# Busoni's Tribute to Sibelius: The First Movement of the Geharnischte Suite, Op. 34a

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While both Sibelius and Busoni scholars have addressed the relationship between these two composers, the research is somewhat more robust on the Sibelius side. In his Busoni biography of 1933, Edward Dent scarcely mentions Sibelius and their relationship is only briefly discussed in Della Couling's more recent biography.[1] Erik Tawaststjerna is one of the first to write more extensively on the topic, both in his Sibelius biography and in his article "The Two Leskovites."[2] In the latter article, Tawaststjerna focuses more on their relationship after 1900 and the performance of Sibelius's works during Busoni's "Berliner Orchesterabende" series, namely the German premieres of *En saga* in 1902, the Second Symphony in 1905, and *Pohjola's Daughter* in 1908. Since then various authors have approached the subject, including Robert Wis in "Ferruccio Busoni and Finland," where the author primarily describes Busoni's experience as a piano professor at the Helsinki Music Institute and his Finnish-related compositions, Antony Beaumont in his presentation at the First International Sibelius Conference in 1990, and Barbara Hong in her more recent article on the Leskovites.[3] Andrew Barnett, Tomi Mäkelä, and Glenda Dawn Goss all include more lengthy descriptions of Busoni's relationship with Sibelius in their recent biographies and, in the case of Mäkelä's, a more in-depth comparison of the two composers.[4]

Though their relationship is often described as one of mutual respect and friendship, Tawaststjerna highlights their different personalities and perspectives: "Busoni was an intellectual with a distinct philosophical turn of mind; Sibelius lived in a private world and was largely dominated by instinct."[5] Indeed, up to the time Sibelius and Busoni met in Helsinki in the Fall of 1888, they had lived very different lives. Though Busoni was four months younger than Sibelius, he was already a well-known concert pianist having traveled extensively throughout Europe. For Busoni, it seemed that from the beginning, with parents who made their living as musicians, there was little question as to the kind of education he would receive. At a very young age he was given lessons in piano and basic music theory from his parents and, in short spurts, at the Vienna conservatory.[6] His formal music training in history, theory, and composition, began just before his fourteenth birthday under the toutelage of the well-reputed composer and teacher Dr. Wilhelm Mayer (a.k.a. W.A. Remy).[7]Although Sibelius came from a family with a considerable musical background and had displayed an early talent for music, these skills were not nurtured in the preparatory school he attended as a youth.[8] He began violin lessons in 1881 with Gustaf Levander and, until he began formal composition lessons with Martin Wegelius in 1887, he was self-taught in theory.[9] He had been in Helsinki only a few years when he met Busoni and was wavering as to whether he would pursue a career as a violinist.

In terms of their development as young composers, they also appear very different. Up to 1888, Sibelius had composed mostly chamber music, his most important early works being trios and quartets. Yet he had a natural ability which greatly impressed those around him, including Busoni. By 1888, Busoni had experimented with a wide variety of orchestral, chamber, and choral music, and, of course, several works for piano.[10] While he had received some recognition for his compositional skills, his early progress was challenging. One story in particular stands out in Hans Richter's consideration of his *Symphonische Suite*, Op. 25 (1883), for the Vienna Philharmonic season of 1884, which the orchestra is reported to have ultimately voted against including by a majority of only one vote.[11] Busoni's prospects as a composer did seem promising, however, and only two years after meeting Sibelius in 1890, his *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra, Op. 31a (1888–90), won the Rubinstein prize. More importantly perhaps, Busoni had already become familiar with the musical landscape of the continent and met with well-known composers and artists including Liszt, Brahms, and Rubinstein. To his great advantage as a very active performer and traveler at an early age, he was often able to get some of his compositions performed in a variety of locations (Italy, Austria, Germany, England, Finland, and Russia to name a few), even if they were not always well received, a benefit he would continue to take advantage of over the course of his life.

