crisis too strictly, but we must attempt to reconcile their seeming differences. Historical changes, like the outbreak of a personal crisis, rarely have definite beginnings or endings and neither author implies that Sibelius’s crisis contradicts this notion. Instead, such historical changes are the results of gradual processes. Sibelius’s “crisis” was certainly a long time in the making. Many of the anxieties of the 1910s were present in the earliest years of his maturity and would occasionally flare-up into small, potentially debilitating crises. Anyone familiar with Sibelius’s biography knows that these intense moments of self-doubt could and would come and go. By the second decade of the last century, however, these problems became more acute and more persistent. Certainly, in 1909, as Hepokoski asserts, Sibelius entered a period of intense confrontation with the very nature of his musical-philosophical principles that would ultimately result in the final phase of his compositional career. Despite the completion of *Luonnotar*, *The Bard*, and *The Oceanides* between 1913 and early 1914, Sibelius could not fully overcome his anxieties. Instead, they were intensified by political events at home and on the continent and compounded by his return to drinking in 1915. Perhaps it would be best to view the entire period (1909-1922) as neither two crises nor one protracted crisis, but as an intense anxiety-ridden period comprised of many

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6 Ibid., 13.
crises both large and small. Ultimately – and despite the crowning achievements of the last three Symphonies, *Tapiola* and *The Tempest* – this anxiety and extreme self-doubt would snowball into the complete withdrawal from composition and lead to the much-discussed “Silence from Järvenpää.”

But before there was silence and amidst this self-confessional atmosphere of angst and anxiety, Sibelius managed to accumulate an impressive cache of thematic ideas that would form the basis of the final masterpieces. In the present chapter, I will examine the period from the autumn of 1914 to circa 1920 from the perspective of the Seventh Symphony. In particular, I will focus on the early development of the Adagio material that would eventually become the trombone theme, as well as the general nature of Sibelius’s compositional process during this period. Through this account, we can witness just how intertwined were the genetic processes and semantic roots of the final three Symphonies and we can witness, in part, how Sibelius the composer made his way through the shifting seas of anxiety and overindulgent self-doubt.

The Epitext

Before diving headfirst into the complex world of Sibelius sketches, some generalizations on his compositional process and on the relationship between modern scholarship and source-critical studies are in order. Recent decades have witnessed a well-known and often controversial surge in studies of musical genesis. It is not my intent to review the myriad ideological battles or to carry the flag for any methodological principle, my study proceeds from very practical considerations with only one *a priori* theory about what a sketch can and cannot

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7 My aim here is, by no means, to cast doubt on the pioneering researches of either Hepokoski or Tawaststjerna, but simply to argue that labeling any one period of a few years as a crisis seems all too neat. Indeed, as they have both shown in their respective studies, the entire final phase of Sibelius’s career was characterized by drastic shifts in his state of mind and many crises, both personal and musical.
reveal. This one theory (if it can even be called that) is caution, the only truly necessary, and undoubtedly the most indispensable, tool at our disposal in sketch studies.

When dealing with pre-textual sources, Gérard Genette has stressed the importance of caution for a number of reasons. Before sounding this cautionary note, let us examine the nature of pre-textual information. For Genette, sketches and previous drafts of a published text represent a certain class of paratextual information and therefore perform a variety of paratextual functions. While, in Chapter 2, I discussed the Seventh’s peritext – all of those things that literally frame the text, such as titles, author’s name and genre indications – we must now turn our attention to the other type of paratextual matter, the epitext. Genette defines the epitext as “any paratextual element not materially appended to the text within the same volume, but circulating, as it were, freely, in a virtually limitless physical and social space.” This includes letters, diaries, pre-texts, interviews, and other such modes of authorial discourse. Though the epitext can encompass a massive space that continually expands outward – it is, in Genette’s words, “a fringe of the fringe” that “gradually disappears into, among other things, the totality of the authorial discourse” – it also can become, as was witnessed with Sibelius’s titular alteration, peritextual and inward reaching as this information is subsequently appended to critical editions of texts or – in the case of music – to program and liner notes.

Presently, two cautionary flags must be raised before venturing fully into the Seventh Symphony’s epitextual universe. First, just as peritexts represent an intentional authorial act, so too can epitexts. Diaries and pre-texts form a special class of epitextual matter, termed intimate

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9 Ibid., 344.
10 Ibid., 346.
epitexts by Genette, in which the author writes for a specific audience: himself.11 Like any relationship between the creator and receiver of a text, the writing of a diary is characterized by intentional acts aimed at producing a particular reading. Sibelius’s own comments reveal that he understood this game of intentions all too well: “My letters give a false impression of me. They are always attuned to what I think will best suit the person who gets them.”12 The case with pre-texts is similar, but here the audience is, ultimately, posterity. In the end, it matters little whether or not an author intended that their source materials survive beyond them. As we know – and as Sibelius well knew – the only way for an author to guarantee the destruction of their sketches would be to take care of the matter personally. Therefore, the sketches represent an intentional authorial act; for Genette they reveal “what the author was willing to let us know about the way he wrote his book.”13 Second, there is a danger in overestimating the worth of sketches and early drafts by privileging them over the final form of a given text. Genette’s warning merits full quotation:

What is oldest does not necessarily tell the truth about what is most recent, and the recovery of origins must not end up assigning any kind of hermeneutic privilege to what is earliest. Were that to happen, obviously we would be replacing the old finalist fetishism of the “last version,” looked on as the inevitable culmination and as superior by definition, with a new and even less well founded fetishism, a kind of archaizing cult of the literary Ur-Suppe.14

In other words, especially where pre-textual clues to musical meaning are concerned, it is imperative that we not favor them to the point that they completely control our understanding of the finished text. Instead, we must be mindful of the temporal and, quite often, semantic gap that exists between pre-text and text, and that in this conceptual space a composer is free to change his mind in ways not reflected in any sketch material.

11 Ibid., 395.
13 Genette, Paratexts, 396.
14 Ibid., 402.
These cautionary remarks are not intended to end my exploration of musical genesis before it has even had a chance to begin, but rather are intended as a reminder that pre-textual data must be handled with care and, though I will use it to draw conclusions about the final version of the Symphony, that it can never serve as uncontestable proof of anything in the finished text. I will approach the Seventh’s genesis and the considerable epitextual material it entails with four goals in mind. First, invaluable insights into the historical and biographical context surrounding the Symphony can be gleaned from a study of the epitext. We can witness, through a narrative reconstruction of the compositional process, how Sibelius went about the task of composing a large-scale orchestral text and how this related to the intense anxiety of the period. Second, as hinted at above, the epitext provides a variety of information concerning meaning in the final text. Comments in diaries, letters or as quoted in conversation along with comments written on sketch pages – essentially pre-textual peritexts – support, and in turn are supported by, the meaning immanent in the final text. Just as the hypertextuality of the text pushes the listener outward to other texts and architexts for clues to inherent meaning, the epitext leads us from outside the text into the text itself. As was articulated in Chapter 3, it is precisely this kind of process that shows musical meaning to be immanent and renders the very idea of what some refer to as “extra-musical” obsolete. Third, sketch study will show how Sibelius constructed the Seventh’s unique form and how each time we listen to the Symphony we experience this process anew. Fourth, and in many ways, the sum of the first three goals, our study can reveal how Sibelius lived up to his own self-image as a nature-mystical composer. Essentially, this last point entails reconciliation between the epitext as a whole and the pre-texts themselves. In other words, we must explore whether all of those nature-mystical comments were self-mythologizing exaggerations or essentially truthful descriptions of his compositional
process. This same line of reasoning can ultimately demonstrate how Sibelius’s penchant for harsh self-criticism manifested itself in music.

The Compositional Process in General

Though the true essence of any creative process is shrouded in mystery, there are, nevertheless, certain generalizations that can be made. Primarily, the creative process is a complex interaction between inspiration, imagination and reason. That is not to say that inspiration and imagination lead to a mass of ideas which are eventually worked into a final composition by way of reasoned craftsmanship. If reasoned craftsmanship is to be at all successful, then it must also be guided by further moments of inspiration. Indeed, as Richard Kramer has reminded us with regard to Beethoven’s sketches, “reason and imagination are not discrete and separable.”15 The generative path taken by the Seventh Symphony is defined by elusive moments of inspiration – elusive, that is, to all but Sibelius – and by obsessive re-workings of various passages and material through which the composer hoped to regain new inspirational insights.

While the reality of the compositional process mixes inspiration and reason, first hand accounts of it often exaggerate inspiration as if a composer was merely the medium through which some mystical force operates. Santeri Levas elicited the following detailed account of Sibelius’s compositional process from Aino:

> A great orchestral work takes a long time to mature in his mind. For days I can perceive the creative process taking place, and I remain quite silent so as not to disturb him. In the night he moves about restlessly in his room. From time to time he sits down at his writing-desk, and then once again paces to and fro…The work is not yet matured…Then eventually one night the moment comes. As so often before, I hear him seat himself at his desk and then all at once he begins to draw the bar-lines. My husband never writes the parts one by one, but composes

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for all the instruments simultaneously. The whole score develops bar by bar. When the writing down begins, he works very quickly…It is a great event for me too. A heavy load falls from my heart. At such a time I am deeply happy.¹⁶

Highly Romantic and dramatic, this passage is instructive for a few reasons. It is, as far as I know, the most detailed account of Sibelius at work. It also shows, albeit with some exaggeration, to what degree everyday life at Ainola was connected to the ups and downs of Sibelius’s compositional work. This notion is corroborated by entries in Sibelius’s diary in which he worries over the difficulties his bad days create for Aino. The latter part of Aino’s description appears to support the later stages of composition when the full orchestral score was drafted. This process was usually withheld, unintentionally, until the last minute before deadlines and consequently had to be executed quickly.

As for the earlier stages of genesis, Aino’s comments are a little misleading. Sure, there may have been late night pacing and such, but, as was certainly the case with the Seventh, the leading musical ideas were vigorously worked-out on paper, not only in the composer’s head. In fact, the late masterpieces all sprang forth from an initial stage of inspiration in which an entire universe of thematic ideas was created (primarily from 1914-15) and then tried out in a variety of contexts. Mahler once described childhood as the one time when composers gather the blocks from which they build the music of their maturity.¹⁷ For Sibelius, however, the anxiety-filled years from 1914-19, which on the surface seemed so unproductive in terms of large-scale texts, were actually another time of inspired and prolific gathering. It was during this time that Sibelius acquired the tiles that he would fashion into his grand, “heaven-sent” musical mosaics (recall the diary entry quoted in Chapter 1). In a sketchbook now housed in the State Archives in Helsinki, Sibelius harvested his musical imagination for the themes that would comprise the

¹⁶ Quoted in Levas, Jean Sibelius, 13-14.
¹⁷ The well known quote can be found in any number of sources. See, for example, Constantin Floros, Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies, trans. Vernon and Jutta Wicker (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993), 25.
Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, *Tapiola* and the Violin Sonatina, Op., 80. Following this initial gathering, the next main tasks would be to, first, find the appropriate context for each theme and, second, to begin the long process of shaping them into the final work. The Sibelian compositional process was not so much about dramatically transferring initial inspiration onto a final score, but was about inspiration giving way to contextualization which ultimately grew into the arduous process of editing. He was, to paraphrase Joni Mitchell’s “Hejira,” “chicken-scratching for immortality.” The moments that Aino described so effectively were likely the inspired leaps from the later stages of editing to the initial orchestral draft, which would then be subjected to its own inspired editing.

Sibelius’s own comments on his compositional habits and philosophies seem, at first blush, contradictory. On the one hand he represents himself as a nature-mystical medium through which primal ideas were transformed into music. On the other, he often recorded his compositional progress in terms of great struggle – the final revisions of the Fifth Symphony clearly attest to this. The reality seems to hover – as one might expect – somewhere between these two poles. Nature meditation as manifested in his Symphonies was not a passive activity, but extremely hard work. As expressed early in his career, the Sibelian mission was to compose as truthful and honest a music as possible: “I do not want to strike a false or artificial note in art and hence I write and then tear up what I have written and think a great deal about what I am trying to do.”¹⁸ A few years later, as he began to lose faith in Wagner, Sibelius elaborated on this theme:

> In my view it [Wagner’s music] is altogether too well calculated. I do not like it when a piece of music is so carefully worked out. Besides his musical ideas strike me as manufactured (not fresh)…One cannot hammer out themes by force, but one must accept or reject them when they come.¹⁹

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¹⁸ Excerpted from a letter to Aino from late in 1891. See ETL I, 97.
¹⁹ Letter to Aino dated 28 July 1894, quoted in ETL I, 155.
His desire to create a natural sounding music – one that did not contain, as he viewed them, the overly contrived gestures and excesses of Wagner or, later, Mahler and Strauss – resulted in a great deal of work. The aim of this work, however, was to regain the elemental and uncalculated sense of the natural world. In other words, the raw materials – the themes themselves – were a kind of wilderness which was neither to be tamed nor depicted, but was to be contemplated deeply in order to learn its underlying secrets. In this way the compositional process mirrors the rotational and teleological designs of the Symphony itself; Sibelius obsessively returned to the thematic material time and time again until its ideal form was finally revealed. He truly was a “slave to [his] themes,” and he truly “submit[ted] to their demands.”\(^{20}\) In the autumn of 1914, as the themes that would eventually comprise the Seventh Symphony were beginning to be tried out in a variety of contexts, Sibelius took the time to record the following in his diary and perhaps nothing better explains why it took an entire decade for these themes to reach their final destination:

> But my way of working, based as it is on inspiration, has nothing to do with the conventional kind of composing. As a result I cannot always see where I am going in all this wilderness.\(^{21}\)

The National Archives Sketchbook and the Birth of the Adagio Theme

Though the first written reference to the Seventh Symphony did not take place until the end of 1917, its basic thematic material first appeared as early as the summer or early autumn of 1914. In the National Archives Sketchbook (henceforth abbreviated as NAS), which was concerned primarily with the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, one can find the earliest known variants of what would grow into the Seventh Symphony’s Adagio material (the trombone theme


\(^{21}\) Diary entry from 19 September 1914. See ETL III, 6.
and its continuation) and, to a lesser extent, the scherzo theme (m.285ff in the finished score). Much discussed in recent years, this sketchbook served as the fertile soil in which the seeds of the late masterpieces were sown. Initially intended as a place for planning the thematic content of the Fifth Symphony, this forty-page sketchbook with crude, hand-drawn staves eventually grew to include the initial planning stages of the Sixth Symphony and – on at least one page – the Violin Sonatina. As Sibelius gathered the themes that would come to form these texts, he also, inevitably, collected musical ideas that would ultimately not fit with them. Some of this surplus material, once freed from the orbit of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, would grow into the Seventh Symphony and *Tapiola*. The sketchbook has received considerable attention from the perspective of both the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies by Tawaststjerna and Hepokoski.\(^{22}\) Kari Kilpeläinen, in his discussion of the Seventh’s genesis, focuses most of his attention on the later sketches.\(^{23}\) Therefore, the time is ripe for a close examination of this essential document from a Seventh Symphony perspective.

On 10 October 1914, Sibelius noted the following impression in his diary:

*Alleingefühl* once more. Solitary and strong . . . the autumn sun is shining.

Nature is pervaded by a sense of farewell. My heart sings full of melancholy – the shadows lengthen. *Adagio in Sym.5*? That I, poor mortal, should have such wonderful times!\(^{24}\)

What Sibelius did not realize was that this melancholic theme was not destined to be the Fifth Symphony’s *Adagio*, but was to become the main theme of the Seventh Symphony. Hepokoski has argued that in teleological compositions, like the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the telos itself


\(^{24}\) Quoted in ETL III, 6.
is usually amongst the first themes worked out during a composition’s genesis. The same can be said for the Seventh. Perhaps the first draft of the future telos theme appears on NAS, p.5 (see Ex.6.1a). This is the first of twelve appearances made by this theme in the sketchbook. In Table 6.1, I have indexed these variants in terms of key, context, date (when known) and any additional comments written by Sibelius pertaining to each sketch. Let us now explore these variants in some detail.

Covering two lines at the bottom of p.5 in the Sketchbook, the first appearance of the main theme is given in D♭ major, a far cry from its future C major home. Like most of Sibelius’s sketches, this one contains no bar lines, only one reference to vertical harmony and no counterpoint. As will be the case for all but two NAS appearances, Sibelius only gives the incipient of the theme without extensive development. Of course, before it could undergo any expansion and development, a proper context needed to be found. As the label “A” indicates, this was to be the first thematic area of a proposed movement and the contrasting B material is found on the facing page (NAS, p.4; see Ex.6.1b.). The A theme contains the gestures that will dominate the early stages of the Adagio’s development. The initial descending third from 3 to 1 followed by the descending fourth to 5 clearly prefigures the head motive of the trombone theme in the final version. This gesture is followed by its transposition up a semitone to suggest supertonic harmony. While this harmonic move is absent from the final version, the general shape of the line does prefigure the eventual score. The next important feature of this early draft is the leap to b♭2 (♯6), which may have given rise to the prominence of A♭ in the published score (especially in m.72). These three traits – the head motive, its supertonic transposition, and the pronounced arrival on ♯6 – are common to all of the NAS variants. The B theme does not seem

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26 Contrapuntal voices and chords were usually withheld until the later phases of composition.
Table 6.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Tempo</th>
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<th>Additional Comments</th>
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<td>Mvt. III</td>
<td></td>
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<td>B or C♭+</td>
<td>Mvt. III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“eller cess” [or C♭+]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.14</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A or H? (as in H dur)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Mvt. III</td>
<td></td>
<td>1/12/15 &amp; 4/10/15</td>
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<td>Mvt. III (secondary theme)</td>
<td>Fifth Symphony</td>
<td>2/5-6/15</td>
<td>“in g dur”</td>
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<td>Mvt. III</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“in g dur?”</td>
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<td>B♭</td>
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Example 6.1a:
NAS, 5.

Example 6.1b:
NAS, 4.
to be subject to any further development in the sketchbook. Its B♭ minor key does suggest a large-scale motion to the submediant and this tonal plan will persist through some of the early sketches.

The next appearance of the theme (NAS, p.9; see Ex.6.2) occurs in D major with the heading “Lento Movement.” A 7/4 time signature is also fixed to the theme at this point. Though the beginning of the theme is a transposition of p.5, the second half clearly implies a move toward the submediant through its dominant. More importantly, the theme is now explicitly fitted into a multi-movement scheme as indicated by the Roman numeral III above the sketch. Sibelius typically employed Roman numerals for movement numbers and used letters to denote sections of individual movements. This is the first written evidence of a multi-movement plan for the eventual Fifth Symphony. The III itself is written over a II. On p.8, which is dedicated to the Scherzo for this plan, he appears to have vacillated between the movement numbers II and III. In the end – based on the bold III that covers II on p.9 – it seems that the Scherzo was intended to precede the Lento. Sibelius sketched plans for the first and fourth movements on pages 9 and 10 respectively. The opening E♭ major movement bears the title “Intrada (In Pastoral Mood) and the Finale is the Bacchic Procession discussed in Chapter 5 (see Ex.5.6). Amongst the opening movement’s major themes is the pizzicato theme from the eventual second movement of the Fifth. This theme is itself taken from Sibelius’s incidental music to August Strindberg’s play Swanwhite (1908) where it was associated with both the healing/redemptive powers of motherly love and romantic yearning. In light of this epitextual

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27 Tawaststjerna transcribed the Scherzo, but missed its connection with the Lento the Seventh Symphony, which was first noted by Kari Kilpeläinen. ETL III, 19-20; and Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 241.
evidence, we find that the Seventh’s Adagio material was linked to ideas of nature mysticism, romantic yearning, the quest for redemption and Bacchic excess from very early in the generative process!

