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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Sibelius

James Hepokoski

The generation of the "modern" European composers, those born in the years around 1860, was the first to come of age in a post-Wagnerian, post-Lisztian period of rapidly proliferating art-music enterprises—civic and private orchestras, conservatories and universities, music-publishing networks, stable outlets for criticism and commentary, and so on.¹ These recently secured, generally prosperous, and (at least outwardly) confident enterprises spawned a demand for new works to display alongside the canon that they had been formed to perpetuate. As shrines of liberal-humanist cultural memory, they also sought their own continued affirmation from succeeding generations. Among the essential functions of this perception of institutional continuity was its ability to serve as a sealant against the corrosive social and aesthetic forces that were beginning to eat away at the liberal consensus in the last decades of the nineteenth century.² Such considerations can help us to understand what Carl Dahlhaus called "the second age of the symphony," and what we may regard as its remarkable reinvigoration in a series of three or four generational waves.³

"The moderns" constituted the second of those waves, and it brought forth at least six major symphonic composers: Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Edward Elgar, Jean Sibelius, Carl Nielsen, and Alexander Glazunov.⁴ Notwithstanding the substantial differences among them (including the divergent cultural politics of their music's reception history), all six, probably along with a few others, are best considered as a group facing the same kinds of compositional problems.⁵ Moreover, these six are only a fragment of a much larger, self-sustaining network—the multifaceted institution of art music—which was shot through with ominous sociocultural tensions and aesthetic controversies.⁶ Studies that encourage the examination of only a single "great" figure or work can mislead,

particularly if they downplay the framing context for the competitive circulation of this music. The de facto precondition for the dissemination of Sibelius's music in larger Europe, for example, was his status as an exotic "outsider"—someone utterly different from "us"—an early advantage that before long turned into a curse.

And yet, considered less reductively, his grasp of essential symphonic problems proceeded incrementally: in each major work his grip tightened a notch further. Once past his training as a student, his compositional development took him through three interrelated but distinguishable phases. The first, lasting from the early 1890s through around 1902 or 1903, is indeed an emphatically Finnish political phase marked by his immersion into and gradual emergence out of the exclusively local and national. This phase ranges from the early, massive "symphonic poem" (with voice) *Kullervo* (1892) and the subsequent suite of Kalevalaic tone poems, *Four Legends* (1895–96, actually something of a programmatic symphony in E♭ major) to the First and Second Symphonies. In the second phase, from around 1904 to 1912, Sibelius shifted to a "modern-classical" strategy that strove to engage a larger public, that of the central musical marketplaces of Europe. To this end, he forged a modern musical language of renunciation and compression, one clearly evident in the Third and Fourth Symphonies. The third phase, from around 1912 to the early 1930s, was triggered both by his realization of the inevitable marketplace failure of the second and by the unforeseen emergence of the aggressive cultural politics surrounding the dissonant New Music of a younger generation. This final phase, which saw the compression, severity, and "strangeness" of his style pushed to their limits, is one of disillusioned withdrawal into a private world of symphonic meditation and nature mysticism. Its monuments are the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies and the tone poems *Luonnotar*, *The Oceanides*, and *Tapiola*. This phase concludes with the unknown (though much discussed) Eighth Symphony, which was never released and whose manuscript and various drafts, it seems, Sibelius eventually burned once and for all in the 1940s.⁷ It is with characterizing these three phases that we shall be concerned in this essay.

National Romanticism

For the most part, Sibelius's early symphonic work was a local affair, caught up in the Finnish intellectual and artistic movement often referred to as National Romanticism or Karelianism. A closely knit movement both of self-assertion against the Swedish-language elite culture established by Finland's past and of political resistance to the harsh Russian control of its present, National Romanticism sought to touch and

re-evoke what it regarded as the true springs of uncontaminated Finnishness. One source was the preindustrial culture of Karelia, the undeveloped region in the southeast, to which a reverent pilgrimage was de rigueur for virtually any Finnish artist of the period. (Since the 1939–40 "Winter War" with the Soviet Union it has been part of Russia, the region northwest of St. Petersburg.) Another source was the *Kalevala*, the Finnish—often Karelian—folk epic of gods, heroes (including Kullervo and Lemminkäinen), charms, and spells collected, stitched together, and published by Elias Lönnrot (1835, revised and enlarged 1849). Still another was Lönnrot's companion book of collected folk poetry, the *Kanteletar* (1840). Often accompanied by a bleak, unadorned realism, the brisk winds of 1890s Karelianism were felt not only in music but also, and in fact more primarily, in Finnish painting and literature. In painting Akseli Gallen-Kallela became the most celebrated figure, but Pekka Halonen, Juho Rissanen, and Eero Järnefelt (Sibelius's brother-in-law) also produced significant work; in literature we should note Juhani Aho's historical novel *Panu* (1897) and Eino Leino's collection of poems *Helkavirsiä* (1903).

The impact of all this on the young Sibelius is obvious enough: merely to list the programmatic titles of his major works from the 1890s would be sufficient. Still, when we confront the specifics of his early musical style—particularly as it had developed by the end of this period in the First and Second Symphonies, when he was emerging out of a merely local context to enter a more competitive, international marketplace—the issue is more complex. From the beginning this music embraced the risks of the new wave of European modernism, and it was driven by the search for a strongly individualized, willfully eccentric style. Sibelius's early style was an inseparable mixture of at least three different traditions: the Austro-Germanic, the "Nationalist" (especially the Scandinavian and Russian variants), and the primally Finnish. Each was a vital ingredient, but none should be given an absolute priority.

Two of these traditions were central elements of the institution of art music. The first, the hegemonic Austro-Germanic symphonic tradition, was grounded in a broader concept of musical metaphysics—music as *Geist*—and its adherents generally regarded rock-solid formal construction (as defined by Beethovenian models) and unswerving, motivic "musical logic"⁸ as moral imperatives. This tradition was inescapable, and Sibelius had encountered it full-strength in his studies in Berlin and Vienna from 1889 to 1891. The key point, though, is that he seems to have regarded it with uncommon veneration. (Displaying the intense concentration and developmental motivic interconnectedness of his music is the most common strategy of Sibelius analysis.) Nor was his regard limited to the conservative or academic wing of the tradition: his early music rings with echoes or adaptations of Lisztian, Wagnerian, and Brucknerian gestures. As recent scholarship has suggested, for example, certain surface features of Bruckner's earlier symphonies seem to have had a particularly

potent influence: multiple waves of static sound blocks (*Klangflächen*), reverberating ostinatos, craggy sequences, chasms of silence, cumulative climaxes, and so on.⁹

Related to this first tradition was one closer to home, the customary tradition to which a non-Germanic symphonist was expected to aspire: that of the eclectic "nationalists," who paid homage to the *Formenlehre* structures and their deformations but illuminated them with melodies, harmonies, and rhythms perceived as "national" or in touch with the "folk." For Sibelius this group included Grieg, Svendsen, and Sinding from Norway, yet surely the most prestigious models were those provided by the recent Russian schools—Tchaikovsky above all, but also the nearby Petersburg composers from Balakirev, Borodin, and Rimsky-Korsakov to Sibelius's contemporary, Glazunov.¹⁰

The third tradition was the Finnish folk idiom, in which Sibelius seems to have been determined to steep himself and whose premodern atmosphere, naïveté, and bluntness he wished to incorporate into his own compositions. As a budding Romantic Nationalist, for example—freshly home from Viennese training, and during the period of the composition of *Kullervo*—he traveled to Porvoo (Borgå) in December 1891 and was deeply impressed after hearing the woman who was the most celebrated *Kalevala* lament and rune singer of the time, Larin Paraske.¹¹ (Within the Karelian folk tradition the trochaic tetrameter poetic lines of the *Kalevala* runes—*runo* is Finnish for "poem"—were typically sung to "monotonous," conceptually endless repetitions of a characteristic two-phrase melody type. Its characteristics included an implied $\frac{5}{4}$ meter, persistently disposed as six eighth notes plus two quarter notes; an obsessive, narrowly circumscribed minor or "Dorian" mode; and a hypnotic, back-and-forth rocking of the two "antecedent-consequent" phrases, the first ending with the two quarter notes on the repeated second scale-step, the second on a repeated modal final or "tonic.")