Despite these differences, Sibelius and Busoni forged a friendship that would continue for several decades, until the death of Busoni in 1924. As Tawaststjerna suggests, Busoni may well have had a significant influence on the young Sibelius: "For Sibelius the time he spent with Busoni was of enormous value and stimulus; their interchange of ideas in no small measure contributed to his development and in all probability to his artistic breakthrough in the spring of 1889."[12] This may have been the case in terms of philosophical and artistic outlook; however, as a composer Sibelius seems to have been Busoni's equal despite the variety of the latter's earlier experimentation, something Busoni likely recognized. While Sibelius had little appreciation for Busoni's compositions, Busoni championed Sibelius's works and would continue to well into the twentieth century.[13]

The early compositions of both composers, though grounded primarily in contemporary idioms, feature characteristics that would later become staples of their more personal styles. For Busoni, it was his combination of the dance-like

character in the Italian manner and the contrapuntal complexity in the German manner, reflective of his split heritage. There are traces in his early orchestral works, namely *Konzertstück* (1889–90), *Symphonisches Tongedicht* (1893), and *Zweite Orchestersuite* (*Geharnischte Suite*) (1895), of a penchant for mixing major and minor modes and, especially in the last of these works, of favoring non-functional harmonic progressions resulting from primarily parsimonious voice leading, resembling the style of late Liszt. Sibelius's early compositions feature certain melodic and rhythmic elements that can be said to reappear with some consistency, and in some cases in later works. Barnett points to such characteristic features as the descending fifth at cadence points, the 'S-motif', the dotted rhythm on the penultimate beat of a motif, the syncopated 'short-long-short pattern', and triplets.[14] In his early orchestral works, particularly the tone poems, he continued to incorporate these characteristic features along with such techniques as extensive use of ostinatos and repetitive motivic ideas, long pedal points, static sonic fields, melodies that followed a particular shape reminiscent of Runic melodies, and intersections between modality and tonality.

Though these two composers differentiated themselves early on and their styles became more individual and personal over time, there are some intersections as regards their respective developments. Their early orchestral works have their roots in Berlioz, Bruckner, and Wagner, and, in particular, in the Lisztian symphonic poem both in its formal innovations and in the concept of thematic transformation.[15] Their interest in Liszt's compositions may well have had the same origin in Martin Wegelius's influence during the late 1880s.[16] Both composers also experimented to some extent in their early works with the free application or modification of standard forms and with more 'content-based' forms.[17] In Busoni's case, he had early on "learned how to create an individual entity from the material at his disposal," something that is true of Sibelius as well.[18] Both would eventually reject standard forms and conceive of the formal process as a result of the natural and free development of the musical idea. It is in these early orchestral works that they began to develop a more thorough integration of thematic ideas and to experiment with new formal possibilities. Both composers would move away from nineteenth-century Romanticism after 1900 and embrace elements of modern Classicism. [19] In Busoni's case, this was made explicit in his espousal of what he called Junge Klassizität ('Young Classicism') or, in his own words, "the mastery, the sifting and the turning to account of all the gains of previous experiments and their inclusion in strong and beautiful forms."[20] This was not a wholesale return to earlier idioms, but rather recognition of the value of "previous experiments" and, in relation to the modern, a desire to create works that would also be of lasting value. Finally, with an eye toward the present and future, both were later in life negatively disposed toward their own earlier works of the 1880s and 90s, many remaining unperformed and unpublished during their lifetimes.[21]

In this paper, I will touch on the first of these intersections, their concurrent development as young composers in the 1890s, by connecting features of the first movement of Busoni's *Geharnischte Suite* ('The Armoured Suite'), composed in 1895, with those of Sibelius's early compositions. The first movement, entitled *Vorspiel*, is an appropriate choice since it was dedicated to Sibelius and exhibits aspects of thematic development, form, and harmony also found in some of Sibelius's early orchestral works. As mentioned above, both composers were influenced by the New German School, but it is possible that some of Sibelius's early orchestral works may have had a more direct influence on Busoni's *Vorspiel*. Finally, I will address specific features in this movement which more directly point to compositional characteristics identified as hallmarks of Sibelius's style, revealing it as a kind of musical tribute to its dedicatee.