The first theme table that explicitly bears the title Symphony No.5 (“Sinf V” in Sibelius’s shorthand) appears on NAS, p.12. The incipient of Adagio/Lento theme, once again the main theme of the third movement, is now transposed to B major, but beside it Sibelius has written “eller cess” (“or Cß”) (see Ex.6.3).29 In this scenario the third movement would have unfolded a minor third below the other movements which are all in Eß. After establishing this key and context, Sibelius appears to have subjected the theme to further elaboration on pages 14 and 15 (Exs.6.4 and 6.5 respectively). It is difficult to discern whether the theme on p.14 is labeled A (as in the primary theme of a movement) or “H” (as in H dur), but both fit the sketch. In all likelihood, NAS, p.14 represents an isolated experiment. The characteristic ^4 - ^3 - ^2 - ^6 gestures that had originally highlighted the supertonic are incomplete and chromatically altered to ^4 - ß^3 – ß^6; a gesture that suggests a minor seventh chord built on the subdominant. Whatever the reasons for this change, Sibelius abandoned it on the next page which is entirely devoted to the theme – for the first theme labeled Adagio. As Ex.6.5 reveals, the incipient of the theme remains as in its first appearances, but is now subject to its most elaborate continuation in the sketchbook. Some of this continuation prefigures the turn figures of the printed score’s first group. Tawaststjerna dates these two pages to mid-November 1914 when Sibelius recorded the following thoughts in his diary:

I have had a wonderful idea. The adagio of the symphony – earth, worms and heartache – fortissimos and muted strings, very muted. And the sounds are

29 A facsimile of this page is given in ETL III, ix; the entire theme table is transcribed in Hepokoski, Symphony No. 5, 34.
godlike. Have rejoiced and reveled in the rushing strings when the soul sings. Will this glorious inspiration fall victim to criticism – my self-criticism?30

Once again, that the epitextual evidence points towards nature mysticism and domestic drama as intertwined and inseparable forces is quite clear. Couched in the high anxiety of the times, this statement through its discussion of “earth,” “worms,” “heartache” and “godlike” sounds points toward the rotational and semantic cycles of birth, decay and rebirth along with their associated romantic and ecclesiastical overtones that would come to characterize the Seventh Symphony. It also suggests that Sibelius, despite the lack of clues as to orchestration in the sketches, heard the Adagio in terms of the glorious string hymn it would give rise to in the second rotation.

After a brief fragment of the Adagio on p.19, it next appears as part of a Fifth Symphony theme table on p.24 which is dated 12 January and 10 April 1915. Again in B major and again labeled as movement III there is little that distinguishes this variant from its predecessors. Tonally, it was still intended to unfold a minor third below the rest of the E♭ Symphony. With the next theme table for the Fifth (NAS, p.26, dated 5-6 February 1915), Sibelius began to rethink the contextual disposition of the Adagio material along with its key. Here, as Ex.6.6 indicates, it is written as the secondary idea of a potential C♭ major third movement. Beside the Adagio theme, which is written in C♭, Sibelius wrote the words “in G dur.” This implies that the theme would have unfolded in the flat submediant of the movement’s tonic key or the mediant of the overall tonic (E♭). The first theme recalls the intervallic content that would end up in the Fifth’s definitive second movement and, once again, this links the Adagio material with the Swanwhite music and all its semantic implications. The new first theme is relevant to our study of the Seventh in another way that will be discussed below. Tawaststjerna reports that on 2 December 1914 Sibelius ruminated over whether or not the Adagio would remain in its present

30 Diary Entry dated 13 November 1914. See ETL III, 7.
context as the first theme of the Fifth’s third movement. 31 This p.26 theme table is a realization of this uncertainty. On p.30 the incipient again appears in B major under the Roman Numeral III along with the same “in G dur?” question, but on the following page the context changes once again. Here (dated 30 March and 18 April 1914), the Adagio appears in B♭ major as a secondary idea for the first movement (E♭ major) (see Ex.6.7). This, along with the idea that replaced it as the third movement, was subsequently crossed out.

By this date in the Fifth’s Genesis, ideas for a new work destined to become the Sixth Symphony had begun to fill Sibelius’s mind and sketch pages. These new ideas, as Tawaststjerna has mentioned, distracted the composer from the Fifth and added a new layer of complexity to the compositional process as the two works became entangled. On NAS, p.37 Sibelius jotted down two theme tables: one for the Fifth and below it one for the Sixth. The only problem – from our privileged historical perspective anyway – was that the proposed Fifth Symphony was actually the Sixth and vice versa! In this proposed Sixth Symphony, we once again find the Adagio theme in B major as the primary theme of a third movement. Also in this sketch, Sibelius included the Fifth’s characteristic “Swan Hymn” among the themes that would come to form the Sixth Symphony. Eventually, he thought better of it, circled the theme and with a line returned it to the context of the Fifth, here called the Sixth Symphony.

Though all of the sketching just outlined had been undertaken between the autumn of 1914 and the spring of 1915, the last three pages of NAS date from the spring and summer of 1916. The final page (see Ex.6.8) is a B♭ major variant of the Adagio theme now with its final 3/2 time signature. In the autumn of 1916 – perhaps later – Sibelius reworked this variant in B major on the back of a receipt dated 24 November 1916 (HUL 0397).

31 Ibid., 7.
This early stage of the Adagio material’s development clearly demonstrates Sibelius’s nature-meditative methods of composition as the theme was returned to numerous times and in several contexts. Thus far it is very apparent that Sibelius was struggling to find his way through the vast wilderness of themes that filled the National Archives Sketchbook. As he blazed a trail forward, however, he seemed to only encounter new obstacles as ideas for the Sixth Symphony began to add to the density of that wilderness. Amidst the confusion added by the Sixth, a couple of crucial Seventh Symphony themes would emerge.

The Flute and Scherzo Themes

The flute and woodwind theme first heard in m.8ff of the finished score was, along with the Adagio, one of the Seventh’s first themes to come into existence – albeit in a far different context. Page two of the sketch HUL 0390, which Kilpeläinen dates to late 1914 or early 1915, contains two early variants of this theme. Example 6.9a shows the first of these which, as part of a theme table, is labeled “II Larghetto [sic]” and underlined in red. On the bottom half of the page it appears a third lower and circled, but still retains the movement number “II” (Ex.6.9b). It appears that this sketch page contains two distinct theme tables; the upper half of the page contains four movements as does the lower half with only the Larghetto theme held in common. In fact, the first occurrence of the theme was eventually crossed out in green pencil. It is rather difficult to discern the exact relationship between these two tables, but it is quite likely that the upper theme table was intended for the Sixth Symphony. This is made apparent by the first movement theme on the top of HUL 0390 which would ultimately wind up as the idea first heard in m.29ff of the Sixth (see Ex.6.10a-b). As shown in Ex.6.10c, this theme is also found as the first movement on the theme table for the Sixth Symphony – when it was temporarily labeled as

32 Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 241.
Example 6.9a:
HUL 0390, p.2 (upper half)

_H Larghetto [sic]_

Example 6.9b:
HUL 0390, p.2 (lower half)

Example 6.10a:
Sibelius - Symphony No.6 (mvt. 1)
m.29ff oboe

Example 6.10b:
HUL 0390, p.2 (upper half)

Example 6.10c:
NAS, p.37
(from theme table for Symphony No.5/6)
the Fifth Symphony – found on NAS, p.37. In light of these details, it becomes clear that, in its formative stages, the flute theme was associated with the Sixth Symphony.

Though the flute theme is absent from NAS (including the p.37 theme tables), according to Kilpeläinen its rhythmic roots are to be found on a few pages.33 This rhythm (a dotted half followed by three quarters) does not appear in the final version of the flute theme, but was one of its defining characteristics through much of the compositional process. Interestingly enough, the rhythm first appears in NAS, p.23 as the second movement of what appears to be a table for the Sixth Symphony.34 We have already witnessed its next appearance in Ex.6.6, where it served as the first theme of the Fifth’s third movement and ultimately led to the Adagio theme in C♭ major. In both of these cases the intervallic content carried by this rhythm prefigures the *Swanwhite* middle movement of the Fifth Symphony. In the end, the rhythmic profile, which had become synonymous with the flute theme, did not survive into the final version of the Seventh, save for the ascending scales (mm.56-58) that precede Telos I.35 Though this prominent rhythm was destined to play a small role in the published scores, its importance in the pre-histories of the Fifth through Seventh Symphonies can hardly be overestimated. Its early relationship with the flute theme, the *Swanwhite* theme and the Adagio material suggests that all three of these ideas share a deep genetic kinship which bolsters – though not proves – their clear semantic connection.

Another crucial early variant of the flute theme is found on HUL 0366 (Ex.6.11a-b). In the first system the flute theme is present primarily in eighth notes – the lower staff provides an alternate reading to the upper one – without its characteristic rhythm. It is unclear whether or not this more active presentation is connected to the remainder of the sketch. In fact, it is difficult to

32 Ibid., 241-2.
33 Kilpeläinen transcribes this theme as Ex.11.5. Ibid., 242.
34 Kilpeläinen also makes this connection. Ibid., 242.
determine if this is a continuity sketch, an elaboration of a theme table for a movement or at least four separate sketches on one page. The second system gives the flute theme with its expected rhythmic shape. Sibelius, after filling the remainder of the page, drew a line from the last measure of the second system to the facing page where he altered its continuation (Ex.6.11b). The original continuation – if it was intended as such – begins in the second measure of the third system following the double bar-line. Here Sibelius wrote out several measures of the climactic “Swan Hymn” that would come to characterize the Fifth Symphony’s Finale. On the fourth system, following another bar-line, the flute theme is taken up again. As I have indicated with the bracketed measure numbers on Ex.6.11a, the remainder of the sketch corresponds quite closely to mm.8-22 of the final score (b and c of the referential rotation). Aside from the obvious rhythmic and metric differences between HUL 0366 and the finished score, this sketch passage also has a slightly different bass progression. In spite of these differences the final three systems of HUL 0366, p.1 are remarkably close to the Seventh as we now know it. In all likelihood, Sibelius did intend this to serve as a continuity sketch. The altered music written on p.2 gives way to a figure that resembles the “Swan Hymn,” but replaces it nonetheless. Though there is no indication of the context for HUL 0366, is it possible that it was a potential second movement for the Sixth Symphony? Recall that on NAS, p.37 Sibelius had included the “Swan Hymn” in his table of themes for the Sixth’s second movement, but then returned it to the Fifth. While the flute theme was not included on NAS, p.37, it was, as we have seen, considered as the second movement of the Sixth at one point. Could HUL 0366 represent a crucial stage in the early evolution of the Sixth Symphony’s second movement? Perhaps this is a question best left unanswered based on the little information currently available.
As we know, in the Seventh’s printed score the flute theme is closely related to the trombone/Aino theme. Therefore, it is quite surprising to find that these two themes originated during the same period, but in different contexts. In fact, the structure of most of the flute theme’s early variants does not really foreshadow the head of the trombone theme. However, in the flute theme’s more complete statement on the final systems of HUL 0366, p.1, the motivic relationship was secured. Of course, it would be sometime before Sibelius came to realize the powerful, hidden connection between the two themes. After all, discovering secrets like this was the very essence of his slow, meditative compositional process during the decade of the Seventh’s genesis. Perhaps there are clues to this future relationship within HUL 0366 itself.

For example, the final two measures of the “Swan Hymn” section closely recall the passage immediately preceding the first statement of the trombone theme (mm.54-59). The final measure of the hymnic passage (the second measure of the fourth system) sounds very similar to the incipient of the trombone theme with $d^1$ falling to $c^1$. Could this early sketch prefigure the nature of the C major trombone theme? At this stage of the Seventh’s composition, the Adagio had yet to appear in C major and its incipient had always begun with $\underline{3}$ descending to $\hat{1}$ in the foreground instead of the incomplete $\underline{2}$ to $\hat{1}$ of the final version. Perhaps this brief, unassuming three measure passage helped inspire one of the final version’s most pivotal moments.

The Adagio material and flute theme were not the only ideas Sibelius began working on in the mid 1910s. One of the other principal ideas from the Seventh that commanded his attention during this period was what would eventually become the scherzo theme (m.285ff). Two early variants can be found on HUL 0390, the same sketch in which the flute theme was tried-out in a couple of contexts. On the first page of this sketch (the beginning of which is transcribed in Ex.6.12a) the scherzo theme appears in $B_b$ major. Its basic rhythm and arpeggiated
interval content are essentially the same here as in the final version. Of course, its first statement in the Seventh is in C major. The intended context of this sketch is implied on p.2, where, in the lower theme table, it appears as the main theme of a fourth movement (Ex.6.12b). At this point, then, the flute and scherzo themes were linked as the second and fourth movements of a four movement plan. As mentioned above, whether this lower theme table was for the Fifth or Sixth Symphony, or something else entirely, is difficult to determine. In NAS the scherzo theme is given three times. Two of these are in E♭ major and labeled each time with a “IV” (Exs.6.12c-d).36 Given the key of these two sketches it is quite possible that they were, at one point, intended as the Fifth Symphony’s fourth movement. Again, however, it is difficult to affix any degree of certainty to this hypothesis. At any rate, it appears that by early 1915 – NAS, p.33 is dated 20 April 1915 – Sibelius had come to think of this theme as well-suited to serve as the main idea in a final movement. On the bottom of NAS, p.40 the incipient of the scherzo is given in C major and labeled as “III.” Its exact role in this context is unclear. As we will see in the next chapter, before the scherzo theme found its home in the development of the published score, it would become the central theme of the fourth movement in the multi-movement version of the Seventh.

During this period the scherzo theme seems to have been worked out extensively on a large bifolio (HUL 0384) which bears the date 8 April 1915 and contains nearly two hundred measures of music. Here, the theme is given in a variety of keys and with numerous transpositions. A detailed discussion of this page is beyond the scope of the present study, but a couple of transcriptions are called for. Example 6.13a shows the theme as it appears toward the beginning of the page in C major. Like most of the variants and the final version, this passage

36 NAS, p.36 is the closest of these variants to the final score and is essentially a transposition of mm.285-290.
moves from I to II with the repetition of the alternating third head motive. In Ex.6.13b, taken from much later in the sketch, the theme is transposed and developed to suggest VII\(^{o7}\) moving to V – the resolution of which Sibelius delayed through the correction shown – in Eb major. On HUL 0383, another large bifolio devoted primarily to the scherzo theme, one finds a highly complex web of heavily drawn lines, circles and largely indecipherable words laid over two full pages of music. Among these words include the names Aino and Ruth. Here the names are also associated with letters as “Aino = A,” “Ruth = B,” and – most curiously – “A = B.” At this point, I will only mention this epitextual evidence in passing as we will return to it in the next chapter. However, it is worth noting that one of the scherzo variants, which bears the bold label “A=” twice (once circled) explicitly highlights the descending sixth between c\(^3\) and e\(^\text{b2}\) (Ex.6.13c). This interval, of course, plays a crucial role in the Seventh and is particularly associated with the Aino material. As in Ex.6.13c, the scherzo variants found on HUL 0383 couple the alternating third head motive with various continuations, but not the typical arpeggiated continuations found in the other variants. Though this sketch carries no written date, it may be deduced that it stems from the spring of 1915 like HUL 0384 for at least two reasons. First, it is the only other sketch in the entire collection of Seventh Symphony documents on the same paper as HUL 0383. Second, it seems to present a very early and rudimentary form of the scherzo theme. Of course, the various nonmusical markings probably date from a variety of later periods that would be at best difficult to determine.

Early examples of the flute and scherzo themes can be found on a couple of other sketches.\(^{37}\) HUL 0391 contains both themes in what appear to be fairly early variants. The lower half of p.1 falls under the Roman numeral “IV” and comprises two systems of hard-to-read

\(^{37}\) Not discussed here, HUL 0392, p.1 contains what appears to be an early Bb major scherzo theme.
ascending motives and one final staff which contains two themes, labeled A and B. Theme A proves to be another B♭ major scherzo variant which is coupled with a sequential eighth note motive (Ex.6.14a). It is difficult to determine for what this fourth movement plan was intended. Because there is no date on this material, it could possibly be for the Fifth, Sixth or Seventh Symphony. However, on p.2 there are two versions of the flute theme, one in G minor (possibly E♭) and one in B♭ minor (possibly A♭) (Ex.6.14b-c). The fact that this material is not associated with the Seventh Symphony in either of these keys suggests that it may belong to the earlier works. These variations on the flute theme do not appear to be a continuation of the preceding page’s fourth movement music.\(^{38}\) The sketch once again reveals a close association between the flute and scherzo themes. One more significant Seventh Symphony theme appears on HUL 0391, p.2. Given in Ex.6.14d, this ascending motive, characterized by a falling third followed by a rising fourth, prefigures the crucial preparatory passage (mm.502-3) for the climactic catastrophe of the recapitulation as well as the first group’s climatic arrival on E (mm.82-3). Interestingly enough, each of these passages works its way up to the crucial $\flat^6$ ($a^\flat$ in the exposition and recapitulation and $g^\flat$ in HUL 0391).

On HUL 0393 the scherzo and flute themes appear on what looks like a theme table for the Sixth Symphony. Over the space of three staves there are fifteen brief thematic ideas separated from each other by double bar-lines. It is possible that each staff represents a theme table for a different piece, but it seems more likely to me that this is one table for the Sixth Symphony. The first theme (Ex.6.15a) shows the incipient of the Sixth’s first movement theme as found in Ex.6.10. This is immediately followed by the flute theme (Ex.6.15b) and on the second staff one finds the scherzo theme in C major (Ex.6.15c). From the information gleaned

\(^{38}\) It is possible that this sketch dates from later in the compositional process. On HUL 0359, the first sketch of the one movement form, the flute theme does appear in A♭ by beginning on B♭ (see Chapter 7).
from the documents outlined above, it is apparent how intermingled the genesis of the last three symphonies was. The extent to which the flute and scherzo themes were connected to the genesis of the Sixth Symphony – in addition to the Fifth – has not been documented in detail elsewhere, but I think it represents a crucial part of the Seventh’s genesis. Once again we find just how complex and mysterious the creative process was for Sibelius.

D Major and Nature Spirits

Following these initial stages of inspired gathering and contextualization (1914-16) and after the Fifth had finally been launched in its definitive form (1919), the material destined to become the Seventh Symphony would undergo new attempts at contextualization and, for the first time, more extensive expansion and development. Just as the earlier period had a central document (NAS), this period – circa 1919 to the first years of the twenties – also had its own makeshift central depository of musical ideas. This document – catalogued as HUL 0395 – consists of several bifolios bound together to form a forty-three page sketchbook. In addition to material for the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies, this sketchbook contains ideas for a variety of works that would never see the light of day. One of these, a proposed tone poem named Kuutar ([feminine] moon spirit or moon goddess) and based on literary themes drawn from the Kalevala, was particularly influential in the development of the final two symphonies. As was the case in NAS, themes migrated fluidly from one proposed context to another in HUL 0395. This, as Hepokoski and Kilpeläinen have both suggested, may have had profound semantic ramifications for both the Sixth and the Seventh.39 In the remainder of this chapter we will examine how the Seventh’s Adagio theme and in one case its scherzo theme developed in the

Kalevalic environment of HUL 0395 and we will study several related sketch pages.