A pilgrimage to Karelia itself would follow in summer 1892. Within a few years he was collecting and editing more rune melodies, some of which were published in 1895, the year of the *Four Legends*, in a book of *Kalevala* commentary. Perhaps most telling, on 25 November 1896 Sibelius delivered a lecture at Helsinki University, "Some Reflections on Folk Music and Its Influence on the Development of Art Music." Here he insisted that European art-music harmony was on the decline and could be regenerated only through an intermixing with the spiritual truth of the folk idiom. For a Finnish composer this meant a personal bonding with traditional *Kalevala* recitation formulas. He went on to insist that Finnish rune singing's core consisted of melody types bound together by a ruling minor pentachord, D–E–F–G–A (which could be expanded in various ways—for example, by transposition or by adding extra pitches for strongly emotional texts), and by delivery patterns of circular, varied-line, and stanza repetitions resembling the process of theme and variations. Fi-

nally, he argued the importance of finding non-normative, though instinctively and spiritually appropriate, harmonizations for pentachord-related melodies.¹²

At the turn of the century, perhaps spurred on by a Breitkopf contract in 1898 for the *King Christian II* Suite, followed by a performance of it in Leipzig the following year, Sibelius began to grope toward the exit of his first, Karelianist-local phase, to move toward a larger, more influential audience with his only slightly more abstract First and Second Symphonies.¹³ Although the First (written in 1898–99 and revised in 1900, a year after its Helsinki premiere) is not explicitly programmatic, its clear allusion to, then deformation of, the standard *per aspera ad astra* symphonic plot nonetheless invites speculation along this line. (The deformation is that the expected *astra* conclusion is crushed.) Moreover, both Sibelius and his Finnish backers initially used the work for unabashedly political purposes. The new symphony was the centerpiece of the Helsinki Philharmonic's European tour in the summer of 1900, which aimed, in part, to marshal sympathy for a Finland suffering under the Bobrikov governorship and its policy of Russification, made most explicit in the notorious February Manifesto of 1899 (this deprived Finland of its political autonomy and severely limited the freedom of speech and assembly). The month-long tour, which included concerts in Lübeck, Berlin, Amsterdam, and Paris, was a volatile mixture of the new aesthetic of "elemental" Northern sound and subtle politics, and it was a pivotal moment in Sibelius's career.

Toward the end of this first compositional phase some of Sibelius's music became known in the musical power centers of Europe (Germany, France, and England). According to the existing terms of reception, it was heard under the sign of the exotic. Ernest Newman's response to the First Symphony in 1905 reminds us of how daringly primitive it could sound to its first non-Finnish listeners: "I have never listened to any music that took me away so completely from our usual Western life, and transported me into a quite new civilization. Every page of it breathes of another manner of thought, another way of living, even another landscape and seascape than ours."¹⁴ Much of the First Symphony's exotic effect relies on the radicalism of its orchestration. Among the sources for this is Tchaikovsky, whose spirit and tone loom behind the work, for all of its rugged individuality. To a later generation of Northern modernists Tchaikovsky's nakedly direct, heartfelt intensity, his coloristic outbursts, and his unleashing of eruptive emotion—the very aspects that some Western European critics criticized as recklessness or barbaric transgressions of cultivated taste—represented a revolution of sonority that should not be undervalued. The young Sibelius embraced this liberated orchestral style and pushed it in even bolder directions.

From this perspective the "post-Tchaikovskian" First Symphony may be heard as a succession of contrasting, static timbre tableaux or sound

sheets. Here we encounter bold patches of color laid onto the sonic canvas with the broad strokes of the palette knife, not the fine brush. Transitional material is minimized to permit rich chunks of primal sound to butt up against one another. Consider, for example, the harsh brass closes of the first and last movements; or the “cold” reprise of the first movement’s second theme, whose phrases are passed back and forth among the clarinet, trumpet, horn, and flute; or the hammered timpani that ignite the scherzo’s main theme. Or consider the characteristic intercutting of the horns at the beginning of the scherzo’s trio (Ex. 15.1, mm. 4ff.). Here the *allegro* vigor, ostinato energy, modally inflected C tonality, and characteristic deep-string-based *Klang* of the scherzo are abruptly liquidated by a non sequitur, horn-bassoon-tuba slab of momentarily static, dissonant E-major wind color—an ephemeral E, as it turns out, that soon slips off toward G♯ minor. (Notice also the equal division of the octave by major thirds, C–E–G♯.) In the extremity of its contrasts and in its non-nuanced primitivism and directness the passage is quintessential early Sibelius.

The drama and abstract program of the First Symphony are driven by three principles: a novel treatment of symphonic tonality, a stringent “musical logic” carried out through the four movements, and the persistent recirculation of a limited collection of relatively static *Klänge*, or sound objects. Tonally, the symphony’s reigning idea seems to be that its musical narrative is obliged to unfold in a negative tonic, E minor—apparently an “imposed” or oppressive tonic subjugating a more “ideal” tonic, G major. Within the context of this interpretation, much of the work is played out in an unnatural or false tonality: the E minor is a persistent, unwelcome distortion of a desired, but unsustainable, G major. Thus the slow movement’s E♭ major relates primarily to the suppressed tonic, G major, as an escape into its flat submediant, a distant dream color, far from the symphony’s E-minor reality. The scherzo on C (with its trio touching fleetingly on the also potentially redemptive E major: see Ex. 15.1) belongs both to the E and G complexes. The finale reimposes the negative E minor.

The underlying E minor/G major duality is established at the symphony’s opening. In the introductory frame, *andante, ma non troppo*, Sibelius sets up the narrative to come with spare, lyrical lines that hover in the border zones between E minor and G major. Its final phrase, though, sounds on G minor, and the ensuing narrative proper, the *allegro energico*, begins with a shimmering upper-string dyad, g²–b², that momentarily suggests a release into the “true” tonic, G major (Ex. 15.2). What is sought at this point is a stable $\frac{5}{3}$ triad above G, but with the subsequent theme (whose core is the g²–f^{♯2}–e² descent) the expected $\frac{5}{3}$ decays instead into an implied $\frac{6}{3}$, whose “E-minor” connotations are then shored up with a bludgeoning root in measure 9, whereupon the process is immediately repeated. In a burst of frustration, measures 14–15, the G bass is reinstated, *f*, and by degrees, moving back through the $\frac{6}{3}$ above G (m. 15), it man-

EXAMPLE 15.1. Sibelius, Symphony No. 1, movt. 3 (opening of trio)

Allegro

Vln., Vla.

Timp. *f* Vc., Cb. *ff*

f

Lento (ma non troppo)

Hn., etc. *ffp*

poco a poco dim.

pp ma marcato

2

2

EXAMPLE 15.2. Sibelius, Symphony No. 1, movt. 1 (end of introduction and principal theme)

Andante, ma non troppo

Cl. *morendo*
ppp

Allegro energico $\text{♩} = 108$

Vn. *mf sempre* *poco forte*

8, 12 *Tutti* *f* *meno*

16 *f*

ages to secure the “ideal”—but still all too temporary— $\frac{5}{3}$ above G (mm. 19–20). The remainder of the principal theme, in which E minor ultimately predominates, may be easily read in terms of this struggle of internal self-assertion and external thwarting.¹⁵ This is also true of both the movement and the symphony as a whole.

Example 15.2 also demonstrates several characteristic gestures and sonorities of this early phase of the Sibelius style. In addition to its clipped syntax and static G pedals in contrasting registers, we should notice the obsession with the brooding melodic descent, 3–2–1. Particularly in the minor mode, this figure serves throughout Sibelius’s career as one of his most important “sonic ideograms,” or objects for contemplative immersion. (It is probably best regarded as the lower segment of the minor pentachord that Sibelius emphasized as typically Finnish in his 1896 Helsinki University lecture.) In Example 15.2 the 3–2–1 ideogram appears as the B^{\flat} –A–G conclusion of the introductory frame; at the opening of the principal theme, as the 8–7–6 decay of G major into E minor (where it becomes 3–2–1); in measures 9 and 13, only inverted, e^2 – $\text{f}^{\sharp 2}$ – g^2 , as if in an impulsive attempt to undo the 8–7–6 E-minor decay; and in measures 14–15, b^2 – a^2 – g^2 , anticipating the G-major triad established only in measures 19–20.