# Busoni's Familiarity with Sibelius's Early Works

Busoni almost certainly had a good sense of Sibelius's early style and of some of his early orchestral works prior to the completion of the *Geharnischte Suite* in the summer of 1895. During his time as piano instructor at the Helsinki Music Institute, Busoni became familiar with at least three of Sibelius's early works: the Suite in A major, JS 186 (1889), which he heard at the time and many years later commented on, the String Quartet in A minor, JS 183 (1889), which he is reported by Sibelius to have played wonderfully at sight, and the Piano Quintet in G minor, JS 159 (1890), which Busoni performed at the Helsinki Music Institute in May of 1890.[22] Folke Gräsbeck lists the latter two as the most important annual works of those years.[23] Through these works Busoni may have first become familiar with some of the more distinguishing characteristics of Sibelius's early style, particularly his use of the syncopated 'short-long-short pattern' and triplets in the String Quartet in A minor and the 'S-motif' in the Piano Quintet in G minor.

Busoni took up another teaching post in Moscow from the Fall of 1890 to the Spring of 1891. He then left for America in August of 1891 and taught at the New England Conservatory in Boston, not returning to Berlin until April of 1894. It is unlikely that Busoni was aware of Sibelius's orchestral music of the early 1890s while in Moscow and Boston since Sibelius was not yet of international fame, performances of these works were limited, and the music went unpublished for several years. Once he returned to Europe, however, he met Sibelius both in Berlin and Helsinki. Sibelius conveys in a letter to Aino from Berlin in 1894 that he wishes to show Busoni *En saga, Karelia*, and others, which he also later sent to Busoni.[24] Busoni also visited Helsinki in May of 1895 for a concert series just before completing his suite the

following summer.[25] It is very likely that Busoni, in 1894–1895, became familiar with the scores of *En saga*, Op. 9 (original version of 1893), the *Karelia* music, JS 115 (1893), and possibly *Vårsång*, Op. 16 (1894), and the symphonic ballad *Skogsrået*, Op. 15 (1894–95), especially since he recommended that Sibelius send in particular *En saga*, *Vårsång*, and *Skogsrået* to the Russian publisher Belyayev.[26] In the case of *En saga*, Busoni later requested that the German premiere of that work be included in his "Berliner Orchesterabende" series, prompting the 1902 revisions.[27] Given Busoni's continued interest in and support of Sibelius's music in the first decade of the twentieth century, he also likely became familiar with Sibelius's orchestral works from the end of the nineteenth century, such as *Finlandia* (1899) and the First Symphony (1899).

## The Geharnischte Suite

Little has been written about Busoni's *Geharnischte Suite*. Documentary evidence that would shed light on its compositional genesis is scant: there are only a few letters that mention the *Suite* and no autograph or sketches are known to exist.[28] The work is not mentioned at all in Dent's biography and is only briefly mentioned in later biographies. It is also not included as a major work in Beaumont's survey of Busoni's works. As mentioned above, the *Suite* was composed in the summer of 1895 shortly after Busoni's return from his Helsinki concert series in May of that year. It was not premiered until October 1897 in Berlin, after which it was revised and performed again in 1903. It is likely that these revisions were prompted by the 1903 performance and by plans for its publication, indicated in a 1902 letter to his wife, which eventually occurred in 1905.[29] Unfortunately, since the first version of the *Geharnischte Suite* is lost, there is no way to know whether the 1903 revised version was significantly different than the 1895 version.