Furthermore, an annotated list of sketches from this period and later is provided in the Appendix.

On HUL 0395, p.29 Sibelius sketched out a table of themes accompanied by programmatic titles (Ex.6.16).40 Two of these themes were destined for the Sixth Symphony and two for the Seventh. The second theme on this table is familiar to us from m.29ff in the Sixth’s opening movement (recall Ex.6.10a). Here, it bears the Finnish label “Talvi?” (“Winter?”) and appears to be paired with an unidentified theme under the heading “Suvetar” (feminine spirit of summer). The first theme on the second staff labeled as “Hongatar ja Tuuli” (“pine spirit and wind”) was also destined for the Sixth Symphony. In fact, as Hepokoski has shown, this future fourth movement theme – a holdover from NAS – would become the telos of the entire Symphony.41 Based on the programmatic headings given on this table, Hepokoski and Tawaststjerna have both proposed readings of the Sixth Symphony as a meditation on the winter landscape.42 The incipient of the Seventh’s scherzo theme appears alongside the “Hongatar ja Tuuli” theme with the incomplete heading “Terhentar ja?” (“spirit of the clouds/fog and?”).43

On the final staff Sibelius wrote the beginning of the Adagio theme in D major and alongside it placed an unidentified theme. The Adagio is headed with the words “Kuutar ja pilvet” (“the feminine moon spirit and the clouds”) and, beneath this, “Tähtölä” (“where the stars dwell”). The final theme carries a Finnish title which to my eyes is largely illegible, but which

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40 Hepokoski reproduces a facsimile of this page, but its significance is such that a full transcription is warranted here. “Rotations, Sketches and the Sixth,” 334.
41 Ibid., 335.
42 Ibid., 335; and ETL III, 169-70.
43 This theme is not discussed in any of the literature and, as far as I have been able to deduce, its title is a misspelling of the word Terhenetar. Sibelius, in his haste, probably left out the third “e.” For a glossary of Finnish names in the Kalevala see Kalevala: Land of Heroes, trans. W.F. Kirby, ed. M.A. Branch (Dover, New Hampshire: The Athlone Press, 1985), 662-5.
Tawaststjerna has transcribed as “The Forging of the *Sampo*.”\(^{44}\) Finally, at the bottom of the table, Sibelius scrawled the word “*tuli*” (fire).

In addition to the wintry connotations this table lends to the Sixth Symphony, a variety of other conclusions can be drawn from its contents. It represents one of the first cases in which the Seventh’s Adagio and scherzo material were presented in the same context and it adds a new dimension to the confusion-riddled compositional process. The Fifth Symphony may have been finished, but now it appears as though Sibelius was juggling several works: the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies and at least one tone poem. References to all of these pieces can be found in his diaries and letters from throughout this period. Tawaststjerna has shown that Sibelius made numerous references to *Kuutar* throughout this period as well as to other potential *Kalevala*-inspired compositional plans.\(^{45}\)

In an interview from 1921, the composer discussed the possibility of setting *Väinämöinen’s Song* (probably Runo 41) as a tone poem.\(^{46}\) In his discussion of this literary theme Sibelius began speaking of the forging of the *Sampo*, which occurs much earlier in the *Kalevala* (Runo 10). However, the Runos immediately following *Väinämöinen’s Song* (42-49) all focus on the *Sampo*. It is quite possible that the final theme on the HUL 0395 table refers to this compositional plan. More likely however, the entire table describes a never completed work based on impressions gleaned from Runos 41-49. I will not go into a detailed description of this extensive and complex passage, but instead will note that it prominently features all of the imagery found in the theme table’s titles. For example, in Runo 42 – where Väinämöinen steals the *Sampo* from *Pohjola* – the images of “*Hongatar ja Tuuli*” and “*Terhenetar*” appear in short

\(^{44}\) The first word of this title appears to be “*Sampo,*” but I have been unable to make out the remaining Finnish words and have deferred to the translation presented in ETL III, 169.

\(^{45}\) *Kuutar* is mentioned on the following pages in ETL III, 169-70, 177,191, 243.

\(^{46}\) The relevant portion of the interview is given in ETL III, 169-70.
succession. Called forth by Louhi, the old maid of *Pohjola*, to battle Väinämöinen, these natural forces and images appear as follows:

Then the Maid of Clouds, Mist-Maiden,  
From the sea a cloud breathed upward  
Through the air the cloud she scattered,  
And detained old Väinämöinen…

Then the winds arose in fury,  
And the tempests raged around them…

From the trees the leaves were scattered,  
And the fir-trees lost their needles…

From the relationship between Sibelius’s titles and Runos 41-49, it is possible that the HUL 0395 theme table is not for the *Kuutar* project as Kilpeläinen has suggested, but for a larger meditation on the ending of the *Kalevala* – save for its final Runo – and the Finnish landscape. The position of the reference to *Kuutar* relative to everything else on this table does not suggest that it was intended as the overall title. On the other hand, it is possible that the table represents not one, but several projected works. In this scenario, the Adagio theme – “Where the Stars Dwell” – would have formed one movement of the projected *Kuutar* tone poem. Of course, the *Kuutar* name persists in other epitextual evidence, but perhaps this entire theme table should not be understood as belonging to the moon spirit alone.

Ultimately, the titles given to the Adagio theme in the HUL 0395 table do suggest that it was understood as a contemplation of the night sky. This imagery, as we will see in the next chapters, exists in other features of the Seventh’s structure and genesis. What has not been suggested elsewhere, but what is of prime importance for our study, is the cloud imagery that accompanies both the title *Kuutar* and the scherzo theme. After all clouds are the greatest impediment to any contemplation of the moon and stars. These literary titles may evoke nature-

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49 Kilpeläinen was the first scholar to propose this reading. Ibid., 248.
mystical images, but they are also imbued with all of the related human drama found in the
Kalevala. In other words, in these themes natural processes reflect and are themselves animated
by a deep relationship to human action and emotion. Perhaps these titles help explain the many
obstacles faced by the Adagio theme in the course of its unfolding. It is only fitting that the final
version’s destructive Bacchic scherzo was once given the label Terhenetar. The very spirit and
force sent to detain Väinämöinen is represented by the same musical theme that derailed Sibelius
– himself a veritable latter-day Väinämöinen – from his compositional path in the Seventh’s
development! On at least three levels this table represents not nature meditation alone, but the
metaphorical association between the drama of nature and the drama of life.

On the first page of the HUL 0395 sketchbook, and on several other sketch pages in the
HUL collection, Sibelius wrote out the Adagio theme in D major and experimented with its
continuation. The nature of the continuation as conceived during this D major period is
remarkably close to the final version of the exposition’s first group. In Ex.6.17 I have provided
the Adagio theme as it appears between mm.60 and 91 for ease of comparison. These D major
variants are quite similar to each other in terms of length (each is around thirty measures or so),
the general shape of their continuation (only minor differences exist), and in terms of their
rhythms.

HUL 0395, p.1 is in all likelihood an early variant from this period (Ex.6.18). Like the
earlier variants from NAS, this sketch contains no significant references to counterpoint and
harmony. The main difference between the D major melodies and that found in the final score is
the persistent turn to supertonic harmony in the second and third measures. However, by this

50 The Adagio is worked out in D major on the following extant sketches: HUL 0395, 0364, 0367, 0373, 0362, p.1
and 0375.
51 On the bottom of this sketch page there are three lines of unrelated music that appear to have been written at a
different time. These are not included in my transcription.
Example 6.17:
First Group Melody from Published Score.
point, the final version’s rhythm is mostly present. One of the biggest departures from the norm found in Ex.6.18 is the half rest that replaces \( \frac{3}{4} \) in the first measure’s descent. Of course, its presence is implied, but its conspicuous absence prefigures the neighbor note figure that arises from the orchestration of the trombone’s entrance in m.60. Curiously, this half rest figure can only be found on two other sketches from this period (HUL 0373 and HUL 0362, p.1) and on none of the many C major versions of the Adagio theme from the next phase of genesis (see Chapter 7). Overall, HUL 0395, p.1 seems fairly experimental in terms of working out the nature of the continuation’s melodic shape. At the end of this sketch the music implies a strong turn to the dominant – a property common to virtually all of the D major sketches – which suggests that the Adagio theme was originally intended to lead directly to V. However, in constructing the final score, Sibelius undermined the genetic predisposition of this theme’s tonal organization and withheld the dominant. The expectations created by the first group’s structure were actually fulfilled during its formative stages.\(^52\)

The primary difference amongst the D major variants lies in the nature of their respective accompaniments. In these sketches and in the later C major variants two main types of accompaniment can be found. The first is a fairly homophonic texture of either parallel or contrary motion and the second type finds the Adagio theme functioning, in Kilpeläinen’s words, “as a kind of cantus firmus that gives rise to more rapid contrapuntal figuration above or below it.”\(^53\) HUL 0375 (transcribed in Ex.6.19) is a typical example of the first type with contrary motion accompaniment. Here, as in the final version, a tonic pedal undermines the implied

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\(^53\) Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 245.
arrival of II in mm.2-3. The counterpoint gives rise to local voice exchanges in mm.1 and 3. Towards the end of this sketch the dominant arrival is followed by a return to the beginning of the theme and the tonic (the final four measures recompose mm.1-2 and mm.7-8). In this case the dominant proves to be a dividing dominant, not a deep structural one. On HUL 0364, p.1 (Ex.6.20a), this is contrasted by a strong dominant arrival which actually gives rise – on the following page (Ex.6.20b) – to a theme that recalls the beginning of the second group (motive y etc.).54 While this connection will be discussed shortly, let us first examine some other features of HUL 0364. Unlike HUL 0375, it is harmonized by parallel motion (predominantly sixths) and also serves an example of the more active contrapuntal figuration. Over the first two measures, Sibelius wrote out very agitated accompanimental figures. In fact these figures are so agitated as to be virtually illegible. However, on the second page he tried out two different figuration patterns. These, of course, recall both the development and the recapitulation whose themes emerge over such dense patterns of notes. As we will see elsewhere, finding the right pattern of figuration proved to be one of the more difficult challenges over the remaining years of genesis.

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When the themes of the Seventh Symphony coalesced into the four-movement plan to be discussed in the next chapter, Sibelius appears to have emerged from the depths of his compositional wilderness. With the themes and motives finally narrowed down and with the other Symphonies either completed or similarly reined-in from the perspective of thematic content, he could concentrate on shaping the Seventh’s large-scale design and structure. Of course, there were still themes to be weeded out or added, but the basic blocks of the Seventh were now present. In addition to the Adagio, flute and scherzo themes, the composer also

54 Page one of this sketch is partially transcribed (melody only) as Ex.11.9 in Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 245.
Example 6.20a:
HUL 0364, p.1

[unclear eighth note figuration (mm.1-2)]

[rhythm/meter?]
developed the ideas for the second group during this early period – motive y, as discussed above, and the running quarter notes that would ultimately make up both the proto-scherzo and the trio. As was illustrated by HUL 0364, the second group’s initial themes were already associated with the Adagio during the D major period. In fact, this connection was made even more explicit in another D major variant (HUL 0373). The details of this relationship are so bound up with issues of the multi-movement planning that I will reserve an examination of the D major material from this perspective for Chapter 7.

From our study of the Seventh’s early phases of genesis, we can gain a better understanding of the multidimensional nature of Sibelius’s nature mysticism. The semantic content of his late texts emerged from nature-mystical and human/Kalevalic themes; the music’s structure and form – not to mention other aspects of design – reflect a deep meditation on natural processes; and his compositional methods themselves were akin to these nature-meditative processes. In other words, Sibelius did not just employ natural processes in his semantic and structural content, but he lived them through the very act of composing. The high degree of personal anxiety during this time imbued all of this meditation with strong overtones of human drama and struggle. Perhaps the common image of Sibelius – real or imagined – composing at his desk at Ainola, pausing from time to time to gaze out the window at the rugged Finnish landscape, serves as an appropriate metaphor for our study: nature was always viewed through the windows – or through the context – of Ainola and all that transpired within its walls and within the composer’s own anxious mind.55

55 Levas, for example, tells us that Sibelius composed much of the Seventh while seated before the window of the guest room which looks out on tall birches. *Jean Sibelius*, 7-8.
Sibelius, in a well known letter to Axel Carpelan from 1918, touched on his plans for the Fifth Symphony’s revision and for the composition of both the Sixth and Seventh Symphonies. He characterized the nascent Seventh as follows: “The VIIth symphony. Joy of life and vitality, with appassionato passages. In 3 movements – the last a ‘Hellenic Rondo.’” After divulging these plans, he noted that, as work progressed, his current intentions were likely to change. This letter, an epitextual gem for any study of the last three symphonies, has traditionally been interpreted in one way by Seventh Symphony analysts. It has compelled many to find a three movement design hidden within the final one movement form and it has provided a foundation for reading the Symphony as a “Hellenic Rondo” – whatever that might mean. While the various attempts at finding this early plan in the final score have yielded many valuable insights, the analytical quest for the “Hellenic Rondo” has proven itself to be as fruitless as the quest for the Holy Grail. In one of the most significant contributions to Seventh Symphony scholarship to date, Kari Kilpeläinen has shown that there are no extant sketches for this plan and that the Symphony’s final form was preceded by a draft of a four movement plan. Instead of focusing on the “Hellenic Rondo” and three movement intentions expressed in the letter, the source evidence suggests that scholars should have paid more attention to Sibelius’s penchant for altering his plans according to the nature of his themes. Presently, I will give an account of this four movement plan with details of what preceded it and how it eventually grew into the one

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2 It was in this letter, incidentally, that he wrote of being a slave to his themes. See Chapter 2, note 3.
movement form we now know. Furthermore, we may trace the implications these sketches and drafts have for the design, structure and meaning of the final version.

One of the chief difficulties in wading through the massive collection of sketch material from the early twenties is the lack of accompanying titles. For example, many sketch pages bear movement numbers, but no indication of their broader context. When Sibelius wrote of the Seventh Symphony was he referring to the sketches that would eventually form the Seventh or something else? Projected tone poems like Kuutar, Väinämöinen’s Song, or the Forging of the Sampo were also on the composer’s mind at this time along with the Sixth Symphony (completed in 1923) and Tapiola (1926). To add one further layer of confusion, we must remember that the Seventh itself was premiered under a different title (Fantasia sinfonica No. 1).

All of these difficulties are only compounded by the lack of dates on the sketches. Therefore, when we turn to the four movement plan found on HUL 0386 (the first three movements) and HUL 0387 (the fourth movement) it is impossible to know when these drafts were executed and for which piece they were intended. Tawaststjerna hypothesized that the first single movement draft was begun in 1923 following the February premiere of the Sixth and during the composer’s trip to Italy that spring. Given this information, which Kilpeläinen verified based on paper-type analysis and other evidence, and given the fact that Sibelius would have been too consumed with the final preparations of the Sixth in the winter of 1922-23 to work on the Seventh, one may deduce that the multi-movement plan originated sometime around 1920-22 – a date more precise than this is currently unattainable.

As for finding an overall title for the multi-movement plan, that may also require a range of possibilities as opposed to a single answer. The second movement – as mentioned elsewhere

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4 This information is absent from the English edition of Tawaststjerna’s biography, but the relevant passage is quoted in Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 249.
5 Ibid., 256.
in this study – is based on the Adagio theme. By the early twenties, this had lost any titular association it once had with the Fifth Symphony, but had acquired, as the previous chapter suggested, new literary titles associated with the night sky (Kuutar ja Pilvet and Tähtölä) and possibly the Kalevala (HUL 0395, p.29). The fourth movement is composed around the scherzo theme that, on the same theme table, was labeled for the spirit of the clouds and fog. The first – and largely unanswerable – question raised by this material is: was this new multi-movement text a tone-poetic exploration of the mythical night sky? Though they do not preclude the aforementioned programmatic titles, at least two generic title possibilities also exist. The first can be found on a page pasted into the massive bifolio that contains the fourth movement (HUL 0387). Here, Sibelius wrote “I serien (i form af en symfoni)” (“First Suite in the Form of a Symphony”), which he followed with the following movement numbers: “I, II, III, IV.” Next he wrote “II serien” and followed it with movement numbers five through eight (seven was later crossed out and replaced with another eight). 6 Given its location within the fourth movement draft and the movement numbers contained on the multi-movement draft as a whole (I, II, and IV – the third movement is not labeled as such) it is likely that this plan pertains to the future Seventh as the First Suite and either the Sixth Symphony or some other multi-movement project as the Second. Of course, it is entirely possible that these symphonic suites would have also carried the programmatic titles found on the HUL 0395 theme table. 7

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6 The translation of these words is taken from Kilpeläinen’s discussion of this sketch page. Ibid., 252.

7 The broader implications of this verbal plan suggest that 1. Sibelius was dissatisfied with the label of “Symphony” for his compositions and wanted to draw attention to his perceived break with tradition (see Chapter 2) and 2. that he was fully capable of composing separate works that represented a continuous musical design and structure and perhaps a continuous semantic structure as the movement numbers I through VII suggest. The potential continuity of this plan could profitably be studied alongside theories put forth by both James Hepokoski and Timothy Jackson. For example Jackson’s theory of the meta-Ursatz, in which a composer unites a number of pieces into one massive, over-arching structure often for programmatic reasons. See Tchaikovsky: Symphony No.6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 23. Hepokoski’s theory that the final masterpieces of Sibelius represent a prolonged musical meditation on the Finnish landscape and nature certainly corresponds to this plan’s continuity. See for example, Sibelius: Symphony No.5 (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 32-33.
Sibelius penned the incipient of the Adagio theme in C major and headed it with the roman numerals “VII. II” (see Ex. 7.1). Clearly, this refers to the second movement of the Seventh Symphony. In fact, it is quite likely that this was one of the first places where the Adagio theme appeared in C major. Ultimately, the primary significance of the multi-movement plan is not its title – whatever it might have been – but the fact that here, for the first time, the major thematic ideas around which the Seventh is built have finally been brought together.