Its dissonant appearance in measures 14–15—manifestly recalling, though more violently, the middle section of the second movement of Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique* Symphony, one of the source-passages for early Sibelius¹⁶—is a recurring sonority of this symphony: a 3–2–1 (10–9–8) motion over a held bass, consisting of an accented upper neighbor resolving to a diminished seventh, which then moves to either an unstable $\frac{5}{3}$, as here (when further prolonged this last sonority produces the so-called Sibelian mediant pedal, although that term should probably be contested),¹⁷ or a more stable $\frac{5}{3}$. A variant of the same “*Pathétique*” dissonance may be found in Example 15.1, at the beginning of the scherzo’s trio. Here the more characteristic E pedal bass is underpinned at first by a low C, which evaporates with the dissonance’s resolution, and that resolution is to a $\frac{5}{3}$, not a $\frac{6}{3}$. Nonetheless, its allusions to the first movement are unmistakable.

The dissonance also recurs prominently in the preceding slow movement (Ex. 15.3, mm. 4, 6, 12, 14, 19, and 21). Here it is linked with the closely related “Russian 5– $\sharp 5$ –6 shift,” another meditative *Klang* object (involving a move from a $\frac{5}{3}$ to a $\frac{6}{3}$ sonority, and sometimes back again, through a chromatic passing tone) that sounds through so much of early Sibelius. In the passage shown in Example 15.3 Sibelius tracks through the 5– $\sharp 5$ –6– $\flat 5$ motion three times over the static E^{\flat} bass: measures 3–8, 11–16, and 18–23. (The same chromatic shift is a prominent feature of the finale’s second theme.) Whatever its pre-*kuchka* pedigree, there is little doubt that from Sibelius’s perspective its most immediate derivation

EXAMPLE 15.3. Sibelius, Symphony No. 1, movt. 2, mm. 1–23

Andante (ma non troppo lento) $\text{♩} = 54$
 Vn., Vc. (8va bassa) con sord.
 semplice

6

Cl.

10, 17

Str.

[2nd time: *pp*]

14, 21

Cl.

was Russian: it is one of the most commonly encountered “exotic” sounds of the Petersburg composers.¹⁸ A model for the slow-movement theme might have been the similar main theme of the slow movement of Glazunov’s Second Symphony (1889), one of the most celebrated “re-

EXAMPLE 15.4. Glazunov, Symphony No. 2, movt. 2, mm. 1–10

Andante $\text{♩} = 63$

Vla. *p*

Hn.

Cl. solo

3, 5

7

9

gional” symphonies of the time (Ex. 15.4). However tempting it might be to suggest that Sibelius’s darker, more brooding theme was based on Glazunov’s, it is probably safer to suppose that both exemplify a Petersburg theme type that Sibelius was adapting and Finnicizing.

EXAMPLE 15.5. Sibelius, Symphony No. 2, movt. 2, 5 mm. after rehearsal letter C

ff marcato

più f Timp. ff

ff > mp < cresc. molto fff f

p f cresc.

(continued)

Hn.

ff fff dim. ppp

The concept of Northern sound object meditation also pervades the Second Symphony. While the Second, like the First, invited its audiences to perceive it primarily as a nationalistic symphony (its driving toward the circular folk reiterations of the finale's second theme is especially characteristic of the genre), Sibelius was now also beginning to reach out to a wider European audience. Correspondingly, allusions to the Germanic canon become more evident. In the famous eruptions of the slow movement, for instance (Ex. 15.5 shows the essential voices), the references to the *Tristan* chord, and indeed, to the sequential opening of *Tristan* itself are unmistakable. Among other things, this passage is a modern-primitivist reworking (or purposeful "misprision")¹⁹ of Wagner that transmutes the original sign—that of erotic desire—into an anguished attempt to writhe free from the prison house of D minor, only to have the gates swing shut again in the powerful descent of measure 6–11. (Mm. 12–18 are best interpreted not as a positive shift away from D minor, but as the reactive, impotent aftermath of defeat: it leads to the movement's second part, the "Christus" passage in F \sharp major.)²⁰ We may also recognize here reworked echoes of Bruckner and Strauss. The gaping silences of measures 8–10 suggest features of the former, while the "frustrated" two-chord conclusion in the horns seems adapted from the collapse at the end of the developmental space of *Tod und Verklärung* (after rehearsal letter W, mm. 364–66). Yet the Finnish core remains: the passage outlines three grim minor-pentachord descents (5–4–3–2–1 on E, A, and D minor) and the meditative 3–2–1 ideogram resounds in the bass in measures 10–11.

Modern Classicism

From about 1904 to 1912—beginning with revision of the Violin Concerto (1905), the incidental music to *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1905), and the Kalevalaic tone poem *Pohjola's Daughter* (1906, surely a response to Richard Strauss)—Sibelius turned his attention to carving out a space of distinction in larger, non-Scandinavian modernist markets. He now sought to compete for attention with such composers as Strauss, Mahler, Busoni, Pfitzner, Schillings, and Reger on their home territory. To this end he

began to rethink, deepen, and expand his aesthetic beyond his earlier "modern nationalism" in order to address some of the ongoing modernist controversies in the pan-European—and particularly Germanic—mainstream. The problems that he faced in engaging the rapidly shifting cultural politics in Germany (and eventually in England) are not easily summarizable, although they are central to any thoughtful consideration of Sibelius as a twentieth-century composer.

The crux of the issue is that his entrée into the larger arena was the work of his earlier phase. While these compositions opened the larger European door for him, they simultaneously stamped his reception pattern so irrevocably that his subsequent works could never escape being collapsed into the facile, and ultimately (from the Germanic perspective) peripheral, category of "mere" nationalism. It was in these years that Sibelius's name began to appear in the German music journals. In 1904, for example, the Helsinki critic Karl Flodin skillfully played the nationalist gambit in Germany on Sibelius's behalf—the standard opening, though a simplistic one, in this cultural-political situation—reporting in a special Scandinavian issue of the influential Berlin journal *Die Musik* that Sibelius's music was the culmination of the "awakening of the national tone in Finland," that "the ancient Finnish sacred song lingers on him in the form of the antique modes," and that Sibelius, though clearly influenced by Tchaikovsky, was no mere nationalist of the old school—rather, this was music of keen "originality," "modern through and through," and so on.²¹

In January 1905 a Sibelius-conducted performance of the Second Symphony on one of Busoni's new-music concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic initiated a vigorous German debate about the composer. At first it was mostly positive, and we should note that Sibelius was greeted both as a nationalist and an emphatic modernist.²² At this point all was promise in his career. This was confirmed a month later, when in February 1905 he turned away from his Helsinki publishers, Fazer and Westerlund, to sign a contract with Lienau (Schlesinger) in Berlin. It was confirmed further with his first trip to England in November and December 1905. This, too, was a decisive moment, signaling the onset of his "English connection."

For his part, Sibelius now seems to have decided to make his voice heard in the ongoing Germanic battles concerning the direction of modern instrumental music. At the heart of this controversy lay the perception that the leaders of *die neudeutsche Richtung* (especially Strauss, but also Mahler and others) had shifted their attention away from architectonic principle in favor of a hypertechnically advanced, decorative, or illustrative instrumental color. (Much of the debate centered on such seemingly episodic works as *Also sprach Zarathustra* and *Ein Heldenleben* and Mahler's Second and Third Symphonies.) For ardent partisans of *der moderne Geist*, such as Arthur Seidl, Hans Merian, and Max Graf, modernism was a liberation from shackles, an "emancipation of color" wedded to "free form," a post-Wagnerian, post-Lisztian leap into technique,

tone color, and monumentality, all carried out with the full modern orchestra for the sake of *Fortschritt*, or progress.²³ Others welcomed the liberation of color and technique but were unsettled by its potentially anarchic, centrifugal spinning away from the formal principle—all too easily taken, perhaps, as a metaphor for the feared dissolution of the European liberal-humanist consensus itself. Consequently, this century's first decade heard a number of prominent calls for the introduction of a principle of restraint. If successful, the resulting new classicism would embrace modernism's color, boldness, and uncompromising character, but would also shore up the eroding genre of the symphony—widely viewed as the essentially German musical way of thinking—by renouncing its current tendency toward episodic looseness and trying to recover, on new terms, its earlier compression of thought and rigorous musical logic.²⁴ Thus emerged within the institution of art music the possibility of *Reaktion als Fortschritt* (as Rudolf Louis described it in 1909): something perceived as a needed course-correction or reconsolidation, but something that was still undeniably "progressive."