The four movements of the Geharnischte Suite are dedicated "to the Leskovites in Helsinki (1889)": Vorspiel to Jean Sibelius, Kriegstanz to Adolf Paul, Grabdenkmal to Armas Järnefelt, and Ansturm to Eero Järnefelt. No accompanying program exists for the work even though its titles and its dedication to the Leskovites suggest a connection with an extra-musical inspiration. This would not be uncommon for Busoni, since, as Beaumont illustrates in his survey, there was often a book, poem, biographical event, or idea that inspired many of his compositions. In her Sibelius biography, Goss presents perhaps the most imaginative description of the Suite: "...in its pages Busoni brought to life one of Finland's foremost artistic circles, placing Sibelius and his closest contemporaries in a context that captures la verité of their idea world—their comic sides, their personal qualities, their preoccupations—in a way few other documents have done."[30] Goss suggests connections with Don Quixote as an inspirational figure for the young Leskovite artists noting that "the valiant Spanish knight lent his aristocratic courage to many young artistic types" and points to some of Sibelius's own frequent references to Quixote.[31] Without documentary evidence, one is left only to imagine what Busoni had in mind. It is probable that the absence of an explicit program was intentional, and that Busoni was not interested in depicting a specific series of events or actions but rather capturing the general mood of the suggested titles. [32] In this sense, it bears resemblance to Sibelius's tone poems *En saga* and *Vårsång*, which also contain no programs but through their titles conjure certain images.[33] The image that appears below the characteristic font of the period on the cover page of the Geharnischte Suites's 1905 Breitkopf und Härtel edition is the profile of a knight bearing a sword and shield with Op. 34a appearing in the center of the shield. Whether or not Busoni approved of or contributed to the design of the cover, it certainly fits the title, intimating along with the titles of each movement, the tribulations of a hero at war, perhaps, as Goss suggests, inspiring "...Finns fired with idealism and passion to stand up and fight for their heritage and prove the true nobility of their natures."[34] The armored-clad knight also recalls a Mozartian reference in the two "geharnischte Männer" from Die Zauberflöte. Busoni had a great affinity for Mozart's music and would later transcribe their duet in the last of his Fünf kurze Stücke zur Pflege des polyphonen Spiels of 1923. Along the same lines as Goss's idea, and perhaps also linked with supporting the Finnish people in their national movement and struggle against the contemporaneous first wave of Russification, it is worth noting that these two characters warn Tamino of the trials of water and fire, but profess the enlightenment gained through overcoming these trials.

# Aspects of Form, Harmony, and Thematic Transformation and Development in the Vorspiel

At the root of the compositional process in the *Vorspiel* is the unfolding of two contrasting themes and their immediate development. These two themes consist of a group of motivic ideas which are at times developed separately. More importantly, there is a clear sense of teleological genesis evident in the carefully designed build up to the climactic moment and in the way that each of the compositional parameters, motive, harmony, and orchestration, are incorporated toward this effect. The *Vorspiel* also exhibits aspects of sonata form, with a discernable introduction, exposition, development, and recapitulation shown above the voice-leading sketch in Example 1.

Example 1: Vorspiel, Geharnischte Suite, voice-leading sketch.

Example 1: Busoni, Vorspiel, Geharnischte Suite, voice-leading sketch.



The first theme in mm. 16–28 undergoes a lyrical and rhythmic transformation immediately following in mm. 29–38, before the entrance of the second theme. Given that the second theme is the first to be developed in mm. 78–94 of the development section, the idea seems to be to develop both themes immediately following their first statements. As opposed to contrasting keys for the first and second themes, the harmonic scheme emphasizes tonal uniformity: the themes begin in C-sharp major-minor both in the exposition and the recapitulation. This highlights the main harmonic struggle between C-sharp major and minor over the course of the work. In contrast to the significance often placed on the return of the second theme in the main key as tonal resolution in traditional sonata form, its weak return in the recapitulation sounds like an afterthought within the dissipation that follows the climax of the work (m. 147). Thus, while the outlines of sonata form are present in this movement, the formal process is more connected with thematic development, tonal uniformity, and teleological genesis. Following a brief analysis highlighting these and other features, I will relate them specifically to aspects of Sibelius's early works.