Before diving headfirst into the multi-movement plan, a brief detour back to the D major phase of genesis is necessary. Towards the bottom of HUL 0373, p.2 – one of the D major variants beginning with a half-rest – Sibelius identified the Adagio theme as a second movement (see Ex. 7.2). Beneath this he sketched out a prospective theme for a third movement. This theme, comprised of a characteristic rising semitone motive between ♯7 and ♯1 and highly chromatic rising and falling quarter notes, is recognizable as the opening of the Symphony’s second group (m. 93ff.). On the first page of this sketch (which will be discussed below as Ex. 7.15) it is worked out in even greater detail. For now, however, HUL 0373 commands our attention because it presents a clear and early association between the future main themes of the exposition. The association operates in two ways on HUL 0373. First, it appears as if the Adagio would lead directly into the second theme as in the final version. On the page’s third full staff the first two measures of the Adagio are repeated and lead directly into the second group material. Sibelius immediately altered this idea on the two staves below by replacing the second group with the Adagio’s continuation. This is not an isolated example of this thematic juxtaposition, as it was experimented with on a number of other sketches from the D major as

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8 The Aino references on this page will be discussed later in the chapter.
Example 7.1:
HUL 0395, p.11 (staff 7)

VII. II.
well as the C major phases.\(^9\) Perhaps the most significant aspect of HUL 0373 lies in Sibelius’s decision to isolate the second group theme as the basis for a third movement. In the four movement plan, it serves as the beginning of the fourth movement. In other words, it was a theme the composer deemed appropriate for a symphonic finale. Though the second group theme would appear in some C major Adagio sketches that preceded the four movement plan, we must consider the possibility – however difficult it is to substantiate – that HUL 0373 might prove to be physical evidence of the elusive three movement plan. Unfortunately, I am unaware of any documents that would enable us to carry this line of thought any further. HUL 0373 does illustrate the simple fact that finding a proper home for the second group material was one of the primary concerns in the next phases of genesis.

The First Movement

The first three movements of the multi-movement plan proposed by Kilpeläinen can be found on the large bifolio catalogued as HUL 0386. On the top of its first page, beneath a large “I,” Sibelius wrote out the initial thematic ideas for a planned first movement in G minor (Ex.7.3).\(^10\) Because the entire sketch has been crossed out, it is difficult to determine the nature of most of the movement’s material. In fact, judging by the music’s fragmentary appearance it can be surmised that Sibelius did not have a firm grasp on how he wanted things to proceed. Though they are too illegible to confidently offer in transcription, figures similar to the running quarter notes of the second and closing groups were tried out in this context before being moved to the fourth movement. From the pitches of the first theme and the key signature, it is apparent

\(^9\) See the Appendix for a list of other examples.
\(^10\) Kilpeläinen was only able to find one other source of this melody. It appears as a theme for a first movement on the theme table found on the lower half of HUL 0390, p.2. This table, discussed in Chapter 6 also contains the flute and scherzo themes and the Sixth Symphony’s first movement theme is also present on the page. See Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 250.
Example 7.3:
HUL 0386, p.1 (staff, mm.1-14)
First Movement (crossed out)
that the first movement, like the third and fourth movements we will discuss below, was planned
to begin off-tonic with an auxiliary cadence of some variety. It is possible, from the emphasis
placed on $e^\flat_3$ in the first measure, that the minor sixth motive between $e^\flat$ and $g$ from the final
version was also present in – if not generated by – the planned opening movement. The first
movement would have established the overall G minor tonal center of the four movement plan.
As we will soon see, the first, third and fourth movements all unfold in G minor with the Adagio
second movement in the major subdominant (C major). Though C major would win out in the
end, the great emphasis placed on the dominant throughout the finished score is a legacy of its
multi-movement heritage.

The Second Movement:
Part One

With its four- and five-voice counterpoint, the second movement is by far the most
advanced member of the four movement plan. Of course, one would expect this since the
Adagio material had been the subject of intense development over a period of several years. In
fact, the sources suggest that a nearly complete draft of the slow movement was undertaken
before the version discussed by Kilpeläinen as part of the multi-movement plan (HUL 0386,
p.4). Therefore, in order to gain a better understanding of HUL 0386, p.4, we must first explore
some of its predecessors.\footnote{It should also be pointed out that many of these early C major variants are labeled as a second movement. See the Appendix, section III for a list.}

In the printed score there are four variants of the Adagio theme. In addition to initiating
the exposition, development and recapitulation, it also appears hidden within the polyphony of
the second rotation (from m.34ff). The first group and introductory versions formed the basis of
a great amount of experimentation during the period leading up to the plan laid out on HUL
In Ex.7.4 I have included the introductory form of this theme, which can be compared to Ex.6.17 (the first group’s melody). Aside from their respective positions within the texture, the primary differences between the two are the truncated beginning of the introductory variant (it begins on the theme’s fifth measure), the modal differences between mm.40-41 and mm.70-71 (the presence or absence of A♭ in these passages is crucial), and the conclusion of each theme is slightly different – particularly with regard to rhythm (m.45ff and mm.75ff). One typical early variant of the Adagio’s introductory form is given in Ex.7.5 (HUL 0363, p.2). This example, in which I have only reproduced the melody, presents the theme with its first four measures intact. The Adagio is found in this form on a number of other sketches including HUL 0361, 0362, 0365, p.1-2, and 0396, p.1.¹² In none of these sketches, with the possible exception of HUL 0365, is this theme explicitly labeled as introductory nor does it clearly function as such. These variants and their accompaniments recall the D major phase discussed in Chapter 6. One difference between these sketches and the final score – the same can be said for the early sketches of the first group form – is the presence of f₂ in the fifth measure. This early variant can be found on HUL 0361, 0362, 0363 and 0396. On HUL 0381, p.2 Sibelius circled the fifth measure and beneath it wrote out the version we now know with g² instead of f².

From the first known appearance of the Adagio theme on NAS, p.5 through the D major phase of genesis, the rise to b♭ had been one of the theme’s constant and defining characteristics. Why did Sibelius abandon it during much of the C major phase only to restore it later? At least two possibilities come to mind. First, he simply changed his mind and then changed it back. Second, and it seems to me far more likely, he intended these variants to lead into the exposition form of the Adagio. In this scenario the first rotation through the theme would provide a

¹² Once again, the Appendix details some of these other sources.
Seventh Symphony - Hidden Audio Theme (m. 744)

Example 7.a
normative model without modal mixture in the eleventh measure which would then be deformed by the second rotation. This of course would add considerable emphasis to the crucial $A\flat$.

Thinking of the theme as quasi-rotational also explains why the first measures are present in the introductory variants. The one problem with this is that all of these variants stop short of repeating themselves. Some of these introductory passages do lead to the dominant in order to, presumably, set up a return to the tonic.

The manner in which Sibelius composed his way into the dominant deserves some attention. In the introduction of the published score this is accomplished through an ascending scale from $d^1$ to $f^2$ with the rhythmic pattern characteristic of the early flute theme (dotted half-note followed by three quarters) (see mm.56-9). However, in many of these early variants, Sibelius concluded with the same ascending quarter note scale from $d^1$ to $f^2$ that concludes the first group of the published score (m.90ff). In fact, the composer seems to have vacillated on which ending was better – of course this ending was as much of a beginning for the following rotation as anything. HUL 0361 and 0362 employ the m.93 form and HUL 0396 employs the introduction’s form. On HUL 0365 and HUL 0369 Sibelius wrote out both forms. HUL 0365, one of the more advanced C major sketches, is a fascinating case study. On the first page, which contains the “unhidden” equivalent of mm.34-58 (in addition to the first four measures of the theme), he arrived on V through the rhythm of the bridge (m.90ff). On the following page – a pasted in scrap of manuscript paper – he recomposed mm.50-58 with the same ending, but beside it penciled in the variant found in m.56ff of the score, which he then circled (see Ex.7.6a). The fourth page, which is pieced together from three scraps of staff paper pasted onto one large page that serves as a board to hold everything together, contains the first group version (from m.71-93) with the introduction’s ending (Ex.7.6b). In other words, Sibelius had yet to decide that the
Example 7.6a:
HUL 0365, p.2 (system 2)
(variant of m.55ff)

Example 7.6b:
HUL 0365, p.4 (lower part)
(variant of m.88ff)

Example 7.7:
HUL 0365, p.4 (excerpt from upper half)

[inner voices and bass omitted]  [rhythm unclear]  [m.71]

[m.72]  [m.73 etc.]

[connects to m.73 ahead]
introduction and first group forms required different endings. Though this appears to be a minor
detail of genesis, the indecision regarding these passages is instructive for a couple of reasons. It
highlights the motivic similarities between the beginning of the third and fourth rotations. In
addition, it also shows that each passage led to the dominant. Of course, in the final score there
is only an implied G in the bass at the first group’s conclusion. This phase of the Seventh’s
prehistory underscores the presence of the diachronic transformation referred to in the previous
chapter. Initially, the material that would become the first group led directly to the structural
dominant, but the final score undermines this early model. The genesis of the passage, however,
does help explain why we both expect a dominant at the end of the first group and why we read
an implied G – albeit a passing tone – in the bass at this point.

HUL 0365 is possibly one of the first sketches in which the introductory and first group
forms of the Adagio were combined. Due to its pieced-together nature, it is difficult to gain any
real insight into the continuity of this sketch. For example, the introduction’s conclusion is
physically separated from the first group form, which is incomplete itself (where are mm.60-
70?). This sketch is further complicated by the appearance of the flute theme at the top of p.4 –
the same page that contains mm.71ff of the Adagio theme.13 Here, instead of prefiguring the
trombone theme, the flute theme appears to lead directly into the Adagio’s continuation (see
Ex.7.7). Whether or not the flute theme was to serve as a stand-in for the Adagio theme’s
incipient, HUL 0365 demonstrates that Sibelius had begun to associate the two themes in his
mind. Indeed, before it assumed its introductory role, the flute theme was also tried out in a host
of developmental guises and as a potential secondary idea to the Adagio. This line of thought is
evidenced in a number of sketches including HUL 0386.

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13 A flute theme variant also appears on a hand-drawn staff above p.1, but is crossed out. On HUL 0363, p.2 it again
appears on a hand-drawn staff atop the page. It is difficult to determine just how either of these might be related to
the Adagio melodies written below (see Ex.7.5).
Though no written dates exist to bolster this hypothesis, it is likely that sometime after executing HUL 0365 Sibelius began working out the entire second movement in detail on HUL 0369 and 0370. In fact, these two sketches probably represent the immediate predecessor to HUL 0386, p.4, if not a more detailed version of the slow movement. On HUL 0369 – a single page that has been removed from the rest of its bifolio – one finds the introductory form of the Adagio leading directly to the first group (see mm.1-30 of Ex.7.8). Labeled as page three by Sibelius, this page, as Kilpeläinen has deduced, likely belongs with HUL 0370 which contains the numbered pages five and six written on the same type of paper. These later pages contain a variant of the second group material that leads directly to a developmental return to the Adagio. The second group themes would eventually be removed from the Adagio and placed at the start of the fourth movement on HUL 0387. However, before elaborating on pages five and six, we must look carefully at page three. Typical of the C major Adagio sketches, this page approximates the second violin theme and its continuation in other voices from the second rotation. Once again, as the beginning of Ex.7.8 reveals, Sibelius seems to have been indecisive as to which rhythm to set the d$^1$r$^2$ scale. In any event, this leads directly to the Adagio’s first group form, which is literally cut off after its fourth measure (the equivalent of m.63). This presents us with the following questions: what became of pages one, two and four and where is the remainder of page three?

The first two pages may never be recovered, but the fate of the third page’s lower half and perhaps page four is vital to our understanding of the Seventh’s genesis. On one paste-in from the (presumably) final form of the second movement (HUL 0386, p.4) one finds mm.64-75

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14 Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 246.
15 There is an outside possibility that HUL 0381 contains pages one and two of this draft, despite the fact that there are no page numbers. On the second page one finds an advanced sketch of the first group’s Adagio theme which leads directly to the second group. Other details are also very close to HUL 0369.
(i.e. the musical continuation of HUL 0369). The paper type of the paste-in and, more importantly, its distinctive physical shape prove that it is unquestionably the lower half of HUL 0369: the two fit together like a perfect jigsaw puzzle.\(^{16}\) The particular paper used for HUL 0369 contains twenty staves. On HUL 0369 Sibelius included an empty staff between each system of music. The cut-off occurs half way across the fourteenth and fifteenth staves, which are continued on HUL 0386, p.4. Staff sixteen is left blank and staves seventeen and eighteen, the last on the paste-in, are occupied with a new system of music. This leaves staves nineteen and twenty unaccounted for, but they were probably left blank so Sibelius did not have to crowd the page without leaving a blank staff between each and every system. Beneath this paste-in, Sibelius added yet another paste-in of the same paper-type which picks up exactly where the previous one left off (mm.76-93). In light of this, it is highly probable that the new paste-in is the missing fourth page from the HUL 0369-70 second movement plan. There is clearly some literal truth to the notion that Sibelius pieced his symphonies together as an artist assembles the tiles of a mosaic!

By leading directly from the Adagio into the second group, the HUL 0369-70 complex (which has been reconstructed for the first time in Ex.7.8) clearly recalls the D major sketch discussed at the opening of this chapter (HUL 0373, Ex.7.2).\(^{17}\) In fact, the shift from HUL 0369-70 to the multi-movement plan (HUL 0386-87), where the second group was removed from the Adagio and placed at the head of a final movement, retraces the thoughts unfolded on HUL 0373. As we know from our study of the published score, Sibelius was destined to change his mind at least one more time and juxtapose the Adagio and second group themes. The struggles on HUL 0373 and the process that led from HUL 0369-70 to HUL 0386-87 clearly show that the

\(^{16}\) Kilpeläinen missed this crucial connection.

\(^{17}\) There are other examples of the Adagio leading to the second group. See section VII of the Appendix for an annotated list.
decision to combine the eventual fourth and second movements into the final score was not arbitrary, but based on a common history between the two main themes. Before delving into HUL 0386, let us summarize the Adagio’s generative path thus far. An initial planning stage – as found in NAS – gave way to the early stages of expansion and development (D major). Next, D major sketches were replaced by many similar C major variants, which ultimately led to the more complete draft found in the HUL 0369-70 complex. This plan was then reworked into the second movement of HUL 0386 and the fourth movement of HUL 0387. Finally, these last two steps were combined in the creation of the one movement design.

The Second Movement:
Part Two

From the standpoint of musical continuity, HUL 0386, p.4 is rather difficult to decipher. The lower half of the manuscript is a patchwork of various paste-ins – there are four in all including the two mentioned above – which make its original music inaccessible. Because of the complexity of the page’s organization I have included a map of its layout in Fig.7.1. For ease of analysis, I have labeled each section of the draft with a different capital letter and numbered the systems within each section. At the top of the page (section A), above the printed staves of the manuscript paper, Sibelius wrote out a system of hand-drawn staves whose music is virtually illegible. Because this passage does not appear to lead directly into the Adagio, I will forgo any transcription and analysis of it. Let us now turn our attention to the rest of the page.

One of Sibelius’s main concerns with the feasibility of the Adagio plan as found on HUL 0369 may have been the potential redundancy of two consecutive statements of the slow moving music. At the same time the composer, in all likelihood, did not want to sacrifice the first statement of the Adagio theme, which had received so much attention over the past several years.
Figure 7.1

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In his attempt to satisfy these potentially conflicting desires, Sibelius revealed himself as a master of the fine art of hiding a theme. Among the chief accomplishments of HUL 0386 was the composition of the future second rotation with the Adagio theme tucked away in an inner voice. As Ex.7.9 reveals Sibelius accomplished this on the first two systems of HUL 0386, p.4. Here, all four voices of the harmonization are crammed onto the upper staff and—as was typical in these early variants—he also included the first four measures of the Adagio theme along with its continuation. Remarkably, the upper voice of mm.6-21 on the sketch, which may have been worked out elsewhere, appears almost exactly as in the final score (mm.34-49). At this point the early climax in the final score’s m.50 seems to have been problematic. Sketch measures 22-23, which have been circled and annotated with “Soll,” bear little resemblance to the climax save for the inner voice descent from c⁰. On the third system of section B, Sibelius circled the first two measures, but it is difficult to know why he did so. Furthermore, the two measures are not familiar from the final score. In any event, in m.26 of the sketch Sibelius recomposed m.34ff of the final score—now positioned across both staves. In all likelihood, this new pass through the Adagio in its hidden from is a correction, not a continuation, of the first two systems. To this end, it is noteworthy that Sibelius began with m.34, for that is where the hidden Adagio begins in the published score. As the transcription makes clear the remainder of the continuation is quite close to the published version—mm.52-54 are the major exceptions though they appeared in this guise on other early sketches like HUL 0365, p.1-2—and it leads directly to the trombone theme of m.60. Incidentally, this draft implies a real arrival on g⁰ in m.59 as opposed to the final version’s failed Anstieg that ends on f⁰.

18 On this transcription I have included measures numbers for the sketch beneath each system and above, when applicable, have included the corresponding measures of the final score. In my discussion I will employ both number systems. The first ten measures of section are transcribed as Ex.11.15 in Ibid., 251.
With the arrival of the trombone theme, which is marked by the word “Soll,” the sketch’s continuity appears to break down or at least becomes very unclear. At this point, the first paste-in – taken from an unknown source – was added to the page. The first themes found on this section (labeled as C) is a variant of the flute theme from m.8ff of the final score. Unfortunately, the inner voices and bass of this passage are extremely unclear. This flute theme variant, as in the final score, leads into the material from mm.14-22 of the referential rotation. Though the exact pitches are unclear towards the end of this passage (sketch mm.67-71), judging from their general shape and the bass line it can be surmised that they represent a variant of mm.18-22. This is not, of course, the first time these themes were put together as the entire passage dates back to the D major period (recall HUL 0366, Ex.6.11a). The encircled addition sign that precedes the flute theme – I have used the coda sign to represent this symbol which is common in Sibelius’s sketches – does not refer to the same sign written above the sketch’s thirty-first measure. Instead, it, along with the accompanying “A=B” designation refers to the end of the sketch and will be discussed momentarily.

Following the familiar material from the referential rotation, Sibelius composed a developmental passage (see sketch mm.73-80) which recalls some developmental fragments from other sketches, but is not found in the final score. After this, on section C, system 4, the Adagio theme returns within a development context. As Ex.7.10 indicates this developmental pattern is derived from an earlier sketch (HUL 0371). After the first four measures of the Adagio theme are stated beneath the rising developmental figure, there is a measure which contains nothing but a quarter-rest with a fermata. Following this – and on the same system – the lower half of HUL 0369 makes its appearance. Why did Sibelius include the continuation of the previous paste-in’s development without any developmental figuration? Several possibilities
come to mind. First, he could have intended to add developmental figures later. Second, he might have decided to reject the developmental ideas and only added the continuation since he had already written out the theme’s opening four measures. A third possibility is that the developmental passage was to lead directly to the first group’s form of the continuation. Of course, there may also be some answer that I have not considered. In any case, the Adagio theme continues on to the next paste-in (section E – HUL 0369, p.4?). It concludes with the introductory form of the ascending d₁-f₂ scale.

In the center of this section’s final measure Sibelius wrote the measure number one in a circle and beside it “+ A=B,” also in a circle. To the right of section E, refer to Fig.7.1, three strips of paper are fixed to HUL 0386. Each of these contains three numbered measures of music which continue on from the final measure of section E. Ex.7.11 offers a transcription of this passage which proves to be a developed variant of the flute theme. Clearly, the “+ A=B” that precedes this passage refers back to the same letters as they appeared on the first statement of the flute theme at the beginning of section C. What is not clear, however, is the relationship between the two sections. Presumably the new flute theme fleshes out details and corrects aspects of its predecessor, but it does little to help explain the movement’s overall continuity.