By and large, this seems to have been Sibelius's view in his 1904–12, "modern classical" period, represented above all by the Third and Fourth Symphonies (1907 and 1911). Perfectly suited by temperament to the task, he now set out to reconstitute the strictness and discipline of the modern "symphony," to repudiate the reigning principle of monumentality, and to counter what he believed to be the surface sensationalism of the leading Germanic modernists with the bracing purity of cold Northern water. By no means was he jettisoning his earlier "modern nationalist" style; rather, he was trying to transform, deepen, and ultimately overwhelm it with a radical austerity that simultaneously addressed more internationally urgent, pan-European issues of symphonic construction. To be sure, this was a risky strategy for an outsider in a volatile, prestige marketplace most responsive to heightened scandal and "the shock of the new": after all, these were the *Salome* and *Elektra* years. Nonetheless, these were the terms on which he now decided to compete.

This new phase saw a determined weeding-out of sounds and procedures that he considered inessential or indulgent. The result was a leaner, sparer music. To avoid falling prey to the charges of naïveté or academism, the new style correspondingly demanded the cultivation of compensating techniques to heighten the impact, implications, and sheer strangeness of the limited number of *Klang* objects that survived this process of critique. On the one hand, we may perceive his growing obsession with the "severity and style [of the symphony] and the profound logic that created an inner connection between all the motifs," as he remarked to an apparently unimpressed Mahler in October 1907.²⁵ On the other hand, Sibelius now embarked in earnest on the project that we might interpret as an attempt to draw out the hidden secrets of sound itself—to give the impression of a phenomenological deep-sinking into its material-

ity and "being." To be sure, his music of this period is often stamped with puzzling, acerbic sonorities and brooding dissonances. (The Fourth Symphony is a case in point.) But it also strives to recover both the diatonic melodic fragment and the pure triad as meaningful modern utterances, to "defamiliarize" them so that their potential to speak might be disclosed anew. Given the European aesthetic environment in which it was proposed, this defamiliarization of the diatonic and the consonant was a daunting task, one easy for audiences to misconstrue, both then and now. Indeed, it is on this widely misunderstood feature that most of the subsequent Sibelius controversy of this century has pivoted.

A watershed in his career, the Third Symphony sets out the challenge in no uncertain terms: within an anti-monumental work to restore the possibility of experiencing the reality not merely of the major triad but of C major, its tonic, as a progressively deepening, revelatory event. Here one needs to grasp the trajectory of the whole symphony: the initial near-regularity of the first movement's C-major sonata arrangement moves forward through two complementary stages of gestational nurturing—the broad circular rotations of the second movement and the first, "scherzo" portion of the third movement (G \sharp minor and a not fully complete or stable C major)—in order to bring forth the work's *telos*, an altogether new, gravitationally "heavier" C major, in the third movement's even more obsessively circular finale-conclusion. This is the procedure that would eventually become a central feature of Sibelius's final stylistic period: a progressive, teleological genesis (generation of climactic goal-statement) involving the process of formal rotations through gestational sound matrices (the process, i.e., of successive cyclings through a referential thematic pattern within which the *telos* idea is gradually nurtured and shaped); these sound matrices then decay away or are discarded once they have given birth to the *telos*.²⁶

That the procedure has implications for a gendered reading of "alternative" musical process and structure is obvious. While any adequate consideration of these implications would lead us afield,²⁷ we should at least look more closely at its first appearance in the symphonies. In brief, following a preparatory, rotational second movement, whose deceptively simple surface conceals its generation of the crucial interval of the major third, from which the finale theme proper will grow,²⁸ the third movement's initial, "scherzo-character" section continues the process more forthrightly—and closer to C major—through a series of three broad rotations. The first (or expository rotation)²⁹ subdivides into two areas: 1a in C major, leading to a fleeting, "off-tonic," and *rinforzando* triple enunciation of the descending major third (Ex. 15.6, mm. 4–5, or 2 mm. before rehearsal no. 2; notice also the characteristic 3–2–1 ideogram in the bass around rehearsal no. 2); and 1b, on A minor (beginning at rehearsal no. 2) and leading to even more emphatic descending thirds, C–A \flat , eight measures after rehearsal number 3.

EXAMPLE 15.6. Sibelius, Symphony No. 3, movt. 3, 5 mm. before rehearsal no. 2

[*allarg.*] *ravvivando all'*

The complementary rotation 2a (beginning around rehearsal no. 4) returns to the material of 1a and readjusts the thirds at the end to sound the pitch classes E–C (after rehearsal no. 5). These thirds, that is, are being shaped toward the key of the finale theme. In rotation 2b (5 mm. after rehearsal no. 5), however, the tonal color shifts to F minor. Within five measures the prior third descents begin to take on the recognizable, though still incomplete, shape of the finale theme—its quickening within the womb or its drowsy awakening from slumber. But the stirrings subside (rehearsal no. 6) and rotation 2b continues, taking on extraordinary energy and driving to a shattering A \flat downbeat (rehearsal no. 8), which disperses the scattered motivic particles in all directions. Modulatory and "developmental," culminatory rotation 3 (beginning gradually between rehearsal nos. 8 and 9) seeks to reconfigure these particles and to trigger the emergence of the fully formed *telos* in the proper key. The finale theme is anticipated one last time, in the violas, *divisi*—still wrapped in the motives and timbres of surrounding matrix (6 mm. after rehearsal no. 12). It finally appears on its own, as the *telos* proper, four measures after

rehearsal number 13, the beginning of the movement's finale portion (Ex. 15.7).

This obsessively circular *telos* music—confined to varied, accumulative rotations of a single theme and a single key—may be understood from differing perspectives. We may regard it as an exponentially distilled

EXAMPLE 15.7. Sibelius, Symphony No. 3, movt. 3, "finale theme," 4 mm. after rehearsal no. 13

a tempo, con energia

illustration of that type of "nationalist" symphony finale that featured circular "folk" reiterations as the *telos* of the whole work. Or we could hear it as occupying the substantially altered recapitulatory space of a bold sonata deformation encompassing both the scherzo and the finale portions of the third movement, conceived as a single, generative gesture. Or—perhaps most relevantly from our immediate perspective here—we may regard it as the production of a "supersaturated" C major whose sheer specific gravity, ever accruing, permits no escape (for instance, via its frequent "Lydian" fourth) to subordinate themes or keys. Even its two

feints toward E minor, six measures after rehearsal number 15 and one measure before rehearsal number 18, are immediately undermined by a shift to a $\frac{6}{8}$ position above the E bass (the so-called C⁶ chord), and in each case the $\frac{5}{3}$ above a C bass is vigorously restored within a few bars. This progressive accumulation of concentration and weight on a single sonority is unique in the symphonic repertory. It drives toward a maximal-density, heavily weighted close, a sonorous black hole that excludes all other possibilities. Appropriately, it is capped at the end with an elemental, 5–3–1 C-major triadic affirmation, *ff*, in the brass.

Both the Third and the even more extreme Fourth Symphony—extreme especially in its obsession with dark sonority, aphoristic utterance, and bitter, spare astringency—can be understood as Sibelius's two principal attempts to find an individual symphonic voice in the larger European, and especially German, marketplace of art music. This voice was intended to be simultaneously "modern" and "classical." It was offered as a proposed advance in terms of orchestral sound, intellectual concentration, and compositional seriousness. Yet, as a protest against what he regarded as the "circus tricks" or musical indulgences of his principal competitors, it was also to be part of what he hoped would be a new wave of modern classicism.

But in marketplace terms the strategy was ineffective. Despite the existence of a few scattered champions, particularly in England, for the most part Sibelius's second-phase music proved to be only puzzling, to the degree that it was noticed at all. Since the composer had been largely ghettoized as a mere nationalist—not "one of us"—and worse, since he was frequently judged to have run out of the expected "grand-gesture," coloristically sensational, or inflated rhetoric that the Germanic and French marketplaces, in particular, expected from such "exotic" nationalists, his newer, more difficult works failed to achieve a widespread resonance. And as became increasingly clear, in the 1909–12 period the aesthetic debates over the direction of modernism were being eclipsed by the musical concerns of a radical new generation—that of Schoenberg and Stravinsky.