The two primary themes of the exposition are a complex of motivic ideas that are dispersed and transformed and to some extent integrated over the course of the movement. The first theme, martial in character, is quite lengthy and can be broken up into two antecedent phrases, mm. 15–18 and mm. 19–22, followed by a consequent phrase in mm. 23–28 (Example 2). The two halves of the consequent phrase are rhythmic

Example 2: Vorspiel, First Theme.



transformations of the initial descending fourth of the antecedent phrase. Harmonically, the statement of the first part of the theme is quite straightforward: C-sharp minor is prolonged with a mediant E major dividing motion from tonic to dominant. The consequent phrase is somewhat more complicated. The emphasis on flat-II<sup>*i*</sup>, D–F sharp–A–C (B-sharp), is immediately apparent in mm. 24–27. This harmony functions on multiple levels, as an augmented-sixth function (with the C enharmonically spelled as B sharp) resolving directly to C-sharp minor at the local level, and as a Neapolitan function on a larger-scale progressing to the G-sharp dominant in m. 28. Due to certain salient features in this passage (Example 3), it is difficult to interpret the C-sharp minor chord

# Example 3: Vorspiel, mm. 23-28.



immediately following the flat-II<sup>r</sup> chord in m. 26 as a strong tonic arrival since (1) the scalar gesture in the strings and the dynamics emphasize the return of the flat-II<sup>r</sup> harmony immediately following at the *sforzando*, suggesting a flat-II<sup>r</sup> prolongational span through m. 28, and (2) after having emphasized flat-II<sup>r</sup> in m. 25, the return to C sharp occurs within the span of descending melodic motion to scale-degree 5 in m. 28 and the conclusion of the first theme (Example 1). In this reading, there is a tonic de-emphasis in which C-sharp is understood as a passing chord within the unfolding of the flat-II<sup>r</sup> as Neapolitan. Regardless of the interpretation of this chord, the curious role and dual function of this harmony is established within this first thematic statement. Reading the flat-II<sup>r</sup> as a structurally significant Neapolitan chord also emphasizes the outline of an important large-scale motive. Since the dominant arriving in m. 29 is in first inversion, the overall bass motion outlines the upper D natural and lower B sharp of the flat-II<sup>r</sup> chord as neighbors to C-sharp, forming a large-scale motive, C-sharp–D–C-sharp–B-sharp–C-sharp, hereafter referred to as motive x (indicated in Example 1 with asterisks).

In traditional sonata form, harmonic motion to the dominant in mm. 28–31 would likely cue the arrival of the second theme. However, rather than a new contrasting theme, the first theme is transformed into a more lyrical, rhythmically expanded melody (Example 4).

Example 4: Vorspiel, First Theme transformation.



A significant melodic anomaly in comparison to the original statement of the theme appears in the descending motive from G-sharp when D natural curiously appears in m. 33 and is then 'corrected' back to D-sharp in the second half of the measure. The seemingly inconspicuous D natural is a result of a re-harmonization of the main theme, which begins in the context of the G-sharp dominant and commences with a series of triadic chords resulting from parsimonious voice-leading. The descending F sharp–E–D is harmonized in the context of the flat-II<sup>-</sup> harmony within this series of chords. Unlike its first appearance, however, this harmony progresses neither to the dominant nor the tonic but to the subdominant. In this instance, the D-sharp and B-sharp of mm. 33–34 reflect in a local context their large-scale function in motive x as neighbors to C-sharp, which is now fifth of the subdominant. The avoidance of a tonic C-sharp harmony in the re-harmonization of the main theme allows for a more expansive phrase, but also further plays up the avoidance of a strong tonic cadence at the end of the first segment of the main theme.