Though several possibilities exist for the intended continuity of this page, the best I can comfortably offer – without presuming too much knowledge of authorial intent – are a few possible plans. The first is fairly straightforward. In this scenario the movement would have proceeded as it appears on the sketch from sketch m.26ff. The introduction would give way to the flute theme – which was corrected on the lower part of the page – and, following a brief developmental phase, the Adagio would return in its first group form. Next, the flute theme – as a closely related secondary idea – would return. After this the continuity is lost. A potential
variation on this scheme is also possible. The pasted-in C section may have been intended to be moved to the end of the page as the “+ A=B” could indicate. In this plan, mm.26-52 (mm.34-60 in the finished score) would bypass the first paste-in and proceed directly to the Adagio’s continuation (mm.86-115 on the sketch or mm.64ff on the final score – mm.61-63 would need to be filled in). This might then lead to the flute theme as it appears in section F and finally to the developmental material from section C.

These potential plans each have their fair share of problems. Perhaps the most vexing one is the “Aino” label attached to mm.86-111/112. As Ex. 7.9 indicates, Sibelius prefaced the Adagio’s continuation with the letters “ai=” and between mm.111 and 112 added the concluding “=no.” As noted elsewhere, Sibelius clearly employed his wife’s name as a cognitive signifier in many sketches and this is no exception.19 A clear example can be found on HUL 0373 (Ex.7.2) where “Aino” at the top of the page explicitly links several measures to a corrected variant on the lower part of the page that also carry the label. The measures bracketed by “Aino” on HUL 0386, p.4 obviously belong together. However, it is difficult to determine when the reference was written. Did Sibelius write it while these measures were still a part of HUL 0369; does it refer to something within HUL 0386; or does it refer to a later sketch? On the lower half of HUL 0386, p.1 – the home of the first movement – Sibelius sketched plans for the second movement’s conclusion (Ex.7.12). An “=no” at the beginning of this sketch unites it with page four. As on page four, this conclusion employs the flute theme, which triggers an ascent to c3 in both cases, as a continuation to the Adagio. Here, however, the flute theme leads directly to a concluding 3 - 2 - 1 descent that would warm the heart of any Schenkerian. In addition to prefiguring aspects of

19 The term cognitive signifier is taken from James Hepokoski who employed it in a response to my “The Conclusion of Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony: Aspects of Genesis, Structure, and Program” (paper presented at the Third International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 7-10 December 2000). A detailed discussion of the debate over the meaning and use of “Aino” in Sibelius’s manuscripts is presented in the first and last chapters.
the published ending (see Chapter 8), this conclusion creates new problems for an understanding of the second movement’s continuity. Namely, does the first page replace the continuation found in section F?

A considerable army of words could be paraded out in the service of exploring the Second movement’s possible continuity. The end result, however, would be nothing more than a series of more unanswered questions. Furthermore, it is highly likely that Sibelius was as uncertain of that continuity as we are. Indeed, one of the second movement’s most noteworthy features is the apparent lack of a strong, fully developed secondary theme. Yes, the flute theme was tried out, but never in a very definitive format. In fact, adjacent to the paste-in of section C, a few measures of music written before the new material was added can be deciphered. These bars reveal that Sibelius had originally intended for a variant of the flute theme to serve as a secondary idea for HUL 0386, but, unsatisfied with this, he covered up the original plan with a series of paste-ins. In other words, he had considerable trouble with fashioning a movement from the Adagio theme with the flute theme as a contrasting idea. As mentioned above, he would eventually return to a plan closer to the HUL 0369-70 complex. Seen in this light HUL 0386, p.4 is simply a step along the path toward the single movement plan instead of the first culmination of the Adagio’s generative process. The culmination of that early process – before the movements were joined – is spread out across both the HUL 0369-70 complex and HUL 0386, p.4. The former provided the ground-work for the Symphony’s overall continuity and the nature of its contrasting theme while the latter witnessed the creation of the hidden Adagio theme and an important phase in the juxtaposition of the flute and Adagio themes.
The Third Movement

Kilpeläinen tempered his discussion of the third movement (HUL 0386, pp.2-3) with a fair amount of caution for a number of reasons worth noting.\(^\text{20}\) Perhaps the primary cause for concern is the lack of a movement number at the head of the movement. In addition to this, the melodic material is unfamiliar from previous sketches and from the final score. Of course, as Kilpeläinen states, its position within the HUL 0386 bifolio makes it a likely – though short lived – third movement. One of its more curious features is its considerable length (226 measures as labeled by Sibelius with a four bar addition to the end). Other movements tended to develop slowly, only a little bit at a time. Here, however a massive, almost a solely melodic, draft for an entire movement appears to have been sketched all at once. Either this is an illusion and earlier sketches are unknown to us or the movement represents a fleeting idea which Sibelius never felt the need to develop any further. The surprising lack of cross-outs and corrections on these two pages make it likely that these themes had been developed before they were set down in the middle of HUL 0386. Where and in what context this development happened will likely remain a mystery.

All issues of origin aside, let us turn to the music itself. Transcribed as Ex.7.13, the third movement – like the outer movements – unfolds in G minor. The most cursory glance at the movement reveals a limited scope of rhythmic and melodic variety over the course of its 226 measures. Indeed, this may have been a deciding factor in Sibelius’s decision to abandon the music altogether. Despite its homogenous surface, the third movement can be divided into five broad sections following a very brief introduction. In all likelihood this was intended to be a Scherzo as follows:

\(^{20}\) Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 251.
Introduction: mm.1-4
Scherzo: mm.5-ca.62
Trio I: mm.63-88
Scherzo: mm.89-ca.144
Trio II: mm.ca.145-174
Scherzo: mm.175-end.

As the transcription indicates, the three statements of the Scherzo theme are very close to each other though the final statement eventually leads into a brief coda. The trios are more difficult to pin down. Each is preceded by transitional material – without harmonic details it is difficult to pinpoint the exact location of these transitions – and each cancels the G minor signature of the Scherzo. Trio I is written a fourth higher than Trio II, but it is difficult to determine the exact key of each. Beside each Trio section, Sibelius wrote “g dur.” In all likelihood he intended to transpose each to the parallel major at some later time.

Though none of the movement’s motives and themes appear in the final score, there are a few features of this aborted Scherzo that betray a structural kinship to the rest of the four movement plan and the final score. The first is the great emphasis placed on the pitch A♭ in relation to G♯. The second similarity can be found in the auxiliary cadences that move to the tonic over a bass line that highlights the minor sixth or major third from G♭ to G (mm.13-19 and 30-33). This is familiar from both the final version’s motive X and its crucial sixth motive. Furthermore, the relationship between these two pitches and the auxiliary cadence idea were both present in the planned first movement. It is also remarkable to note that the two auxiliary cadences were apparently so important to Sibelius that he felt compelled to include their bass lines in this sketch, which is, for the most part, devoid of any bass line.
The Fourth Movement

Perhaps by now it should come as no surprise that the planned G minor fourth movement also begins with an auxiliary cadence. Here, however, the tonic is reached only after considerable effort. Before examining this in more detail let us consider some generalities of the fourth movement. It is written on a large bifolio – the same paper type as HUL 0386 – that contains four numbered pages of music and one smaller folio inserted in the middle (this is labeled as pp.1a and 1b). The cover page – page four of the sketch – carries a “IV” in its heading that clearly refers to the contents of the entire bifolio. Though the bulk of this movement’s material was destined to become the Seventh’s scherzo, it is unlikely that Sibelius would have written two Scherzos for the four movement plan. In this light, it is entirely possible that the fourth movement was originally thought of in different generic terms. Nevertheless, despite the potential anachronism, I will employ the terms scherzo and trio to refer to its formal sections.

Before the scherzo material’s entrance, however, Sibelius composed the opening measures of the published score’s second group (mm.93-106) (see Ex.7.14). Despite the G-minor key signature, this passage appears at the same pitch level as the final score. As noted above, it was probably taken directly from HUL 0370 (see Ex.7.8). A detailed account of its early genesis is not necessary, but perhaps a few examples are required. From HUL 0373 (Ex.7.2), we noted how Sibelius was undecided about the use of this material. On the first page of that D major sketch, he composed a more extended early variant of the second group (also in D major/minor). Example 7.15, the beginning of this theme, reveals just how advanced it had become by the D major period. The running quarter-notes associated with the second and closing groups and the scherzo’s trio, appear to have originated separately and in an entirely different context. On HUL 0400 (the beginning of which is transcribed in Ex.7.16), figures that
Example 7.15:
HUL 0373, p.1 (beginning)

Example 7.16:
HUL 0400
(excerpt from the planned song "The Shining of the Pleiades")
evolved into this material were tried out as part of a song titled “Pleijaderna stråla” (“The Shining of the Pleiades”). Kilpeläinen noted that the semantic link between this theme and the night sky imagery associated with the Adagio material may have led to their eventual musical connection.21 Though the issue will be argued more fully in the next chapter, it should be pointed out that the reference to the Pleiades may have had more than starry night connotations. Indeed, as a man with five daughters Sibelius may have felt a certain kinship with the mythical seven sisters.

Returning to the music of the fourth movement (Ex.7.14), we find that the beginning of the second group, with its Tristan chord-initiated auxiliary cadence pattern does not trigger a series of structural cycles based on the same thematic material, but instead leads into a transitional passage built on V (D major). As the transcription shows, the transition, which cancels the G minor signature with G major, incorporates the scherzo’s first three measures to foster unity.22 By m.27 of the sketch, there is an arrival on G major which corresponds with m.262 from the final score (the fifth measure of the transition into the scherzo which marks both an arrival on C major and a foreshadowing of the scherzo theme itself). From this point on, as the bracketed numbers indicate, the sketch proves to be a G major version of the Seventh’s transitional passage and much of the first scherzo itself. In fact there are only a few minor discrepancies between this source and its ultimate destination. The trio arrives in m.77 of the sketch and employs the characteristic repeated quarter-note theme from the final version (this a close relative of the second group’s running quarters). Unfortunately, much of the trio material throughout this sketch is very difficult to read and it appears that Sibelius was fairly uncertain

21 Ibid., 248.
22 Throughout the transcription I will use the label S-m.# to refer to material that corresponds to the scherzo – i.e. S-1 approximates the scherzo’s first measure etc. In addition to this I will provide specific measure numbers from the final score where appropriate.
about its general organization. Essentially, the trio comprises three motivic building blocks: the repeated quarter notes (a); the following repeated rhythmic pattern: quarter – quarter rest – two quarters – quarter rest – quarter (b); and rising and falling eighth notes which often incorporate turn figures (c).

Both Aino and Ruth signifiers appear in the first trio and throughout the sketch. For example, in m.92 Sibelius wrote “=ai” which corresponds to a correction labeled “Aino” in m.104ff. At the bottom of the first page sweeping eighth note runs (c material) are circled and labeled “Ruth.” Though there are other “Ruth” markers on this movement, it is difficult to determine exactly how they work in terms of overall continuity. Nevertheless, the presence of both Aino and Ruth in a movement whose epitext contains references to the Pleiades and which is part of a Sibelian architext of Bacchic excess strongly suggests that there is more than a purely practical function to the names.

Amidst the swirling “Ruth” figures the G major scherzo theme returns and is carried over onto page two where it eventually takes on G minor connotations. In m.142 Sibelius wrote “o.s.v.” (och så vidare – and so on) beside an encircled “X.” The “X” – much like the Aino markers – refers to trio material written on page 1b (the back of the inserted page that also contains the aforementioned plans for two suites). Bracketed by encircled Xs, the inserted page includes typical trio material. Its beginning is transcribed here as Ex.7.17. The scherzo theme returns in the fifth measure of the second page’s third system. Here it unfolds in C major, with a considerable extension between S-12 and S-25 (see Ex.7.18). Upon the scherzo’s conclusion the G minor signature is restored as a new statement of the trio material begins. A heavy red line connects the trio’s fourth measure at the end of the fifth system with the beginning of system eleven. The ensuing five systems are crossed out, but still legible. As the example shows, a
Example 7.17:
HUL 0387, p.1b (beginning)
central feature of the rejected material was a G minor return to the scherzo material. The beginning of this was reworked at the end of the page following the correction to the crossed out trio. Pages three and four of the final movement – not transcribed here – contain rough sketches of the trio material.

From the description above, we can gain several insights into both the intended fourth movement and the final score. The movement’s overall tonal design, while not completely accessible from the draft, appears to suggest an auxiliary cadence from the opening Tristan chord through V to G major. Thus far, the underlying plan is remarkably close to the second group’s drive toward the proto-scherzo. The fourth movement’s scherzo proper suggests the following tonal plan: G major – C major – G minor. Of course, the turn to the subdominant mirrors the overall structure of the four movement draft with the second movement in C major. It also prefigures the tonal plan of both the closing group, where a central C major section is framed by two sections in G, and the development, where the scherzo unsuccessfully tries to assert C major within a broader dominant context. In terms of design, the fourth movement’s importance cannot be overestimated. Here, perhaps for the first time, the second group material was linked to the inserted scherzo, which also underwent its first significant expansion. In bringing these two themes together, Sibelius realized and bolstered the connection between their semantic content and their chromatic repeated and running quarter note patterns. Though the two themes would be split apart in the final push towards the single movement Seventh, the deep structural and motivic connections born in the breeding grounds of the fourth movement would persist into the final score and only serve to further its overall unity.
At long last, sometime in the spring of 1923, after nine years, two symphonies, and a world war had come and gone, the Fifth Symphony’s original Adagio theme reached its final destination as the primary theme of a one movement design. Across the early pages of the sketchbook labeled HUL 0359, Sibelius set, mostly in four voices, the opening gestures of what we know as the Seventh Symphony. For the first time, the ascending scale, along with its deflection into the Tristan region, appears within a Seventh Symphony context – I am uncertain if it had ever appeared anywhere else. Reproduced in facsimile by Kilpeläinen, the first two pages only differ slightly from the published score. Among the primary differences are several rhythmic features (the opening scale and the flute theme are in augmentation); the continuation of the flute theme is slightly altered, though it still leads into the material from m.14ff; and the opening scale includes an E♭ prior to its surprise arrival in m.3. On this last point, it is likely that Sibelius altered this initial conception because he wanted the climactic arrival on E♭ to be unprepared and therefore more surprising. The Second rotation and the first group were essentially copied directly from HUL 0386, p.4 to the first pages of HUL 0359. After the second page, however, the sketchbook becomes increasingly experimental. The confidence with which Sibelius wrote out the introduction and first group seems to have been replaced by a fair a mount of hesitation about just how to proceed. Despite the incomplete nature of HUL 0359, we can still gain a good understanding of its intended continuity.

After a variant of the second group’s beginning on p.3, the sketch takes a surprising turn. On the fourth page, a developmental version of the Adagio theme appears in A♭ major along with “ai” written twice (Ex.7.19). Towards the bottom of the page, a rising scale similar to the one at

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23 Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 254-5; his discussion of this manuscript can be found on pages 256-57.
24 It should be added that the first E♭ persisted into the pencil draft of the orchestral score (HUL 0355).
Example 7.19:
HUL 0359, p.4 (excerpt systems 3-4)
the first group’s conclusion appears in $A_b$ and leads to the top of page five where the flute theme is found now in $A_b$. In fact, the bulk of the referential rotation, save for the initial scale and $Tristan$ region, is present in the new key. At the end of this passage “=no” is written twice probably to designate that the entirety of the passage belongs together. Following this $A_b$ major episode the key signature changes back to C and the second group material – the running quarter notes and other related, though unidentified, themes – is resumed. Pages six and eight are also linked by a “Ruth” marker that performs a clear cognitive function. It is difficult to gain a sense of continuity over the course of these pages, but by p.9 the proto-scherzo (m.156ff) enters and is worked out in detail. Following the turn to $A_b$, the future exposition seems to have gained its final formal organization.

Beginning on the right side of p.9a, Sibelius returned to the problem of finding a suitable developmental figuration pattern for the Adagio theme. Scale figures on p.9a come close, but the plan was scrapped and on p.11 (left side) the C major Adagio theme was written out in ink with turn figure patterns lightly penciled in around it – this was a common practice in earlier sketches for the theme’s development. Above p.10 Sibelius scrawled “i moll” to note his decision that this development should occur in the tonic minor. In Ex.7.20 I have transcribed a portion of the right side of p.11 where the development comes closest to its final form. Here, chromatic figures that anticipate those found in m.208ff lead into repeated statements of the Adagio’s head motive. Though the accompaniment only occurs in the first two measures, it is likely that Sibelius intended to have it sound throughout. “Aino” appears above this sketch and is clearly connected to similar material on the center panel of p.11 (the exact contents of the center are very difficult to read).
Example 7.20:
HUL 0359, p.11 (right side - excerpt)

Example 7.21:
HUL 0359, p.17 (left side - excerpt)
On p.12 the A\$ signature returns along with brief, unidentifiable motives, but is cancelled toward the end of the page with the C major entrance of the scherzo theme. Between pp.12 and 16, the scherzo theme and associated ideas from the trio are worked out, albeit with surprisingly little detail considering the complexity of its appearance on HUL 0387. Little can be gleaned from these pages regarding the scherzo’s planned continuity. Of far more significance, however, was the decision to link the scherzo with the Adagio’s development. Despite the fact that these two themes had existed in close proximity since the days of the National Archives Sketchbook, it was only now that Sibelius understood their compatibility. Of course, the lack of details for the scherzo in HUL 0359 reveal that he still needed to find the best way to further that inherent compatibility.

Just as it was difficult to find the right accompaniment for the Adagio theme in the introduction, first group and development sections, it was equally difficult to arrive at a suitable variant for the recapitulation. On p.17 (left side) Sibelius, as he had done with the development, wrote out the Adagio in ink then sketched in figures in pencil (Ex.7.21). The general nature of this material clearly points the way for the churning, rapidly ascending accompaniment of the recapitulation. Other figures were also tried out on the remainder of p.17. By p.18, however, material related to the running and repeated quarter note figures from the second and closing groups and trio have taken over. This suggests that the original single movement plan may have been intended as a normative sonata form with a full recapitulation. Following the contrasting themes, Sibelius returned to the Adagio material (pp.20-22) and tried to find an appropriate ending. This return could have served as a design coda in a normative sonata form. Or, on the other hand considering the many Adagio statements of this draft, it could have been intended as the last statement of a rondo’s main theme. In any event, the nature of the ending proved to be
the last great hurdle standing between Sibelius and his final vision of the Seventh. As such, it will form the subject of the next chapter.

From this brief overview of the HUL 0359 sketchbook, it is apparent that Sibelius had a very clear understanding of the Symphony’s final design early in the process of combining movements. In fact this document as a whole is more notable for its clear succession of thematic material than for its lack of details. On the sketchbook’s cover page, the composer wrote out a series of words that look like they might have been a proposed plan for the work’s continuity. Though they appear beneath heavy cross-outs and writing, the words appear to read as follows: “ass dur [?] ass moll mellan, Thema C dur moll [?] Scerzo.” The emphasis on $A_b$ is certainly noteworthy, as is the abbreviation “mellan” which could either stand for “mellanspel” (rondo) or “mellantema” (transition theme). On HUL 0360, a related page, one finds a very similar formula that clarifies the matter with the more complete word “mellansp.”