Late Style: Nature Mysticism and Content-Based Forms

In the years 1909–12 (those not only of his own Fourth Symphony but also of Mahler's death, the premiere of *Der Rosenkavalier*, and, above all, the growing public awareness of the dissonant New Music in France and Germany), Sibelius came painfully to terms with his own lukewarm reception in the modern Germanic and French institutions of art music, now veering off in directions with which he could not sympathize. These were years of personal artistic crisis and intense self-examination. Although

convinced that he had forged an aesthetically responsible, high-density modern classicism, he was obliged to concede that the art-music world had changed. However his music might be welcomed in certain sectors of England and the United States (often touted, ominously, as a "healthy" antidote to the decadence of a younger generation's New Music), it had become clear that in Germany, Austria, and France, the markets he had originally sought to address, his own music now had little chance of being received sympathetically.

In his final, third phase, beginning around 1912, Sibelius chose to pursue his own path even more doggedly, but simultaneously to accept his irrelevance to "their" marketplace—and thus from "their" constructions of history. This psychological withdrawal was reinforced by the isolating conditions of World War I, which barred him from foreign travel, interfered with his music's distribution and performance in greater Europe, and ground significant publication to a near halt; it was further complicated by Finland's independence from the newly Bolshevik Russia in December 1917 and the subsequent Finnish civil war. In this period Sibelius embraced the inescapability of what he called his *Alleingefühl* (sense of solitude). Now secluded, with his family, for even longer stretches at Ainola, his rustic forest retreat in Järvenpää, he undertook an isolated, meditative project that has no parallel among his contemporary composers. "At Ainola," Sibelius would frequently remark, "this stillness speaks."³⁰ It is the still presence of nature—clean, cold Finnish lakes and towering, resinous pines, forest flowers, winds, stars, sun, snow, migrating swans, cranes, and wild geese—whose being he would seek to awaken in a contemplative music of mysticism and intuition. On 20 May 1918, while again revising the Fifth Symphony (an early version of which, with four separate movements, had received its first performance in December 1915, the centerpiece of the Helsinki celebration of his fiftieth birthday), he would write: "From everything I notice how my inner being has changed since the period of the Fourth Symphony. And these symphonies of mine are more confessions of faith than are my other works."³¹

Recent research into Sibelius diaries and sketches from the final period has established that its four major pieces after 1914 are conceptually interrelated: the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies and *Tapiola*. (Doubtless the destroyed Eighth Symphony would also have belonged in this group.) Each is an individual facet of an even larger project, that of uncovering nature's hidden voice by means of a correspondingly elemental musical process and *Klang*. Since the title of the 1926 tone poem seems (coincidentally?) to summarize the essence of this grand project, we may consider these four works as forming a closely knit "*Tapiola* complex" ("The Forest," or, more precisely, "The Place Where the God Tapio Dwells"). Appropriately enough, the complex was foreshadowed by the immediately preceding tone poems from 1913 and 1914, the creation myth *Luonnotar* ([Feminine] nature spirit) and *The Oceanides*.

So much is evident from the period's most important compositional process document, a forty-page thematic sketchbook (now preserved in the State Archives in Helsinki), whose first thirty-seven pages date from the beginning of Sibelius's wartime isolation, August 1914 through June 1915.³² Although the sketchbook contains many entries for minor works and for pieces that he never brought to completion, this was the period dominated by melodies and thematic tables that he was encouraging to germinate into the Fifth Symphony. By around December 1914 the ideas for this work had multiplied to the point that he began also to nurture plans for an orchestral "*Fantasia I.*" By January 1915 this seems to have changed into a projected Sixth Symphony, and a few of the themes originally planned for the Fifth migrated toward the Sixth, and vice versa. Moreover, in the 1920s Sibelius would rework two of the themes associated in late 1914 with the Fifth Symphony, but eventually set aside, into significant moments of the Seventh Symphony and *Tapiola*: an early version—in $\frac{7}{4}$ and B major!—of the Seventh's recurring "trombone theme" (first heard seven mm. after rehearsal no. C);³³ and the main idea for the staccato music at G of *Tapiola*, the beginning of the second large rotation (which may also be heard as the onset of the developmental space).³⁴

From all this it is clear that the sketchbook illuminates a ten- or eleven-month period that was unusually rich in the creation of raw materials. Much of Sibelius's final period would be spent sorting out these ideas, determining their optimal contexts, reshaping them, and surrounding them with related music. Thus, in a famous diary remark from 10 April 1915 regarding his struggle with the Fifth Symphony: "Arrangement of the themes. . . It's as if God the Father had thrown down the tiles of a mosaic from heaven's floor and asked me to determine what kind of picture it was. Maybe [this is] a good definition of 'composing.' Maybe not. How would I know?"³⁵ It is important to realize that some of the 1914–15 sketchbook jottings were more than mere themes. Several were eventually situated in mid- and late-movement contexts as spotlighted "nature-mystical" moments, synthesis passages, or the bearers of musical arrival points of one sort or another. These became the core ideas into which the works or movements in which they were incorporated may be heard as growing. Not only does the 1914–15 sketchbook demonstrate the interrelationships among the *Tapiola*-complex works; it is also an essential component of any informed study of their musical processes.

The earliest sketchbook idea ultimately retained in the Fifth Symphony, for instance, is the "splitting apart" of the finale's second theme (the wedgelike melodic line shown in Ex. 15.8, from the movement's culminating [third] rotation, rehearsal letter P). It was this distortion of the second theme, not the theme proper (first sounded one m. after rehearsal letter D), that was the generating seed of the Fifth. In the completed symphony this passage takes the decisive step into the work's final gateway; filled with pain and trembling, it initiates the process leading to

the *telos*, the concluding set of emphatic cadences.³⁶ In April 1915, while still planning the work, Sibelius linked this expanding version of the theme with his sighting at Ainola of “16 [migrating] swans. One of my greatest experiences! Lord God, that beauty! They circled over me for a long time. Disappeared into the solar haze like a gleaming, silver ribbon. . . . Nature mysticism and life’s *Angst*!”³⁷ The swan reference was significant. Henceforth in Sibelius’s private circles it seems to have been linked with the differing versions of the finale’s second theme. On 15 December 1916, for example, his friend Axel Carpelan referred to the theme in correspondence with the composer as “that swan hymn beyond compare.”³⁸

EXAMPLE 15.8. Sibelius, Symphony No. 5, finale, rehearsal letter P

Occasionally the 1914–15 sketchbook directs our attention to things we might otherwise overlook. The only extended portion found in it of the Fifth’s second movement (*andante mosso, quasi allegretto*), for instance, is located in the second-movement section of a thematic table for the Sixth Symphony. In the final version of the Fifth the corresponding passage is found beginning fourteen measures after rehearsal letter E (Ex. 15.9). Seemingly retransitional, this is actually the movement’s first arrival point: its intervals are replicated within the subsequent finale’s opening theme. Similarly, the Swan Hymn emerges briefly in the bass shortly thereafter (five mm. after rehearsal letter F) as the movement’s second goal. The sketches help us to notice that generating these two themes for the finale—or calling them forth—is the point of the second movement’s many rotations; immediately after their generation the rotational processes, no longer needed, begin to decay. A later, separate sketch helps to confirm this reading (Ex. 15.10): here we may observe that part

EXAMPLE 15.9. Sibelius, Symphony No. 5, movt. 2, 14 mm. after rehearsal letter E

EXAMPLE 15.10. Sibelius, Sketch for Symphony No. 5, movt. 2

EXAMPLE 15.11. Sibelius, Symphony No. 6, finale, rehearsal letter D

Vla., Vn. (8va)
mf

Ww.
poco f

Hn. Vn.
mf mp marc.