As the transformation of the main theme continues in mm. 35–50, the C-sharp major in m. 38 now functions as a dominant chord subsumed within the prolongation of the subdominant. Rhythmic emphasis plays a role in deemphasizing this C-sharp chord as well, when it shifts rather abruptly to F-sharp major on the second half of the measure. The subdominant prolongation is further affirmed when G major appears in m. 40 functioning as Neapolitan of the subdominant and progressing as expected to a C-sharp dominant in m. 41. This C-sharp dominant is again deemphasized as passing between the Neapolitan and a short digression to A minor in mm. 42–43. Motion to A minor as neighbor to G-sharp was already established in the introduction, thus it cues here a return to G-sharp as dominant in m. 44. This progression supports yet another iteration of the D natural and C of motive x (Example 1). The arrival on a C-sharp major chord in second inversion in mm. 44–45 thus serves as a pivot chord back to the home key. The strong arrival on C-sharp major instead of minor at the end of the first theme's development is unexpected; however, C-sharp minor quickly regains the upper hand as the point of resolution in m. 50. This interplay between C-sharp major and minor, first emerging in a local sense, reflects the underlying harmonic struggle of the movement.

Like the first theme, the second theme is also a composite of various motivic ideas, an upper neighbor figure in mm. 51–54 (G sharp–A–G sharp), which includes the inversion of the eighth-note turning motive from the first theme (A–B–A–G sharp), and a tail which consists of two separate figures, a melodic turn and a descending scale. This idea is placed in counterpoint with an ascending motive, first appearing in m. 57 (Example 5). Like the first theme, the second theme begins in C-sharp minor and is also

#### Example 5: Vorspiel, Second Theme.



immediately developed. The first section of the theme is the basis for the material in mm. 60–77, while the rising gesture of the second part of the theme is the basis for the material in mm. 78–90 at the beginning of the development (Example 5). Thus, motives from the second theme are dispersed and developed separately. The second theme and its development continue to prolong C-sharp minor, much in the same way as the exposition and development of the first theme. Flat-II<sup>,</sup> reached at the climactic moment in m. 90, figures prominently here as well. Again, a definitive arrival on C sharp is thwarted by the lack of a full C-sharp chord in m. 92 and the immediate interjection of a first inversion E-minor harmony placed above the C sharp. The tonic C sharp is again passing between the flat-II<sup>,</sup> and the dominant in m. 95.

While the next section in mm. 95–110 serves as development of both introductory and first theme material, it sounds like a momentary interjection which marks the first phase of a massive build up to the climax of the movement. A stepwise progression back to tonic underlies this section. The rising octatonic scale in the bass outlines two fullydiminished seventh chords. The shape thus reflects the rising thirds of the first theme in m. 17 cast in the rhythmic transformation that earlier took hold of the first theme in mm. 35ff (Example 6). The second of these diminished-seventh chords,

## Example 6: Vorspiel, Basis for material in mm. 94-110.



A–C–E-flat–F-sharp (m. 103), enharmonically functions as VII diminished seven preparing for the return to C-sharp in the recapitulation.

A full conversion from C-sharp minor to major now emerges when the first theme returns in m. 111, the descending motive is transposed to begin on C sharp and the rising top voice from the developmental space now asserts E sharp as the primary tone (Example 7a). Though the rhythm of the original theme is restored, the descending part of the theme,

which began with a half step from G sharp to F-double-sharp/G natural, now emphasizes the C-sharp to B-sharp half step and F-double-sharp as a leading tone to G sharp. Rather than resolve to G sharp, the F-double-sharp leaps up to C sharp, a shape that was introduced in the second theme (Example 5, m. 55). Though the main theme now begins on C-sharp, the harmonic context is similar to the exposition. The presence of the flat-II is again prominent as Neapolitan in m. 124 leading to the dominant in m. 132 (Example 1). Here the first inversion tonic chord is again not a strong tonic, but is caught within the ascending, stepwise motion in the bass and the progression to the dominant.



Example 7: Vorspiel, Return of theme transposed to begin on C sharp in recapitulation.