Beneath this clear designation for rondo, one finds further reference to “ass dur” and “ass moll.” In any event the meaning of the term in this context is entirely unclear. Though there are rondo connotations in HUL 0359, I am aware of no passages in $A_b$ minor. Furthermore, why would only the $A_b$ theme be referred to as a rondo? One additional verbal plan, this found toward the end of HUL 0359 (p.23), seems more promising. It reads as follows: “Allegro dell’ intrada. Allargando al Adagio. Episodio Vivace. Adagio. Allegro [moderato]. Adagio.” It does not fit exactly, but this may pertain to the resumption of the second group following the $A_b$ episode through the end of HUL 0359. In this scenario, the second group, the transition to the development and the development’s Adagio, the scherzo and retransition, the first group’s recapitulation, the second group’s recapitulation and the coda would roughly correspond to each of the above tempo

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25 Kilpeläinen discusses the issue in “Sibelius’s Seventh,” p.253.
indications. In the end, any attempt to link these verbal design schemes with the music leads, like the search for the three movement plan and the “Hellenic Rondo,” to little more than speculation.26

The pencil orchestral draft, the next major phase of composition, provided the grounds for further development and clarification. In fact, in many respects the draft is quite close to the final score. To be sure, there were still details of orchestration to be worked out and some passages needed lengthening while others required editing.27 What strikes one more than these slight differences is the clarity of thought with which Sibelius proceeded from HUL 0359, which contains very few notes on orchestration, to the full orchestral draft. As we will soon see, however, there was one problem with the orchestral draft; the recapitulation is missing altogether. But before we turn to issues of genesis, structure and meaning in the conclusion, let us reflect back upon the compositional process thus far. Like the Seventh itself, it was a lengthy process of crystallization. From the vast wilderness of themes discussed in Chapter 6, Sibelius, after years of careful experimentation and inspired listening and by way of an elusive three movement plan, arrived at a four movement design with a host of programmatic possibilities. But just as the Seventh is, in its end, distilled to its very essence – the Adagio theme telos is overtaken by the C major peroration – the four movements themselves were distilled as four became two and two became one, not joined as railroad cars, but woven together like the silk in one of the master’s fine shirts.

26 As an interesting aside, one other verbal clue deserves mention. Namely, on p.25 of HUL 0359 the flute theme is labeled “Introduktion misterio.” Whether this was written before or after the decision to include the flute theme in the introduction is unknown.
27 Kilpeläinen gives a good account of the discrepancies between the draft and the final score. “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 257-58.
CHAPTER 8
NATURE MYSTICISM AND DOMESTIC DRAMA REVISITED:
GENESIS, STRUCTURE AND MEANING
IN THE RECAPITULATION AND CODA

The upward resolution of $b^1$ to $c^2$ that concludes the Seventh Symphony is so laden with structural and programmatic meaning that its absence from Sibelius’s original conception of the text is difficult to fathom. Yet it, along with the crucial Affettuoso passage (m.508ff), is nowhere to be found in the initial draft of the ending. In fact, it was only after two complete orchestral drafts and considerable additional sketching that Sibelius arrived at the conclusion’s definitive form. Once again, the music’s narrative course and the history of its composition mirror one another to a remarkable degree. The teleological forces that governed both processes led inexorably to a final compositional confrontation where the Symphony’s culmination needed to be deduced from its inherent syntactical and semantic content. Here, the highly anxious and nature-meditative compulsions of the compositional act – obsessive returns to thematic material in order to uncover its “profound logic” – collided head-on with the same properties as manifested in the structure. As much as the music from the introduction through the development sections governed the difficult task of finding a suitable conclusion, the composition of that conclusion and the biographical circumstances in which it was written impact the ultimate structure and meaning of the Symphony’s earlier sections. After an analysis of the recapitulation and coda in the published score, this study will proceed to a detailed account of the original endings and attempt to illuminate the structural and semantic imperatives that motivated Sibelius’s compositional choices. Finally, we may conclude this account of the

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1 This chapter is a substantially revised and expanded version of my “The Conclusion of Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony: Aspects of Genesis, Structure, and Program” (paper presented at the Third International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 7-10 December 2000).
Seventh by returning to where we began: the “Fertile Verge” between nature mysticism and domestic drama and a host of other apparent dichotomies.

The Sixth Rotation:
The Recapitulation

After the scherzo’s Bacchic chromaticism and slippage to C♯, the retransition, through a prolongation of the structural dominant, effects a return to the more positive tonic sounds of C major (recall the discussion in Chapter 5). Not only does the retransition set up a tonic return, but its scalar content – which serves as zone a of the sixth rotation – prepares the arrival of Telos III (m.476 – zone b of the final rotation). As noted earlier, the retransition concludes with D in the upper voice as the culmination of a massive ascending line. Sustained over the tonic arrival, this pitch now initiates the Aino theme’s 9-8 suspension by falling to c¹. The recapitulation’s melodic line essentially recomposes the exposition’s first group (from mm.60-86) until a crucial change takes place in m.503 (which should have been cognate with m.87). A comparison of the recapitulation (Exs.8.1 and 8.2a) with the first group from the exposition (recall Ex.5.1) indicates that, despite the common melodic line, many features are graphed differently. These distinct interpretations arise through a careful consideration of the differences in bass line, design, and dramatic function between the two sections. By differences in dramatic function, I mean that in the exposition the first group leads directly to the second group, while in the recapitulation it leads into a catastrophic climax. In other words, the respective structural goals of each section effect how their content is analyzed.

The serenity that characterized the arrival of Telos I in m.60 is, to a large degree, absent from the recapitulatory Telos III. While not as turbulent as the development’s accompanimental figuration, the recapitulation’s rapid, eighth note string accompaniment does disturb the grandeur
of the trombone theme. At first these ascending figures sound fairly innocuous; they carry the propulsive atmosphere of the retransition into the recapitulation and help underscore its sense of arrival. By m.482, however, the line, which began on g₁, has already reached c³. This extreme register, coupled with the line’s incessant nature, now becomes disruptive as it begins to overshadow the unfolding Adagio theme. In m.484 it reaches its fortissimo apex of g³, which is hammered out for three full measures through a frantic oscillation with f. As the insurgent accompaniment reaches this goal, the bass also arrives on G. The end of this passage (mm.486-87) corresponds to mm.70-71 of the exposition, where an evaded cadence undermined both the return to C in the bass and the arrival of G in the upper voice. Like that earlier passage, this one also returns to C in the bass, not as tonic, but as the upper fifth of F. Once again, this renders g² of the Adagio theme as a passing tone between f² and a♭². At the end of m.486, the accompaniment, which had tried to usurp the structural upper voice by forcing an arrival on the Kopfton in its longed-for obligatory register, is stopped dead in its tracks. In m.487 the fortissimo dynamic is transferred to the winds where it accentuates the move from g² to a♭². As Ex.8.3 reveals, in m.487 the accompaniment’s register and quest for the Kopfton is cast aside by the Adagio theme and the ascents of each voice are, from this point forward, merged.

While the denial of g³ underscores the disruptive nature of the evaded cadence, it also points to certain semantic issues which require careful consideration. The Adagio/Aino theme’s potential as a source of redemption is particularly crucial in the recapitulation. Indeed, its return offered a chance for the Bacchic excesses of the preceding sections to be washed away through the love of Aino’s music. Structurally, this could be accomplished through the return to C major, the stable nature of the main theme and by a strong arrival on the Kopfton in its expected obligatory register. Of course, the tonal and thematic aspects of this potential redemption are
Example 8.3:
Merger of Accompaniment and Upper Voice
in the Recapitulation
secured immediately in m.476. As for the attainment of $g^3$, the rising lines initiated at the recapitulatory moment make this seem immanent. Even the evaded cadence does not destroy these hopes, as the line continues its ascent. But what are the semantic implications of the rising accompaniment figure? Because it grew directly out of the development and retransition, it could profitably be interpreted as a continuation of their fast moving Bacchic material. Though the accompaniment is free of the chromaticism that infected those earlier sections ($f^3$ of mm.484-6 being the only exception), its general character may be viewed as a continuation of Sibelius’s Bacchic music superimposed upon Aino’s redemptive theme. Here, however, the negative connotations of the topos are supplanted by a hyper-active desire to attain the redemptive $g^3$ as soon as possible. In the end, however, redemption is not to be had on Sibelius’s own terms as the Aino theme censures and halts his attempt.

The excitement produced by the accompaniment figure is carried over into the next section of the recapitulation which drives towards the structural arrival on E as the bass of $I^6$. This *fortissimo* entrance – it appears two measures earlier than it had in the exposition relative to the Adagio theme – supports the shattering triple-*rinforzando* arrival on $c^4$ in m.496. As it had in the second rotation (m.50), but unlike its appearance in the exposition (m.80), this passage represents a climactic moment. However, its over-extended register and highly dramatic dynamic marking, coupled with the higher drama of the evaded cadence, establish a new degree of intensity in the recapitulation. From this point forward, the structure becomes a deliberate stepwise ascent to the climactic catastrophe – the *Largamente molto* indication ushered in by the arrival on $c^4$ underscores this approach.

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2 This arrival on e also initiates a final enlargement of motive X (e – f – g), which propels the music toward the structural dominant as follows: e (m.495) – f (m.510) – g (m.521).
In m.503 the ascending line reaches as high as $f^3$. As noted above, this is an alteration of the model provided in the exposition where $g^1$ was reached at this point. Because of differences in design and bass structure, the exposition’s $g^1$ did not function as part of an ascending line. Nevertheless, the small melodic alteration between m.87 and m.503 ($f^1 - c^1 - g^1$ becomes $f^3 - c^3 - f^3$) gives rise to the Symphony’s climactic catastrophe. The recapitulation’s structural failure, indeed that of the entire Symphony, rests in its inability to rise beyond $f^3$ to $g^3$. Instead, the upper voice becomes stuck on $f^3$ between mm.503 and 505. Thrown in relief as the rest of the orchestra drops out in m.504ff, the problematic $f^3$ is repeated in the violins to the stark accompaniment of a repeated $b^2$ and $f^2$. Rather than destructively devastating, this catastrophe, with its major third sonority, portrays the structure’s unfulfilled yearning in a strikingly beautiful manner. The very nature of this passage, its atmosphere of quiet resignation, colors the whole of the Symphony’s conclusion which resonates with – in the apt words of Donald Francis Tovey – “tones of noble pathos.”

Most writing on the Seventh Symphony acknowledges a crisis at this point in the recapitulation, though few writers have convincingly linked this moment to the structural and semantic forces that govern the entire text. Timothy Jackson was the first scholar to explicitly state that the catastrophe was triggered by the upper voice’s failure to reach $g^3$. According to his reading, the repeated $f^3$’s transform and intensify the minor seventh motives from earlier in the piece. Furthermore, the sense of crisis at this moment is heightened by the augmented sixth created between the outer voices ($A^b$ and $F^\#$) (see Ex.8.2a). The aforementioned major third

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3 Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis VI: Miscellaneous Notes* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), 92.
sonority is a foreground event caught within this middleground prolongation. Instead of resolving to G in both voices as expected, the upper voice passes through g\(^3\) and reaches up to a\(^\flat 3\) (in m.506), while the bass eventually progresses to f\(^\flat\) (m.510). The horns state the incipient of the trombone theme in m.508ff, but here it is trapped under the weight of the Affettuoso passage whose upper voice oscillates between f\(^\flat 3\) and a\(^\flat 3\). As revealed on Ex.8.2a-b, the entire catastrophe composes out a massive chromatic voice exchange between F\(^\flat\), A\(^\flat\), and F\(^\flat\).

Before continuing, let us pause to consider some details of this passage not discussed by Jackson. Viewed in a certain light, the catastrophe passage betrays a deep structural kinship with the evaded cadences from the exposition (mm.70-71) and earlier in the recapitulation (mm.486-87). Indeed, its upper voice proves to be, first, a chromatic deformation of those earlier cadences, and second, a melodic reversal. In other words, the ascent from f\(^\flat 3\) to a\(^\flat 3\) is a chromatic deformation, while the descent from a\(^\flat 3\) through g\(^3\) (m.509) to f\(^\flat 3\) (m.510) reverses the cadence pattern’s upper voice. Furthermore, its bass also employs the crucial gesture of moving from c to f. For ease of comparison, a reading of the three passages is produced in Ex.8.4a-c. Example 8.4d shows the very local voice exchange from m.84 which also foreshadows the catastrophe. Semantically, all of these passages – excepting m.84 – reduce the anticipated upper voice arrival on G to a mere passing tone and thwart our expectations. After reaching a\(^\flat 3\) and en route to f\(^\flat 3\) (\( \hat{4} \)), the upper voice unfolds a chromatic variant of the motivic turn figure which moves to g\(^3\) (Ex.8.2). Though it is ultimately extended to f\(^\flat 3\), the turn figure emphasizes the crucial chromatic neighbor motive (a\(^\flat\) - g).
Jackson’s idea that the Aino theme is “entrapped” within the climactic voice exchange is worth pursuing further.⁵ A central concern to Jackson’s reading, and mine, is the role of the bass c in m.508. Laufer, for example, interprets this arrival as a return to tonic, whereas I, in agreement with Jackson, regard it as the upper fifth of the subdominant.⁶ This reading is based, of course, on the evaded cadence ideas expressed above. The arrival on C coincides with the entrance of the Aino theme, which, at first blush, seems to suggest a strong design-structure consonance that would support Laufer’s reading. However, the theme’s incompleteness and its placement beneath the upper voice’s unfolding crisis, along with the inability of c to assert itself as tonic, produce a very different kind of design-structure consonance; a confluence of tonal and thematic failure. Semantically, this failure has dire implications. Here, in its final appearance, the sought-after source of redemption is rendered impotent as it fails to deliver thematic stability, tonal stability and an upper voice arrival on g. Absent from Jackson’s study, however, is any mention of the Aino theme’s trapped presentation in the second group (m.107-8) which serves as a clear precedent for this climactic passage. As noted in Chapter 5 (see Ex.5.3), the earlier trapped theme also occurs in the horn over c as the upper fifth of f. Unlike the recapitulation, the second group’s trapped theme enters beneath the completion of an ascent (f to g) begun in the main theme of m.60. In the recapitulation, the upper voice’s failure is emphasized by its close parallel with this more successful precedent.

The meaning of the upper voice’s ultimate motion up to a is closely tied to the 
Luonnotar topos discussed in Chapter 4. Earlier, I noted that the great emphasis placed on the rising scale throughout the Seventh corresponds to the structure of Luonnotar which represents

⁵ Ibid., 269.
cosmic creation through the metaphor of a protracted Anstieg. Example 4.2 revealed that the completion of an octave ascent – both in the foreground and background – signified the creation of the world and also pointed the way toward relief from the loneliness and pain of an extremely difficult gestation period. When the Seventh Symphony fails to reach beyond f\(^3\) in the Affettuoso passage, it signals a violation of the Luonnotar model. While the topos has clear nature-mystical associations, it also bolsters the unfolding domestic drama on at least four levels. First, the failure of creation implies that Sibelius may have musically represented himself as a failed parental figure. Second, in conjunction with Jackson’s interpretation that Sibelius portrayed Aino as a wife/mother (Mary/Eve) figure with quasi-religious redemptive powers, the Luonnotar reference draws more attention to the inability of the Aino theme to “save” Sibelius from his Bacchic sins. The implication of this second point, of course, is not that Aino was a failure, but that Sibelius made her task impossible.

Third, the problematic resolution of the Luonnotar idea points to the extreme isolation and loneliness expressed in the tone poem, which correspond to the thoughts expressed in many diary entries from this period of the composer’s life. This last point is manifested in the Seventh Symphony through a specific hypertextual reference in the middleground structure. According to Jackson’s interpretation of Luonnotar, the vocal line’s entrance (mm.9-17) unfolds an ascent of a minor ninth (Ex.8.5a). The text of this passage (as translated on the example) emphasizes the difference, isolation and loneliness of the luonnotar. Its arrival on the minor ninth (g\(^2\)) highlights the words “always alone.” Of course, the motive also corresponds to the luonnotar’s

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8 Jackson, Observations on Crystallization,” 177-83 and 260-72.
Example 8.5.c.

This page contains musical notation relevant to the text. It appears to include an excerpt from a symphony by L. M. C. (likely Ludwig van Beethoven), known for its adaptation of the song "La Cucaracha." The notation illustrates the development of themes and motifs characteristic of L. M. C.'s style, likely in relation to the themes discussed in the text.
inability to find a resting place and it is only at the end of the score that the octave is achieved as the structural goal. Returning to the Seventh, we may observe that the upper voice’s extension to a3 in the Affettuoso passage produces a massive ascent of a minor ninth in the recapitulation’s middleground (Ex.8.5b). Given the special emphasis on the Luonnotar topos over the course of the Symphony, it is entirely possible that Sibelius employed the minor ninth motive as a specific hypotext in the recapitulation. By association, it would follow that the motivic chromatic neighbor motion (a♭ – g) participates in this same hypertextual dialogue.

Domestic drama and nature mysticism verge in the climactic Affettuoso passage in a fourth way that requires explanation. Luonnotar concludes with the creation of the stars in the sky – its culminating octave ascent repeats the final line “became the stars in heaven” (recall Ex.4.2 and the discussion pertaining to it). Given the degree to which Sibelius’s setting of the Kalevala creation story privileges its concluding astral imagery and given the epitextual evidence that imbued the Seventh’s themes with images of the night sky – Kuutar ja pilvet (moon spirit and the clouds), Tähtölä (“Where the Stars Dwell”), Terhenetar (spirit of the clouds/fog) and Pleijaderna stråla” (“The Shining of the Pleiades”) – it is tempting to find these images in the Seventh’s recapitulation. In fact, I would propose that the move to a♭3 serves a dual purpose. Not only does it highlight the aforementioned loneliness, but it also, by reaching beyond structural expectations, signifies that redemption must ultimately be sought beyond the earthly confines of the Aino theme. Here, the catastrophe is tempered by a measure of hope as attention is briefly shifted upward towards the glimmering night sky. Perhaps, that hope for redemption was to be realized, not through Aino alone, but through his five daughters – not quite the seven sisters of the Pleiades, but close enough. In this reading, Ruth references in the sketches, aside from their purely practical function, may be viewed as emblematic of all five girls (this will be
explored in more detail below). If the minor ninth does ultimately hold out some hope, then the Seventh represents a reversal of the *Luonnotar* paradigm. Originally, the minor ninth had represented failure and the octave represented success through the creation of the cosmos. In the Seventh the minor ninth represents both failure and hope; failure to attain the desired redemption, but hope in offering a glimpse of the redemptive potential lying just beyond Sibelius’s grasp in the stars.

Following the upper voice arrival on $\text{ab}^3$, the structure undergoes a radical change in direction. Up to this point, the music had been, more than anything else, about ascent. Previous failed ascents had always led immediately to renewed efforts. Here, however, the upper voice arrives on $t^3 (\dot{4})$ in m.510 and initiates the *Urlinie*’s final descent. Because the *Kopfton* had never arrived in its expected obligatory register, the upper voice is thrust into a lower octave in m.511ff. This registral shift coincides with the return of the flute theme – now with a more defeated, limping rhythmic stamp. As in the introduction, the flute theme unfolds the head of the Aino theme (Exs.8.6a-b).\(^{10}\) Instead of stopping on $g^1$, the theme’s descending fourth motive is extended to $t^4$ through a 6-5 exchange over $b^\flat$ in m.517. This pulls the *Urlinie* into yet a lower octave; a long way from the expected $g^3 – c^3$ descent.