Vla., Vc., Bsn. Str. (Timp. omitted)
mf cresc. f

f dim. mf

of the second movement's main theme was planned as a counterpoint to the (normally unstated) Swan Hymn.³⁹

In addition, the 1914–15 sketchbook contains two versions of a theme, initially suggested for the Fifth Symphony, that would become the generating idea of the Sixth. In the completed Sixth it emerges in the middle of the finale (Ex. 15.11, from rehearsal letter D, slightly simplified), although once given the sketchbook clue, one may easily see how the rest of that symphony both sprang from it and consequently, in performance, grows inevitably toward it as a *telos*. Particularly telling are the tonic-subtonic chordal oscillation (d–C, suggesting parallel triads), the melodic parallel thirds (for instance, compare Ex. 15.11, m. 3, with the opening of the first movement), the prominent “Finnish” A–D pentachord and its various scalar segments and transpositions (again recalling the composer’s 1896 Helsinki University lecture), the 3–2–1 ideogram ($c^3-b^2-a^2$), and so on.⁴⁰

The final compositional period witnesses Sibelius’s most radical experiments with symphonic architecture. As several related diary entries from 1912 indicate, his aim had become to rethink the concept of form by allowing certain nature-mystical core ideas to ramify “naturally” or meditatively, as though they had a separate volition not to be thwarted by the habits of traditional practice. Thus on 8 May 1912: “I intend to let the musical thoughts and their development determine their own form in my soul.”⁴¹ This resulted in what I have called Sibelius’s “content-based forms,” a concept relatable to A. B. Marx’s mid-nineteenth-century description of the fantasia. (Indeed, while composing each of the last three symphonies, Sibelius wondered whether the title “fantasia” might not be more apt. The Seventh, for example, was first performed in 1924 under the title *Fantasia sinfonica*.)

The most characteristic of these content-based forms took their cue from the procedure encountered at the end of the Third Symphony: some sort of rotational form (a set of freely varied recyclings through a musical pattern, itself dominated by a closely knit “musical logic”) simultaneously serving as a gestational matrix for the nurturing, and ultimately the full production, of a separate, decisive idea embedded and growing within it. A further complication—a major one for anyone seeking simple answers—is that many of these “new” structures were also in dialogue with the sonata-deformational practices so characteristic of the second wave of modernists. Thus one is normally obliged to confront the structures of these late works on at least two levels: primarily on that of rotational form merged with the process of teleological genesis; and secondarily in terms of allusions to the standard types of sonata deformation. This is the case, for example, with the first and last movements of the Fifth Symphony, with the first movement of the Sixth,⁴² and with the tone poems *Luonno-*

tar (climactic *telos* in the third rotation, at rehearsal letter I, anticipated twice earlier), *The Oceanides*, and *Tapiola* (*telos* beginning thirteen mm. after rehearsal letter Q, anticipated several times earlier), and it is one reason why it is so difficult to deal with those pieces nonreductively.

Occasionally Sibelius's rotational/teleological structures seem to unfold without significant reference to sonata-deformational procedures. The second movement of the Fifth Symphony (striving to generate the finale themes as suggested above) is one of the clearest examples; the broad span of the entire Seventh Symphony—perhaps the most remarkable (and elusive) instance of a multimovement form in a single movement ever composed—is surely the most complex. Also noteworthy is the unorthodox finale of the Sixth, which may be heard as nine rotations apparently succeeding one another to articulate what seems to be a metaphor of birth/blossoming/full-flower/decay/death. Particularly telling in this reading of the movement—apart from Sibelius's provocative use of mode and key, which would require a much more expanded study—are the differing appearances of the *telos* (Ex. 15.11) in rotations 3, 4, and 5. Rotation 3, for example (from five mm. before rehearsal letter C to two mm. after rehearsal letter E) presents us with a pre-*telos* figure (five mm. after rehearsal letter C), the *telos* itself in seemingly full flower (one m. after rehearsal letter D: see Ex. 15.11), and an anacrusis figure or spur (four mm. before rehearsal letter E; Ex. 15.11, mm. 6–10) into the next rotation. In rotation 4 (from one m. after rehearsal letter E to seven mm. after rehearsal letter G) all this is recycled more intensely, in even fuller flower. In rotation 5, however (from seven mm. after rehearsal letter G to two mm. after rehearsal letter J), the process becomes “overripe” and decay begins to set in: the pre-*telos* music (rehearsal letter I) begins to decenter, triggering a *fff* crisis *telos* (rehearsal letter J)—one broken off after only two bars—whereupon everything thereafter, in subsequent rotations, becomes autumnal or valedictory. While motivically related to the movement, the final rotation 9 (beginning five mm. after rehearsal letter O, *doppio più lento*) seems more a separate *envoi* to the cyclical process of birth, flourishing, and decay that the movement, and indeed the whole symphony, has embodied.⁴³

In his major works of the final period—conceived in isolation, split off from the tumult of the marketplace that he had once sought to engage, and subjected to increasingly severe self-criticism—Sibelius brought the central tropes of the “modern” symphony to an unforeseen concentration and musical cohesion. To be sure, brilliant new reconceptions of the symphonic genres, particularly heavily ironized ones facing even more decisive cultural erosions, would continue to emerge throughout the twentieth century. But perhaps the greatest irony is that it was with Sibelius—the perpetual outsider—that the grand heritage of the modern symphony took its most idiosyncratic and uncompromisingly inward turn.

Notes

1. For this sense of the complex and variously defined term *modern* see Carl Dahlhaus, “Modernism As a Period in Music History,” in *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989), 332–39. See also Dahlhaus's earlier remarks, “Musikalische Moderne und Neue Musik,” *Melos/Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 2 (1976): 90. My own view of this modernist wave encompasses composers born from about 1854 to 1866.

2. This topic of the enormous social and ideological changes that began to gather speed in Europe in the later nineteenth century has been treated by innumerable historians. For a provocative overview that stresses the model of institutional self-protection and increasing social challenge—one that centers on the dialectic of bourgeois triumphalism and self-celebration on the one hand and pervasive cultural pessimism on the other—see Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875–1914* (New York, 1989). Hobsbawm persuasively argues that “more generally, the ‘high’ arts were ill at ease in society. Somehow, in the field of culture as elsewhere, the results of bourgeois society and historical progress, long conceived as a co-ordinated forward march of the human mind, were different from what had been expected” (226).

3. Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 265–76. See also pp. 360–68, and cf. n. 1 above.

4. Two clarifications. First, I am concerned at this point with composers who identified themselves emphatically with the institution of the liberal-bourgeois public concert and with genres explicitly labeled and received by the audiences as symphonies or, in the case of Strauss, extended symphonic poems (which could function as modern substitutes for symphonies). Thus Puccini and Debussy, for example—both central modern composers—do not appear on this list (although at least one of the latter's works, *La Mer*, could in some senses be considered a symphony, just as the earlier orchestral *Nocturnes* could be heard as engaging in a dialogue with the tradition of the standard four-movement symphony, here shorn of its first movement). Other candidates for the list, though, would certainly include such figures as Dukas (1865) and Busoni (1866).

Second, in this model the first wave comprises symphonic composers who, at differing ages, launched most of their symphonic output in the recently stabilized international musical marketplaces of the later 1860s or 1870s. This wave brings together composers born between about 1825 and 1850, and it includes Bruckner, Brahms, Bruch, Saint-Saëns, Franck, Dvořák, Borodin, and Tchaikovsky. A third generational wave, consisting, roughly, of composers born in the 1870–85 period, reacted to the de facto institution of art music (n. 6 below) and the public that supported it in various ways, thus precipitating a sharp division within the institution and forcing a socioaesthetic crisis. Here we encounter such diverse figures as Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Ravel, Rachmaninoff, and Scriabin. The model proposed above argues that in a period of rapid social change each generational wave established a different set of relationships with the evolving aesthetic, cultural, and economic structures that supported the circulation of art music.

5. The first chapter of Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge, 1993), elaborates several of the concepts alluded to in the present essay.

6. By “institution of art music” I mean the complex social and economic network that makes that concept of “art music” possible and sets the terms of its

apprehension and circulation. The term is adapted from such writings as Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974), trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis, 1984); Peter Bürger, "The Institution of 'Art' As a Category in the Sociology of Literature," trans. Michael Shaw, *Cultural Critique* 2 (1985–86): 5–33, reprinted in Peter and Christa Bürger, *The Institutions of Art*, trans. Loren Kruger (Lincoln, NE, 1992), 3–30; Christa Bürger, *Der Ursprung der bürgerlichen Institution Kunst im höfischen Weimar: Literatursoziologische Untersuchungen zum klassischen Goethe* (Frankfurt, 1977); and Peter Uwe Hohendahl, "Introduction: The Institution of Literature," in *Building a National Literature: The Case of Germany, 1830–1870*, trans. Renate Baron Franciscono (Ithaca, NY, 1989), 1–43.