The lyrical transformation of the first theme does not reappear in the recapitulation. Rather the introductory chords return first on the mediant, supporting a return to natural scale-degree 3 in the top voice, and then on the dominant supporting scale-degree 2. This begins the next phase in the build up to the main climax. The eighth-note motive from the first theme figures prominently in the accompanying tremolo strings, centered on G sharp as third of E major, then on C as the enharmonic leading tone to C sharp (Example 7b). This motive is now combined with the rising motive of the second theme in mm. 138 and 145 (Example 7c). The climax is achieved in m. 147 with the merging of the descending line from the first part of the main theme and the rhythmic motive from the second part (Example 7d). An emphatic statement firmly asserts the seeming conquest of C-sharp major at the climax and the structural close of the movement. However, there is further delay of a definitive arrival on C sharp in the melodic voice. Rather, the fifth descent from G sharp repeated over the course of mm. 147-150 never makes it to the tonic (Example 7d). When the C sharp is achieved in m. 151, harmonic diversion to A minor is already underway, effectively undermining this arrival (Example 1). Indeed, the delay continues well through the slow and tranquil resolution that follows. The arrival of C sharp in m. 164 is more definitive, yet even here it is approached from below, a result of the oscillation between A minor with added sixth and C-sharp major, certainly not as strong an arrival as having been preceded by a dominant chord. In mm. 168–170, both the conflict between E sharp and E natural and the D-C neighbors to the C-sharp tonic appear in the descending melodic line, but the C-sharp is withheld when E sharp is asserted in m. 170. Thus the melodic resolution to tonic does not coincide with the climax and is consistently thwarted toward the end of the recapitulation.

At this point, the recapitulation of the second theme seems like an afterthought. The perceived weakness of the second theme's recapitulation is perhaps due to a more fundamental shape that underlies the formal process of a build up to a climax followed by dissipation. The recapitulation of the second theme, whose characteristic falling third, which outlines the fifth and third of the underlying C-sharp harmony, has been transformed to major at its opening, yet returns to minor in mm. 177–178. It is not until m. 178 that we finally arrive on a C-sharp with a clear sense of melodic closure.

## Similarities in Aspects of Form, Harmony, and Thematic Development to Sibelius's Early Orchestral Works

While aspects of sonata form are discernible in the Vorspiel, the formal process, to a large extent, involves thematic transformation and development, tonal uniformity, and teleological genesis. With the exception of tonal uniformity, it thus shares much in common with the formal procedures of the symphonic poem inherited from Liszt. The formal process and the particular emphasis on motivic and thematic development in Busoni's Vorspiel parallels the kind of formal thinking manifested in some of Sibelius's early orchestral works. In terms of more focus on the development of themes rather than thematic and tonal contrast, it resembles each of the three movements of the Karelia Suite, Op. 11 (1893, originally part of the *Karelia* press celebrations music), which center around the repetition, variation, and placement within various contexts of a limited number of motivic ideas. The Vorspiel and En saga, however, share more closely related formal approaches, albeit on a much larger scale in the latter work. Like in the Vorspiel, sonata form can be perceived in the overall shape of *En saga*, with a discernable introduction, exposition (m. 38), development (m. 393) and recapitulation (m. 705), yet there is great emphasis placed on a thematic process involving the synthesis of motivic ideas into broader themes and the juxtaposition and integration of thematic material. (Measure numbers refer to the original version.[35]) Furthermore, there is a clear teleological genesis in the gradual working up to a climactic moment in m. 849 that overshadows the broader outlines of sonata form. Both Veijo Murtomäki and Tim Howell describe the thematic process in the significantly revised 1902 version of *En saga*.[36] While the tonal scheme is significantly altered in the later version, the motivic and thematic relationships they describe are maintained from the 1892 original version, with which Busoni was initially familiar.[37] I will therefore include the measure numbers in the original version in reference to these thematic relationships. Howell describes a process whereby motives from the introduction form the basis of the first theme (mm. 38ff.) in C-sharp minor. In turn, the shape of the second theme (mm. 114ff) is derived from the first and, upon its statement, is juxtaposed against a variant of the first theme (m. 118).[38] A third theme then follows in mm. 166ff. In contrast, Murtomäki describes a process whereby a portion of the first theme is transformed into the theme in mm. 114ff (Howell's second theme). This theme then forms the basis for part of a subsidiary theme (mm. 166ff) (Howell's third theme) in C major (E-flat in the revised version).[39] Both authors, nevertheless, point to this subsidiary theme as derived from earlier thematic material. A portion of the previously transformed main theme in mm. 114ff (Howell's second theme) also appears with this subsidiary theme (Howell's third theme), thus forming a chain of relations as each new theme appears with portions of the previous theme. An additional theme appears first in G-sharp minor (C minor in the revised version) in mm. 208ff. As Howell points out, when motivic elements from each of these themes are interwoven in the build up to the climax in the recapitulation, a turn motive is emphasized as the common thread among them and becomes the main motivic element at the climactic moment (mm. 839ff). Murtomäki emphasizes a process of thematic transformation rooted in the Lisztian symphonic poem. In his analysis, the appearance of the last C-minor theme in the revised version introduces structural conflict, particularly between the keys C minor and E flat. The integration of this theme with the other thematic material, or resolution of this conflict, constitutes the main poetic idea of the work. In Howell's analysis, rather than a process of transformation, he emphasizes the placement of the themes in various contexts, or "a kind of changing background technique," and the juxtaposition of thematic motives in order to point out relations, an idea that is also present in the earlier version.[40] Regardless of their differences, evident in both analyses is Sibelius's emphasis on the thematic process and, in particular, with synthesizing and juxtaposing or integrating motivic material, particularly at the climactic moment of the work.