The Hypertextual Frame (Part Two)

In m.518, the texture undergoes a noticeable change with the introduction of a new rhythm in the upper stings and a pizzicato accompaniment in the string basses. The melancholic, waltz-like lilt of this passage sets it apart from the remainder of the Symphony and alerts the

\(^{10}\) On HUL 0386, p.4 (the initial second movement as transcribed in Ex.7.9) and some other earlier documents the flute theme entered immediately after the incipient of the trombone theme. Though these were not specific sketches for the recapitulation, they did set the precedent for this combination of themes.
Example 6.6a:

Example 6.7a:

Conclusion of Symphony:

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Example 8.7: Excerpt from Sibelius’s *Valse Triste*
listener to the presence of a new hypertextual allusion. Indeed, m.518ff close the Seventh’s hypertextual frame through an explicit reference to a distinctive chord progression from his famous *Valse Triste* (compare Ex. 8.6a with Ex.8.7). A number of scholars have noted the reference, though only recently has it been interpreted for its semantic implications.\(^1\) The popular *Valse Triste* was excerpted from the incidental music to the play *Kuolema* (Death) by Arvid Järnefelt (the composer’s brother-in-law).

Eija Kurki, in her study of Sibelius’s incidental music, offers an overview of the drama’s plot.\(^1\) *Kuolema* begins with a mother lying on her death bed beneath the watchful eye of her young son. In her delirium, she dreams of a lovely waltz (set to what would ultimately become *Valse Triste*). By the end of the dance, Death appears at the door in the form of her deceased husband and takes her away. Years later – in the third act – after the boy has grown into a man with a wife and children of his own, he finds that his “idealistic principles have conflicted with his family life with Elsa [his wife] and the children.”\(^1\) When, one day, his home is ravished by fire, he remains amidst the flames to contemplate his past deeds and is visited by Death, now in the form of his mother, who claims him. This is quite striking when we consider that the play has tragic ramifications for a mother, a father and their child. Indeed, the Seventh’s symphonic narrative is peopled by the same type of literary figures (Jean as husband/father, Aino as wife/mother and Ruth as child).\(^1\)

One can interpret the implications of this hypertextual reference in a variety of ways. The most immediate is that Sibelius, as the father figure, acts as the initiator of this tragic cycle.

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\(^1\) Erik Tawaststjerna, for example, notes the reference in ETL I, 150.
\(^3\) Ibid., 81.
\(^4\) Jackson also makes this association between the Seventh and *Kuolema* in “Observations on Crystallization, 270-71.
of events; the family is destroyed by his deeds. In this view, the hopeful outlook proposed above with regard to the climactic *Luonnotar* reference is rejected by the tragic fate of the child in the play. This reading is bolstered by both Jean and Aino’s fondness for a painting given them by Oscar Parviainen which hung above the piano at Ainola. Inspired by the *Kuolema* story and the death of the Sibelius’s daughter Kirsti in early childhood (1900), this painting (“The Prayer”) portrays a mother weeping over her daughter’s lifeless body under the watchful of death. In other words, the painting plays with the *Kuolema* story to make it resonate with the Sibelius’s own lives. Its presence in the house could have served as inspiration for including the *Valse Triste* allusion into the Seventh’s domestic drama. Simultaneously, Sibelius may have observed parallels between himself and the child. Indeed, Kurki’s description of the son in adulthood resonates with our understanding of Sibelius’s own self-image as confessed to the diaries. He firmly believed that his life as an artist and the idealistic attitudes to which he was committed resulted in a gross neglect of his financial and emotional responsibilities to Aino and his daughters. The fact that his greatest commercial success, *Valse Triste*, brought in very little money at this time because of extreme inflation in the European markets would have probably inspired his self-identification with this hypertextual reference.15 The son’s fiery end, in the context of the Seventh Symphony, could well be a musical realization of the many guilt-ridden confessionals found in the diaries and elsewhere. These feelings would have only intensified during the dark, tension-filled and whiskey-soaked days that led up to the Seventh’s completion. In fact, as we will see below, the final stages of genesis were focused on cultivating these various hypertextual traces and their meaning within the narrative of domestic drama.

Before examining issues of genesis or additional meanings, let us turn to an account of the allusion’s specific structural functions. Its chief role is to support the *Urlinie’s descent* and

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15 See ETL III, 240.
to compose out an auxiliary cadence into the structural dominant. In actuality there are two smaller auxiliary cadences nested within the entire progression. Example 8.6 reveals that the first progression leads into $\text{E}^1$ supporting $\text{E}^1$ ($3\text{ }\text{)}$ (m.519). The second cadence pattern leads directly to $\text{G} (V)$ supporting $\text{D}^1$ ($2\text{ }\text{)}$. Sibelius’s decision to employ the *Valse Triste* chord progression was not intended to function on purely semantic grounds. Instead, as the graph reveals, imbedded within its structure is the motivic chromatic neighbor figure ($\text{E} – \text{G}$). In other words, the *Valse*, as a hypotext, already contained within its structure an internal motivic feature of the hypertext. Because it introduces the structural dominant, the neighbor figure assumes added significance at this juncture. This move recalls the initial arrival on the dominant at the end of the second group (Ex.5.9) and, to a certain extent, accomplishes what $\text{E}^3$ of the *Affettuoso* could not; namely a resolution to G. This last connection is bolstered by the viola line in the *Valse* passage, which recomposes the catastrophe’s oscillation between $\text{E} – \text{F}$. Here, however, $\text{E}$ successfully reaches G. In the end, this must be regarded as a case of “too little, too late” as the *Urlinie* is already in the descendant. Not only does the allusion’s auxiliary cadence recall these earlier moments, but it also, as Veijo Murtomäki has suggested, brings the Symphony back, full circle, to the climactic sound of the disruptive $\text{A}^\#$ chord from the opening scale. 16 Though the harmony is now in root position and in the major mode, its function is very similar. Once again it is employed to support a disruptive E; the very note that has distorted expected linear progressions since the opening gesture. This moment realizes the failure of the Symphony to overcome the disruptive, chromatic outburst of m.3. Instead of being purged from the music,

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this troublesome pitch is now worked into the very fabric of the Symphony’s fundamental structure!\textsuperscript{17}

Despite these dark, potentially tragic connotations and allusions, Sibelius manages to end the piece with some degree of optimism. In m.522 (Tempo I) C major, like a great wave, bursts forth and washes over the wreckage wrought by the melancholic waltz theme.\textsuperscript{18} With this stunning tonic return, the upper voice holds out d\textsuperscript{1}, and then resolves it to c\textsuperscript{1} to close the \textit{Urlinie}. The whole of the Adagio theme is now reduced to its very essence; a 9-8 suspension over the tonic. At last, the main theme’s incipient, which had sounded so much like a closing gesture all along, finally realizes its potential as such. Next, after the Symphony’s chromaticism – in the form of the final chromatic neighbor gesture – and the Adagio theme have been distilled to their raw essence, Sibelius in what would become his final gesture as a symphonist, reduced all of the Seventh’s yearning and ascending impulses to one upward resolution from b\textsuperscript{1} to a \textit{fortissimo} c\textsuperscript{2}. So emphatic is the final motion that it serves to partially correct the failure of the ascent to the \textit{Affettuoso} passage. In the end, after Jean, Aino and their daughters have been tragically caught within the text’s deformed structural processes and complex web of transtextual associations, we are left with the hope that lies within this last gesture. Before examining the nature of this hopeful utterance, let us explore how Sibelius arrived at this conclusion.

\textbf{Genesis}

As stated at the outset, the original conception of the Seventh’s conclusion was quite different from the variant we now know. It lacked two of the most significant semantic and structural features outlined above: the final upward resolution and the \textit{Affettuoso} passage. After

\textsuperscript{17} The anticipatory \textit{Urlinie} descent of the development’s inserted scherzo also passed through E\textsubscript{b} (Ex.5.13).
\textsuperscript{18} This is the moment of “definitive tonic arrival” as described by Jackson. See “Observations on Crystallization,” 177 and 271.
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<tr>
<td>HUL 0358</td>
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rejecting the first conclusion, he proceeded to compose a second ending that introduced both the Affettuoso material and the final b♭ to c² gesture, but that proved to be structurally flawed. These problems were corrected in some rough sketches found on the pages immediately following the second version and from here the composer was able to arrive at the conclusion’s final form. Figure 8.1 presents a chronological overview of the conclusion’s genesis. This reveals that Sibelius first completed orchestral drafts of each variant and then proceeded to write out a copy for the autograph score. To this list one may also wish to add the very sketchy attempt at a conclusion found on the second movement plan (HUL 0386, p.1) (Ex.7.12).¹⁹

Let us now turn to the first version of the piece’s ending. Example 8.8 is my transcription of HUL 0354, which consists of pages removed from the autograph score (HUL 0349), and Ex. 8.9 presents an analysis of this material. Structurally, this initial conclusion is quite unusual and significantly different from the published version. It begins like the passage preceding the Affettuoso material, but a striking change occurs in m.3 (compare this to m.503 of the finished work). Instead of stopping the rising lines of the upper voices on f₃, Sibelius moves to g₃ through f½₃. Does this stand for the longed-for g³ Kopfton? To answer this question we must turn back, once again, to the evaded cadences found earlier in the work (Ex.8.4a-c). Example 8.9 reveals that the original conclusion employs this same idea. Though g³ of m.3 is emphasized by its high register and by the Luftpause, it must be understood, not as a goal of motion, but rather as passing up to a½². Its effect is much like the accompaniment’s attempt to force an arrival on g³ in mm.484-86.

Example 8.8:
HUL 0354 - First Ending
(pp.98-102 removed from autograph (HUL 0349))
Example 8.8 (continued):

Poco pressante

[page 99]

[page 100]
Example 8.8:
HUL 0354 (continued)
Example 8.8:
HUL 0354 (continued)
Early sketches for this ending, found on p.21 of the sketchbook containing the initial draft of the one-movement form (HUL 0359), support the idea of regarding g⁰ as a passing tone. The sketch fragment transcribed in Ex.8.10 clearly shows that Sibelius heard a line that moved by step to d³.

Of course, the register is probably also simplified in the sketch as a matter of convenience.™

Returning to the orchestral draft, we find that the registral shifts of HUL 0354 do serve several purposes. The g⁰ of m.3 proves to be a glimpse of the Kopfton in a register that can never be achieved and the outer voices from mm.4-8 highlight tritones to emphasize this failure. The special role of d³ in mm.8 and 9 will be discussed momentarily.

In m.10 one encounters the most striking difference between this draft and the final version. At this point in the music Sibelius introduces a section of agitated string figuration in 12/8 time labeled Poco pressante. A predecessor to the final version’s Affettuoso music, this section’s upper voice obsessively oscillates between f and a♭, but here this agitation is merely a foreground phenomenon. The low register and the constant use of the chromatic upper and lower neighbors to the Kopfton undermine its arrival in the upper voice and this technique lacks the simplicity and sheer power of the final version’s Affettuoso material. Furthermore, the arrival on g⁰ in the Poco pressante is devalued even more by the fact that the autonomy of its harmonic support is illusory. Indeed, the bass arrival on g in m.10 does not function as the structural dominant as one would expect. Instead, it proves to be, as in the upper voice of the evaded cadence patterns, a passing tone between f (m.4) and a♭ (m.16). As in those cadences V leads to C, not as tonic but as V of IV. With the entrance of the flute melody in m.13 the bass arrives on the tonic seventh chord in ⅓ position. The bass B♭ should, in accordance with voice leading

™ Though Kilpeläinen dates this sketchbook to 1923, it is likely that Sibelius returned to it after he had already written out the orchestral draft (HUL 0355) in order to compose the ending. Missing from the draft is the entire recapitulation. Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh,” 256-58.
conventions, resolve to A or A♭ as the third of F. Its prolongation initiates an early version of the *Valse Triste* cadence pattern, which deceptively resolves C♯ of m.13 to i♭Ⅲ of F, but does produce the required B♭ to A♭ resolution in the bass. As in the final version, this harmony supports e♭1 in the *Urlinie* and serves to introduce the structural dominant through the motivic chromatic neighbor motion. The *Valse* progression, it should be noted has yet to receive its characteristic waltz-like rhythm. Scattered across page 21 of the sketchbook HUL 0359 are measures labeled “Aino” and numbered 1-11 (these are reconstructed in Ex.8.11). In these eleven measures we find an early version of the final cadential progression which clearly associates the *Valse Triste* allusion with Aino and elements of the Aino theme!

One further aspect of the original ending requires exploration. As the bass resolves to c in m.17, the upper voice reiterates the d1-c1/9-8 suspension of the Aino theme. In the final version the 9-8 motion is present, but greater emphasis is placed on the final statement of motive Y (the B-C semitone), which, as I mentioned earlier, is not present in HUL 0354. Instead, as Ex. 8.9a reveals, the register of the first conclusion highlights a massive enlargement of the D-C neighbor motive that serves as a covering motion spanning the entire ending. Sibelius deliberately leaps up two octaves to c3 in the first violin’s final gesture to pick up the d3 that was “left hanging” in mm.8 and 9. Although less effective than the ultimate b♭1 to c2 ending, the two-octave leap does add one further level of structural complexity to HUL 0354.²¹

Though the original ending, through the neighbor motion, alludes to the trombone theme, it does not present a full statement of this material. On HUL 0359, p.22 there is a sketch which appears to be a rhythmically simplified variant of the first ending that includes statements of the trombone theme. In fact, as the transcription in Ex.8.12 shows, this entire passage is circled and

²¹ The final octave leap may also serve as reference to the summary octave ascent at the end of *Luonnotar.*
Example 8.12:
HUL 0359, p.22
(entire excerpt circled on sketch)
labeled “Aino.” There are at least two possible interpretations of this sketch. First, this material was written after Sibelius had decided to reject the initial ending and he returned to the sketchbook to begin exploring a new conclusion – one that would explicitly include the trombone theme. The second possibility is that Sibelius wrote this as he was sketching ideas for the first conclusion, but for reasons unknown decided to remove the trombone theme. This second interpretation seems much more likely due to the fact that the sketch is much closer to the first version and there is nothing else that links it to the second attempt at ending the Symphony. Given this idea it is probable that the motivation for the second ending arose from the desire to reinstate the trombone theme and to convert the catastrophe from the foreground agitation of the *Poco pressante* to the deep middleground failure of the *Affettuoso* passage.

The second version of the ending (HUL 0353) is transcribed in Ex.8.13. Its beginning corresponds to m.501 of the published score and until m.507 it is exactly the same. In the second measure of the *Affettuoso* the first violin reaches up to b♭₃ as a neighbor to a♭₃, but in the published edition the line rises no higher than a♭₃. The entrance of the trombone theme is both delayed and expanded in HUL 0353. Furthermore, it is orchestrated in an entirely new way. Instead of being trapped in the horns, as in the final score, here (m.10ff) it is stated by the celli, violas, horns and bassoon. Like the first ending, the second oscillates obsessively between F♯ and A♭, but now with a much slower rhythm. Having achieved its final form (m.19ff), the flute melody gains its final harmonic support. In m.25 the second conclusion breaks from the published ending in a drastic manner. The *Valse Triste* allusion is not present at all. Without this imported progression, what should function as the final *Urlinie* descent lacks sufficient harmonic support. Instead, it unfolds over a shifting series of harmonies over a C pedal. Example 8.14 is a reduction of the unusual resultant progression. This ending comes to a close
Example 8.13:
HUL 0353, p.98 (removed from autograph)
Second Version of Ending
Example 8.13 (continued):
HUL 0353, p.101

[Sheet music notation with instructions for crescendo, mezzo voce, and dynamics]
Example 8.13 (continued):
HUL 0353, p.102

Nb. - m.24 is circled in the oboe and clarinet parts.

[poco allargando]

[hand-drawn staff of unclear music]
with motive Y, but the unsupported *Urlinie* descent produces a flawed background structure.

Sibelius’s motivation for abandoning the *Valse Triste* idea is unclear, but on the page of sketches immediately following the final bars of the second conclusion he sketched out a new form of the *Valse* progression. Not only does this sketch point to the restoration of the allusion, but it also reveals that the association has been made stronger. Transcribed in Ex.8.15, this shows that the bass line is to be played pizzicato as in the *Valse* itself, this – along with its new rhythm – strengthen the allusion by endowing the bass line with a waltz-like lilt. Once this alteration was made Sibelius had little compositional distance to travel before arriving at the final form of the ending.

For Sibelius finding a more compact and streamlined conclusion that clearly expressed the Symphony’s programmatic content was linked directly to his philosophy that “the musical thoughts – the motives, that is – are the things that must create the form and stabilize my path.”

The complex generative process of Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony, a process characterized by the increasing economy of motivic, formal and structural expression, and a process governed by the autonomy of the musical and semantic content, proves to be an excellent example of the composer’s creative concepts at work. Indeed, Sibelius was not satisfied until the material had reached its logical conclusion.

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22 See Chapter 2, note 2.
Example 8.14:
Concluding Progression from HUL 0353, p.102

Example 8.15:
Sketch for False Triste allusion
HUL 0353, p.103
Once More to the Verge

Having glimpsed into the fires of Sibelius’s creative process and the majesty of musical structure, design and meaning, we may now return, full circle, to Daniel Boorstin’s theory of the “Fertile Verge.”\(^{23}\) The Seventh Symphony, can best be understood as just such a verge; a place where so many seemingly oppositional forces run into one another to produce what, at first blush, seems like a conflicted tangle of paradoxes, but, after sustained scrutiny proves to be an utterly unique and unified musical masterpiece. Through the exploration of several verges, we have seen that the Seventh is not a series of “both-ands.” Instead, it is the place between those oppositions; between symphony and fantasy, between one form type and another, between tragic despair and hopeful yearning, between nature mysticism and domestic drama, and so on. In this “between” region – indeed, in this verge – these oppositions become indistinguishable and here, at this point of maximal synthesis, lies the essence of the Seventh Symphony. Let us, in conclusion, observe some more of these Sibelian verges.

“The older I grow,” Sibelius once claimed, “the more classical I become.”\(^{24}\) Of course, his shift toward classicism – usually dated to the period of the Third Symphony – was balanced by a fair measure of innovative modernism. The classicist impulse in Sibelius was not about stylization, but was, as we have witnessed elsewhere, about abstract principles of economy and inner-logic. Likewise, his modernist tendencies arose, to a great extent, from this classicist streak, rather than from a desire to do something different. Ironically, it was precisely this turn to classicism that differentiated Sibelius from his contemporaries. As Murtomäki has asserted:


The degree to which Sibelius was conservative or progressive as been examined and debated – often intensely – to such an extent that further discussion in this context is unnecessary. 26

Furthermore, we have already witnessed the degree to which his formal and structural techniques were a synthesis of his classical and modern impulses. However, two additional examples of this verge deserve mention.