7. Erik Tawaststjerna, "Sibelius's Eighth Symphony: An Insoluble Mystery," *Finnish Music Quarterly* (1985): 61–70, 92–101.

8. On "musical logic" as a source of value and validation within that tradition see, e.g., Carl Dahlhaus, "Musical Logic and Speech Character," in *The Idea of Absolute Music*, trans. Roger Lustig (Chicago, 1989), 103–16; and Dahlhaus, the section on "Musikalische Logik" in the essay "Musikkritik als Sprachkritik," in *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik* (Laaber, 1988), 283–84.

9. Bruckner's Third Symphony made "an enormous impression" on the young Sibelius, as he reported to his fiancée, Aino Järnefelt, from Vienna on 21 December 1890. See, e.g., Erik Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Robert Layton (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976 and 1986), 1:77–78, 109–11. For the remark on *Klangflächen* I am indebted to Peter Revers, "Jean Sibelius and the Viennese Musical Tradition," paper delivered at the First International Jean Sibelius Conference, 25 August 1990. A much larger study of the issue is that of Philip Coad, "Bruckner and Sibelius," (Ph.d. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1985; available in book format, Cambridge University Library, Photographic Dept., 1990).

10. In "Perspectives on the Early Symphonies: The Russian Connection Redux," *Proceedings from the First International Sibelius Conference: Helsinki, August 1990*, ed. Eero Tarasti (Helsinki, 1995), 21–30, Malcolm Brown casts a skeptical eye on the often-adduced Russian influences on the young Sibelius and pointed out that several of the most prominent Russian critics of Sibelius—including Taneyev and Rimsky-Korsakov—judged his style as very foreign and non-Russian. Brown's argument effectively challenges the many casual Russian "influences"—thematic resemblances and the like—that have been found in Sibelius. (For some of the most superficial, see Cecil Gray and Gerald Abraham's comparison of Sibelius and Borodin, in, e.g., "The Symphonies," *The Music of Sibelius*, ed. Abraham [New York, 1947], 15–19).

While I agree with many of Brown's general remarks, it still seems undeniable that the young Sibelius adapted certain characteristically Russian sounds and musical procedures, although he adapted them in such personalized ways as also to make them his own. (Perhaps, needless to say, the debate here concerns the presence of seemingly "Russian" sounds as foregrounded, local events on the acoustic surface of the music; clearly, Sibelius's middleground and background procedures—his larger structural concerns—seem more idiosyncratic, less informed by Russian precedent.) The internal evidence for these dabs of Russian color (both Tchaikovskian and Petersburgian) is overwhelming, and I shall mention some of it in the discussion below. In addition, it is likely that the negative Russian criticism around 1900 was fraught with the politics of the period. We should keep in mind, for example, that some of these critics were associated with the highly pol-

ished, smooth, and elegant perspective of the Petersburg school at the turn of the century. Centering on Rimsky-Korsakov and his protégé Glazunov, the so-called *Belyayevtsi* were all too aware of their own "unrefined" *kuchka* past, which (though revered as a crucial spiritual source) they hoped had been transcended by the opalescent wizardry and technical progressivism of the present. Another group of critics spoke on behalf the glittering Moscow virtuosi. It is hardly surprising that Sibelius's broad-brushed musical "primitivism"—emerging, moreover, from a presumably "backward" outpost of the Russian empire—would have been something tempting to disavow. (See also the mixed reviews cited in Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 1:293).

11. Tawaststjerna's brief account of this in *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 1:97–98, was expanded in the second Finnish edition of the book, which remains untranslated: *Jean Sibelius*, 2d ed. (Helsinki, 1989), 213–18, and in two new appendices to that book, "Larin Paraske ja runonlaulu" (Larin Paraske and rune song), 287–99, and "Nuori Sibelius: Duuri-molli tonaalisuudesta modaalisten ja duuri-molli tonaalisten aineiden synteisiin" (Young Sibelius: From major-minor tonality to a synthesis of modal and major-minor tonal elements"), 301–15. This last article, however, has appeared in a German translation, "Der junge Sibelius: Von Dur-Moll-Tonalität zu einer Synthese von modalen und Dur-Moll tonalen Elementen," in *Das musikalische Kunstwerk: Geschichte, Ästhetik, Theorie: Festschrift Carl Dahlhaus zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Danuser, L. de la Motte-Haber, S. Leopold, and N. Miller (Laaber, 1988), 639–50.

12. The main source regarding Sibelius's lecture, his thoughts on the pentachord and its harmonizations, and his publication of the folk songs has not been translated into English: Jouko Tolonen, "Jean Sibeliusen koelunto ja mollipentakordin soinnutus" (Jean Sibelius's examination-lecture and the harmonization of the minor pentachord), in *Juhlakirja Erik Tawaststjernalle 10 X 1976*, ed. Erkki Salmenhaara (Helsinki, 1976), 79–92. Tolonen provides excerpts from the lecture itself in the original Swedish. For a brief account of other aspects of this lecture, see Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 1:190–91.

13. Some of what follows is adapted from notes written by the author for the recording of the First Symphony by Leonard Bernstein and the Vienna Philharmonic (1992): Deutsche Grammophon Compact Disc 435 351-2.

14. From the *Manchester Guardian*, 4 December 1905, quoted in Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 2:41–42.

15. Moreover, once the G-major/E-minor struggle is grasped, the semiotic sense of the generally parallel conclusions of the first movement (notice especially the strained E–F[♯]–G ascent in the cello and bassoon in the last seven measures) and the finale could scarcely be clearer.

16. This has been noted by, among others, Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 1:209–11. I should add that the ancestry of the the "Pathétique dissonance" may be traced back further, at least to Wagner's *Tannhäuser*. It occurs in the opening lines of act 1, "Naht euch dem Strande!," etc., one of the most celebrated—and imitated—sonorities of the second half of the century. For an argument on behalf of another allusion to it, see David Brodbeck, "Brahms, the Third Symphony, and the New German School," in *Brahms and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton, NJ, 1990), 65–78.

17. A better case may be made, for instance, that prolonged $\frac{6}{5}$ sonorities in Sibelius are often not "first inversions" proper but rather expressive or decorative

alternatives to a more stable $\frac{5}{3}$ chord, which may or may not be sounded nearby. In these cases the bass is not a true chordal mediant—and, of course, when the $\frac{5}{3}$ sonority is prolonged one may at times question whether the implied tonal center is that of the supposed “root” or the actual bass. (For example, taken in the context of what follows, mm. 3–6 and 9–20 of the “B minor” *Tapiola* of 1926 express not “G \sharp ”—that is, a momentary “tonality” of G \sharp minor—but rather a $\frac{5}{3}$ sonority above a static B bass. This sonority soon stabilizes (m. 26) into a $\frac{5}{3}$ chord, a “B minor” that before long is provided with a further “Dorian” color. In brief, mm. 1–25 are probably best considered shifting color sonorities over an implied or actual B bass, leading to the $\frac{5}{3}$ arrival point in m. 26.) One might add that the same issue arises with the two sources for the pre-Sibelian “mediant pedal” effect: the middle section of the second movement of Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique* Symphony (a section over a D pedal that I would prefer not to interpret as being “in B minor”) and the trio of the scherzo of Schumann’s “Rhenish” Symphony (arguably a somewhat clearer mediant pedal, because of the cadence at its end).

18. Some examples: the second theme of Balakirev’s *Islamey*, the opening theme of the third movement of Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade*, the beginning of Borodin’s String Quartet No. 2, and so on.

19. Often borrowed in current discussions of influence, the term is taken from Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York, 1973), and *A Map of Misreading* (New York, 1975).

20. For Sibelius’s labeling of the “Christus” theme and for other labels given at early stages of the sketching see Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 1:250–52. (Tawaststjerna also hears an allusion to *Götterdämmerung* in the movement.)

21. Flodin, “Die Erweckung des nationalen Tones in der Finnischen Musik,” *Die Musik* 3 (1903–4): 287–89. Cf. Flodin’s two earlier reports, “Die neue Symphonie von Jean Sibelius,” *Die Musik* 1 (1902): 1302 (in this article concerning the Second Symphony he mentions that the First is “already known, also in Germany”); and “Die Entwicklung der Musik in Finnland,” *Die Musik* 2 (1903): 355–62. In Germany, Flodin’s positives would be often recast negatively, as limitations, most notably by the influential writer Walter Niemann.

22. Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 2:22–24. This was Sibelius’s second appearance on his friend Busoni’s Berlin series; the first was in November 1902, conducting *En saga*.

23. See, e.g., Seidl, *Moderner Geist in der deutschen Tonkunst* (Berlin, 1901) (“Emanzipation der Farbe” adduced as a *Schlagwort*, 59); Merian, *Richard Strauß’ Tondichtung “Also sprach Zarathustra”: Eine Studie über die moderne Programmsymphonie* (Leipzig, 1899), esp. p. 9; Graf, “Gedanken über das Moderne in der Musik,” *Die Musik* 3 (1903): 21–26 (“die freie Form,” 22).

24. See, e.g., the clear appeal at the close of Karl Schmalz, “Richard Strauss’ ‘Also sprach Zarathustra’ und ‘Ein Heldenleben’: Ein Vergleich,” *Die Musik* 4 (1905): 102–23—which Sibelius, in Berlin at the time of its publication (and an avid reader of *Die Musik*), is likely to have read; Rudolf Louis, *Die deutsche Musik der Gegenwart* (Munich and Leipzig, 1909); Otto Klauwell, *Geschichte der Programmmusik von ihren Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig, 1910), 5–8; and the persistent echoes of such thought in, e.g., Walter Niemann, *Die Musik der Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1913), 172–97 (“[In modern music] the sense of musical economy is evaporating,” etc., 196). See also the discussion of this point, including the possible impact of Busoni’s thought on Sibelius (or vice versa) at this time, in chapters 1 and 2 of Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*.

25. This famous remark was reported by Sibelius much later to Karl Ekman, *Jean Sibelius: His Life and Personality*, trans. Edward Birse (London, 1936), 176. According to the composer, Mahler’s response—the precisely opposite view—was, “No! [the] symphony must be like the world. It must embrace everything.” For another overview of this encounter, see Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, trans. Layton, 2:76–77.

26. Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, chapters 3 and 5.

27. I pursue some of these issues in an essay on Sibelius’s *Luonnotar*, forthcoming in *The Sibelius Companion*, ed. Glenda Dawn Goss (New York, 1997).

28. The third is embedded in the theme itself, of course, and the frequency of phrases ending with a descending major third is particularly telling. One should not oversimplify this complex movement, but it might also be suggested that its C \sharp minor probably alludes to the common procedure of moving to \flat VI for a slow movement. Here, however, the expected C common tone (of A \flat major, that is) is shifted to C \sharp (enharmonically B \natural), which momentarily blocks out the “C character” of this movement. The reemergence of this C character, along with the further, more developed gestation of the third, is one of the central features of the initial scherzo portion of the subsequent movement and helps to define it as a step further in the process of teleological genesis.

29. For more on the terms *expositional*, *complementary*, and *culminatory rotation*, see my *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 28–29 and chapter 5, *passim*.

30. “Ainolassa tāmā hiljaisuus puhuu”: from, e.g., Sibelius’s radio interview on 8 December 1948. This recorded interview dates from well into his retirement, and in it he seems to have wished to document several of the key sentences of his life. A short excerpt from this interview (in Finnish), concluding with these words, was released on the recording *Music of Jean Sibelius*, Finlandia Records, FA 003 (1984).

31. Letter to Axel Carpelan, 20 May 1918; Tawaststjerna, *Jean Sibelius*, vol. 4 (Helsinki, 1978), 290 (in Finnish).

32. In the still untranslated fourth volume of his *Jean Sibelius* Tawaststjerna provides plates of fifteen pages of the sketchbook (following p. 176). The sketchbook’s final three pages date from Summer 1916.

33. For transcriptions of some of the pre-Seventh-Symphony versions of the theme see Tawaststjerna, *Jean Sibelius* 4:60; Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 34, 38; and Kari Kilpeläinen, “Sibelius’s Seventh Symphony: An Introduction to the Manuscript and Printed Sources,” trans. James Hepokoski and Sari Rönholm, forthcoming in *The Sibelius Companion*. Tawaststjerna further suggests (4:22) that this theme may be related to Sibelius’s 10 October 1914 diary entry: “*Alleingefühl* again. Alone and strong. . . . The autumn sun is shining. Nature in its farewell colors. My heart sings sadly—‘The shadows lengthen.’ Fifth Symphony Adagio? That such a poor being as I can have such rich moments!” And according to Kilpeläinen, a later sketch suggests that at one point Sibelius considered incorporating a version of it into a projected multimovement tone poem, *Kuutar* ([Feminine] moon spirit); subsequent sketches for this never-completed piece indicate that he may have intended it for a D-major section called “Tähtölä” (Where the stars dwell).

34. In the 1914–15 sketchbook the “*Tapiola* theme” is explicitly joined to a version of Fifth Symphony finale’s second theme, that is, to the “Swan Hymn” in its expanding-interval form (see below); see Tawaststjerna *Jean Sibelius*, vol. 4, plate 4, following 176. For a transcription see my *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 37.

35. Tawaststjerna, *Jean Sibelius* 4:55.
36. Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 59–60, 83–84.
37. Translation (and fuller quotation of the diary entry) in Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 36.
38. "Tuo joutsenhymni vailla vertaa," in Tawaststjerna, *Jean Sibelius* 4:195. See also Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, 37, 53. This differs markedly from Tovey's often quoted remark about this theme and its preparations: "The bustling introduction provides a rushing wind, through which Thor can enjoy swinging his hammer" (1935–39, rpt. in *Essays in Musical Analysis*, vol. 1: *Symphonies and Other Orchestral Works* [Oxford, 1989], 499.) Sibelius's original swan image and Tovey's Thor, however, do share a crucial feature: the "rushing wind" that offers resistance to a spiritual object moving forward through it.
39. Undated sketch, numbered as A/0339 in Kari Kilpeläinen, *The Jean Sibelius Musical Manuscripts at Helsinki University Library: A Complete Catalogue* (Wiesbaden, 1991).
40. For the 1914–15 sketches see Tawaststjerna, *Jean Sibelius*, vol. 4, plates 11 (the theme in E \flat minor) and 13 (in D minor), following p. 176.
41. This and related diary entries are provided in my *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, chapter 3.
42. The first movement of the Sixth Symphony is also in dialogue with a number of sonata-deformational procedures, including, perhaps most obviously, that of the nonresolving recapitulation. (On this procedure, see my essay on Elgar in the present volume.)
43. Interpretations may differ both on the number of rotations and on their precise boundaries in this closely integrated movement. I hear the nine rotations as follows: 1 (mm. 1–16, an antiphonal hymn or nature epiphany; notice especially the second phrase pair's consequent, mm. 13–16, which anticipates the intervals of the *telos*, as transcribed in Ex. 15.11); 2 (mm. 17–52, a further germinating of the idea, leading to a "spur" onward at rehearsal letter B); 3 (mm. 52–82, near-full flower); 4 (mm. 83–113, fullest flower); 5 (mm. 114–47, "overripening" and crisis); 6 (mm. 148–64, showing the decay that has set into the ideas first exposed in rotation 1); 7 (mm. 165–188, one \flat signature [!], D minor and F major [!], and onset of "coda" tone); 8 (mm. 189–224, recycling the "coda" ideas); 9 (mm. 224–256, *envoi*: farewell to the entire process).

Some prior analyses have heard the C-major "spur" near the end of my rotation 2 (rehearsal letter B, m. 49) as the beginning of a second theme. I hear it, however, not as a conceptually accented thematic incipit but as an anacrusis or transition into the next rotation: this seems even more clearly its function in rotations 3 and 4. Within this "nature-contemplative" work—and there can be little doubt of this fundamental status—the transition-spur in rotation 2 would seem to be analogous to something on the order of the sudden appearance of any one of a number of forest fauna (avian? leporine? but surely specifics cannot matter), startled, then fluttering (scampering?) off into the wider D-minor-modal "nature-space," which correspondingly opens up into availability with the onset of rotation 3.

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