The deep middleground structure of the Symphony represents a remarkable twist on the traditional antecedent-consequent structure of sonata design. In Schenkerian terms sonata forms are typically divided by an interruption on $\hat{2}$ over V at the end of the development section. Here, this is the case, but, as discussed in Chapter 5, $\hat{2}$ is reached through an ascent rather than a descent from $\hat{5}$. This parallels the antecedent of the second rotation (see Ex.8.16a-c). The recapitulation, through its failed Anstieg, recomposes the second rotation’s consequent and intensifies the effect by halting on $\mathfrak{f}$ instead of $\mathfrak{f}$. 27 Both failed ascents also lead directly into statements of the Aino theme, though they are, of course, very different. Here then, Sibelius reworked classical antecedent-consequent sonata structure into a highly individual, though historically rooted, design-structure counterpoint. This innovation is fuelled by, and itself fuels, the teleological and semantic forces at work in the Symphony.

The design-structure counterpoint also produces one other fascinating phenomenon worth exploring. Namely, the Symphony’s tonality seems to lie on the verge between constant teleological motion and absolute stasis. A property observed in the analysis of the second group

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25 Ibid., 295.

26 Recent contributions to this literature can be found in Murtonäki, *Symphonic Unity*, 281-97. Murtonäki and Jackson’s Preface to *Sibelius Studies*, xi-xx; and in the same volume, Tim Howell, “‘Sibelius the Progressive,’” 35-57; and James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No.5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 1-30.

27 Jackson also notes this parallel, but reads neither the second half of the introduction nor the entire structure as an antecedent-consequent structure. “Observations on Crystallization,” 269.
(Chapter 5), this verge produces the effect of a compound melody in the structural bass line. Though the first tonic arrival is reserved until m.60, there is little doubt from the outset that this is a symphony in C. To be sure, several non-tonic pitches are prolonged over the Symphony’s course, but none are convincingly tonicized for any substantial duration. Instead there is an ever-present sense of the tonic. While there are many strong arrivals on C, only a few actually function as tonic. The others refer to the tonic sound world without actually reproducing it. In essence, they act as a tonic pedal point superimposed on the middleground bass structure as Ex.8.17 indicates. This effect lends the entire structure a monotonal character and reduces the conceptual distance between the foreground and deeper levels of structure.\(^{28}\) Indeed, the resultant elemental tonal sphere with strong nature-mystical overtones arises from the primitive “backgroundness” of the foreground. Despite this static sense of tonic, Sibelius was able to make each of its structural arrivals sound completely revelatory. James Hepokoski notes this exact principle in the Third Symphony (also in C major) and his characterization is worth quoting here:

> The perceptual effect created throughout the Third Symphony is that of an elemental C-major-triad sonority gaining cumulative heft and weight, maximizing in presence and insistent self-assuredness, pulling itself free from distracting obstacles, until at the end one is confronted with something extraordinary: the reality of a heavier, more revelatory ‘C major’.\(^{29}\)

In this light, the tonic takes on an earthy permanence; life, insignificant, runs its course and is, in the end, swallowed by the final C major peroration.

The dramatic properties of this last verge have a profound effect on our understanding of one of the Symphony’s most significant verges: nature mysticism and domestic drama. Upon the definitive tonic arrival, the Symphony realizes both its nature-inspired Klang meditation (see the

\(^{28}\) Murtomäki offers a sustained analysis of monotonality in the Seventh. He surmises that this may owe something to the traces of Renaissance polyphony running through the Symphony. *Symphonic Unity*, 259-75.

discussion on teleological genesis in Chapter 3) and by having nature triumph over man’s adversity it suggests a culminating merger of the two semantic strands. Just such a verge was already tried out in the Fifth Symphony where salvation was sought through soaring swan imagery. As we have already discussed, the central movement explicitly references swan-related salvation music from the incidental music to Swanwhite. The triumphant “swan hymn” of the finale also had redemptive – not just nature-meditative – qualities. As Sibelius confessed in a diary entry upon seeing several swans in full flight:

> 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.

This entry clearly indicates that Sibelius thought of natural processes and phenomena as akin to human ones: “Nature mysticism and life’s Angst!” It also reveals the role of nature as a redemptive force capable of delivering him to “the sanctuary.” That this redemptive finale should appear on the heels of a movement with a clear hypertextual reference to mystical swan imagery as a carrier of salvation is made more significant by the fact that in early sketches (the NAS, p.12 theme table) the second movement – which at that point included the “swan hymn” and ideas for the scherzo of the eventual first movement – carried an “Aino” label. Though this has clear practical functions as Hepokoski asserts, its combination with a variety of other kinds of evidence – epitextual and hypertextual – indicates a semantic level of meaning as well. Indeed, the presence of Aino’s name along with images of love and salvation strongly suggest

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30 Hepokoski, in identifying the “swan hymn” as such, down plays its redemptive potential throughout Symphony No.5.
31 Ibid., 36 and ETL III, 49. As both writers note, Sibelius also included the incipient of the “swan hymn’ with this entry.
32 Chapter 6 discusses this table from the perspective of the Seventh’s Adagio theme which serves as a third movement in this context. A facsimile of this page is given in ETL III, ix; the entire theme table is transcribed in Hepokoski, Symphony No. 5, 34.
33 Hepokoski writes-off the potential semantic meaning of this reference in Symphony No.5, 34-5.
that the Fifth plays out a nature-mystical and domestic drama in which the love of Aino, metaphorically associated with the flight of swans, triumphs through its redemptive powers.

In the Seventh, the role of redeemer is denied to Aino, but given over to the natural world. Of course, at this point, the situation was a lot worse and the intense bouts of drinking would have led to greater pessimism on Sibelius’s part. Shortly after the premiere of the Seventh, Sibelius reflected on his drinking – which was both the cause and the cure for a tremor in his hands – and Aino’s inability to save him:

Back from Stockholm, where I’ve had great success. The dreadful demon in me threatens to put an end to me. To escape it is not within my power, nor in Aino’s either. What can I do? If only my nerves were better. Perhaps it would be better then. But it has gone on for so many years and things won’t change. Alone and with “hands that tremble”. Damn it!34

The Seventh Symphony realizes this domestic drama through the nature of its structural drama and through its transtextuality which pulls in traces of earlier compositions where themes of love, yearning, Bacchic excess, creation (on natural and human planes) and death were essential semantic elements. It is the presence of these transtextual threads that free the Aino and Ruth markers from their purely practical role of cognitive signification and enables them to function on a semiotic level. Yes, “Aino” may function as a surrogate for some other label such as the letter “A”, but “Aino” also specifically refers to Aino and “Ruth” to Ruth.35 The frequent association of the Adagio material with Aino and natural imagery is surely bolstered by its ecclesiastical characteristics. Though the Aino and Ruth markers were also used in conjunction with the second group’s Bacchic material, it must be stressed that these references probably refer to the fact that they were caught within the destructive path of Sibelius’s excesses. Furthermore,

34 Diary entry from 5 April 1924. ETL III, 247.
35 In addition to the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies, the “Aino” marker is given semantic heft in the Third Symphony and the “Amor” movement from the second set of Scene historique. See Chapter 4 and Jackson, “Observations on Crystallization,” 181-82. In addition to these “Aino” is also employed in the love song “Dolce far niente” to a text by Karl August Tavaststjerna. This is made clear on HUL 1145. The appearance of this reference came up in Jukka Tiilikainen’s paper “The Evolution of Jean Sibelius’s Songs as Seen in his Manuscripts” (paper presented at the Third International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 7-10 December 2000).
they do not persist into the final stages of composition as does the association between Aino and the trombone theme.

The role of Ruth in the sketches is far more ambiguous than Aino. I do not think it is possible to single out specific themes or motives as being representative of Ruth to the same extent that the trombone theme represents Aino. Jackson’s hypothesis that Ruth is represented by the flute theme and the second group is not sustained by my study of the sketches. However, his association of the ascending octave with Ruth is more promising. Indeed, as we have already seen, the octave/Luonnotar topos is not only associated Ruth in its pre-history (see the discussion of the hypertextual frame in Chapter 4), but it also is associated with Ruth as a signifier of all the children in the final parts of the Symphony. It is also possible that Sibelius turned to Ruth in this late work – she was by now a successful actress and a married woman – because he feared she might end up repeating the mistakes of her parents. As Tawaststjerna reports Ruth was not only a creative artist like her father, but she also inherited his fiscal irresponsibility. This was a constant source of worry. Furthermore, she, like Aino, was the wife of an artistic man – the actor Jussi Snellman – and this may have led Sibelius to fear that she would sacrifice too much of herself for her husband’s career as Aino had done for him. In any event, though her role cannot be articulated with certainty, her presence in the sketches and the whole transtextual space of the Seventh Symphony helps signal the verge of nature mysticism and domestic drama.

Earlier, I drew a strong parallel between Sibelius’s nature-meditative philosophy and his compositional process. Just as nature was contemplated to find greater spiritual truths, each obsessive return to the unruly wilderness of themes brought new insights and new revelations

37 ETL III, 36.
38 An anecdote relating to this is given in ETL III, 86.
until, finally, the way was clear. It is tempting to dismiss this comparison as a serviceable metaphor that must at some point, like all metaphors, break down. It is tempting, but I do not believe it is possible. On the contrary, further contemplation only strengthens and expands the comparison. Indeed, the Seventh Symphony itself is the embodiment of these principles. It is both the revelatory result of the nature-meditative compositional act – the ultimate expression of symphonic unity – and the musical equivalent of nature-mystical contemplation. Its naturalistic, teleological cycles ebb and flow until the final musical truth, pure C major, is achieved. At this point, the conclusion reached in Chapter 3 may be reiterated; namely that *form is genesis*. Not only is this formulation true in the mundane sense that the final form embodies the fusion of two previous movements, but, more importantly, it suggests that the abstract and guiding principles of the compositional process are one and the same as the principles behind the Symphony’s structural and formal processes.

This now brings us to one final verge. Through the sustained contemplation of genesis, structure, design and meaning in the Seventh Symphony, we can come very close to the great “Fertile Verge” where Sibelius the man and nature mystic, the compositional act and the composition itself became one. In this verge there is no distinction between the three. This verge is first the moment – or the decade full of moments – when pen was put to paper and music was created, but ultimately the final moment when the last notes were drafted and the final decision made. Postmodern pessimism has little value when the Seventh is listened to from the vantage point of this verge, for not only is Sibelius to be heard in the symphony’s semantic structure, but every sound is the living expression of his nature-mystical musical voice. It took a decade of anxiety, inspiration and hard work to reach this end, but the result was, to its
composer, truthful. “My symphonies were a terrible struggle,” Sibelius once said, “but now they are as they must be.”³⁹

Appendix:

Annotated Catalogue of Sketches
Leading to the Four and One-Movement Plans¹

I.  Adagio (D Major)

0362, p.1  Variant with extensive expansion and half-note rest at opening. See III.

0364, p.1  Full-length multi-voice variant. Page contains second group theme and developmental material. See II and VII.

0373, p.2  Variant with half-note rest contains Aino references. On bottom of page labeled as “II.” Written below is second group material labeled “III” which also appears on p.1. See VII.

0375  Multi-voice variant. The full statement of theme leads to its repetition.

0391, p.2  Measures 82-83/502-503 of Adagio worked out in D major. Also flute theme variants on this page and scherzo on p.1. See V and VI.

0395, p.1  Early D major variant with half-note rest at opening. Probably from 1919-20.

0395, p.29  Incipient of theme sketched as part of theme table for a Kalevala-inspired work. Theme labeled as “Kuutar ja pilvet” (feminine moon spirit and the clouds) and “Tähtolä” (where the stars dwell). Table also includes themes from the outer movements of the Sixth Symphony and the scherzo theme. See VI.

II.  Development of Adagio (D Major)

0364, p.2  Early developmental sketch with both triplet quarter note and sixteenth note accompaniments tried out. Preceded by brief sketch of second group material and D major Adagio (p.1). See I and VII.

0367, p.2  Incomplete sketch of developmental material – ascending lines. Pages 3-4 contain C major development and second group themes. See IV and VII.

¹ This is not a complete list of all of the materials catalogued by Kari Kilpeläinen. Furthermore, I have not included the earliest sketches of the Adagio and Scherzo materials as found in the National Archives Sketchbook. Information on the physical attributes of each sketch listed above – paper type, length, writing medium etc. – can be found in Kilpeläinen, The Jean Sibelius Musical Manuscripts at Helsinki University Library: A Complete Catalogue (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1991), 44-49.
III. Adagio (C major)

0360 Sketch of end of introduction leading into Adagio theme. Other sketches include flute theme (as secondary idea?). Bottom of page contains written plan for some work (Seventh?). Plan close to those found in one-movement sketchbook (HUL 0359). See V.


0362, p.3 Labeled “II” and “Adagio di molto.” “Introduction”/early variant: no A♭s. F♯ in fifth measure. See I.

0363 Labeled “II” on cover. “Introduction”/early variant: no A♭s. F♯ in fifth measure. Some material was cut out of this bifolio. Flute theme above Adagio theme on hand-drawn staff. See V.

0365 p.1 flute theme crossed out on hand-drawn staff above Adagio. Number “I” crossed out on top of the page. Adagio similar to HUL 0363 etc., but G replaces F♯ in fifth measure as in final version. Continuation reworked on pasted-in page (p.2). Fourth page consists of pasted-in fragments. Flute theme as developmental idea on top of page and continuation of the Adagio on lower half. (See V).

0368 Incipient of Adagio leads to second group. See VII.

0369 One page sketch given page number 3. “Introductory” material plus first three measures of exposition. Lower half of page cut out and pasted on HUL 0386, p.4 as part of the second movement plan. Likely belongs with HUL 0381 and 0370, the latter of which bears the page number 5-6. (See IV and VII).

0372 Brief multi-voice variant of Adagio.

0377, p.1&4 Continuation of Adagio leads to flute theme as secondary idea. Continuation also present on p.4. Also development on p.2. See IV and V.

0378 Lower half of p.2 contains a 4 voice sketch of Adagio. Developmental theme above. (See IV).

0381 5 voice variant (mm.60-93). F♯ of fifth measure circled on this sketch and corrected below by G variant! Probably belongs with HUL 0369 and 0370. (See IV).

0389 Variant appears alongside Second group material. See VII.

0395, p.11 Incipient of theme appears with the label “VII. II.” This likely refers to Symphony No.7, mvt.II.

IV. Development of Adagio (C major/minor)

Developmental material with running eighth note accompaniment pattern. Accompaniment implies C minor, but there is no key signature to suggest this for the theme itself. Page 2 contains D major development. Page 3 contains second group themes. See II and VII.

Labeled as pages 5-6. Probably connected to HUL 0369 and 0381. Second group material on p.5 leads to developmental material on p.6. See III and VII.

First page various developmental ideas for Adagio. Possibly related to second movement plan on HUL 0386, p.4. Remaining three pages developmental variants of flute theme. See V.

Development with running eighth note accompaniment. Second group material appears on p.4 and sketches for the trio are on p.2. See VI and VII.

One measure of development with sixteenth note accompaniment. Preceded by second group material. See VII.

One measure of development. C major theme and flute theme also appear. See III and V.

Brief developmental sketch with various figuration patterns tried-out. Four voice variant of Adagio written below. See III.

V. Flute Theme

Flute variant possibly as secondary idea to Adagio theme. See III.

Flute variant on hand-drawn staff above Adagio theme. See III.

Flute variant crossed out on hand-drawn staff above Adagio theme (p.1). Developmental variant of flute theme on p.4. See III.

Flute theme written several times with both eighth note rhythm and as a dotted half-note followed by three quarter notes. Contains detailed continuation (mm.14-22 of finished version). Variants surround the Fifth Symphony’s “Swan Hymn.” Possibly second movement early Sixth Symphony plan.
First page various developmental ideas for Adagio. Remaining three pages developmental variants of flute theme. See IV.

Flute theme as secondary idea to Adagio. Is this for the ending as in the final version or for a potential second group theme? Developmental material also present. See III and IV.

Theme appears as secondary idea to C major Adagio. Also contains developmental material. See III and IV.

Highly developmental three voice variant of flute theme.

Two developmental variants beginning on B♭ and G. Adagio theme present on p.2 and scherzo on p.1. See III and VI.

Early (1915-16?) theme tables probably related to Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. Appears in two theme tables on this page both times labeled as “II” and the first time labeled as “Larghetto [sic.]”. Page one contains scherzo. See VI.

Appears amidst unidentified context on p.1. Appears on theme table with Sixth Symphony’s first movement and the scherzo theme on p.2. See VI.

Developmental variant in A♭ major. The theme begins on B♭.

VI. Scherzo Material

Trio material sketched. C major development and second group appear on pages 1 and 4 respectively. See IV and VII.

Massive sketch containing several variants of the scherzo material and references to Aino and Ruth. Probably an early sketch. Likely related to HUL 0384.

Dated 8 April 1914. Scherzo theme in several keys. Is this a continuity sketch? Probably related to HUL 0383.

Early material related to Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. First page contains a continuity sketch and the second page contains the theme’s incipient labeled as “IV” of a theme table. See V.

B♭ major variant as “A” theme of a potential fourth movement for some work. Flute and Adagio themes on p.2. See III and V.

Early B♭ major variant.
0393 Appears in C major on a theme table with flute theme and the main theme of the Sixth Symphony’s first movement. See V.

0394 Scherzo and trio ideas along with second group. One Aino reference. Probably a direct predecessor to the fourth movement (HUL 0387). See VII.

0395, p.29 Incipient of the theme appears as part of Kalevala-inspired theme table alongside Sixth Symphony material and the D major Adagio theme. It bears the title “Terhenetar ja?” (spirit of the clouds/fog and?). See I.

0401 Brief sketch of trio material.

0402 Material for the trio. Likely predecessor of the fourth movement (HUL 0387).

0403 Scherzo in G minor introduced by second group material. Likely predecessor of the fourth movement (HUL 0387). See VII.

VII. Second Group Material

0364, p.2 Brief sketch at top of page (D minor?). Followed by D major developmental material. Preceded by D major Adagio. See I and II.

0367, p.4 Running quarter note pattern as in Second and closing groups. Page 2 D major development and Page 3 C major/minor(?) development. See II and IV.

0368 Motive y and running quarters preceded by incipient of the Adagio theme. See III.

0370 Motive y and running quarter notes lead to developmental material. Likely connected to HUL 0369. See III and IV.

0373 Early variant on p.1. Labeled as III and associated with D major Adagio theme on p.2. See I.

0374, p.4 Motive y and running quarters worked out in detail. Page 1 developmental C major and p.2 trio material. See IV and VI.

0376 Motive y and running quarter notes lead to one measure of Adagio development with arpeggiated sixteenth notes. See IV.

0380 Possible, though difficult to decipher, second group material.

0389 Motive y and associated ideas appear along with C major Adagio material. Probably from the early stages of the multi-movement conception.
0394 Second group material along with scherzo and trio. One Aino reference. Probably a direct predecessor to the fourth movement (HUL 0387). See VI.

0400 Possibly an early variant of the running quarter notes. Here they appear as part of a vocal score. The exact nature of the text underlay is difficult to decipher. The song’s title is “Pleijaderna stråla” (“The Shining of the Pleiades”).

0403 Second group sets up G minor scherzo as in fourth movement. This is a likely predecessor to HUL 0387. See VI.


———. “The Maiden with a Heart of Ice: ‘Crystallization’ and Compositional Genesis in Sibelius’s *Pohjola’s Daughter* and Other Works,” in *Proceedings from the Second