Similar processes of thematic development, re-contextualization, and motivic integration are at play in the Vorspiel. Summarized here are some of the motivic and thematic relationships described in the above analysis. The first theme is transformed after its first statement and, without being transposed, is re-harmonized in the context of the subdominant (Example 4). This is similar to the "changing background technique" that Howell describes in relation to En saga. There are also motivic connections between themes. The eighth-note motive so prominent in the antecedent of the first theme appears inverted within the neighboring figure at the beginning of the second theme (Example 5). Motivic ideas and progressions are also used as the basis for later material. The first themes eighth-note figure, which outlines rising thirds, is later combined with the rhythmic transformation of the second half of the first theme to form the rising bass line that later appears with the introductory chord progression (Example 6). The eighth-note figure then reappears as the tremolo string accompaniment to the introductory chord progression in the build up to the climax (mm. 134ff, Example 7b). Motives from each of the themes are also combined in mm. 138 and 145 during the build up to the climax (Example 7c). Thematic material is also transposed while still maintaining the same overall harmonic context. When the first theme returns in the recapitulation, the descending fourth from the beginning of the theme begins on scale-degree 1 instead of scale-degree 5, yet the harmonic context remains essentially the same (Example 7d). The descending fourth span now ends on F double-sharp and returns to C sharp to begin the eighth-note turning figure, an intervallic shape that was earlier established in the second theme (Example 5, m. 55). All of the above features point to a compositional process concerned with thematic transformation, development, and combination similar to that of En saga.

Another connection between the Vorspiel and some of Sibelius's early orchestral works is in the use of modes and modal harmony in interaction with tonality. Murtomäki points out this aspect in both *En saga* and *Skogsrået*.[41] In the latter work, this is particularly apparent in the 'bridge' to the 'slow movement', where there is emphasis on the Aeolian-Ionian mode on A and C. The relationship between A minor (Aeolian) in interaction with the later C-sharp minor/major is reflected in the oscillation between C-sharp minor and A-minor chords (with added sixth), the latter also having a subdominant function and thus serving as a kind of pivot chord between the two keys. As Murtomäki observes, the oscillation between the C-sharp minor and A-minor chords plays a role in destabilizing the move to C-sharp. Nowhere perhaps is this oscillation more poignant than in mm. 374-376 in the shift from A with added sixth to C-sharp major separated by a measure of rest. Similar references to modal relationships appear throughout the Vorspiel; in particular, Busoni also emphasizes the progression A minor with added sixth to C-sharp. The A minor first appears with seventh in the rising progression from a G-sharp dominant in the introduction (mm. 1-8). As a chord that progresses directly to the tonic C-sharp, however, it is most apparent following the climax of the work in mm. 154ff, which consequently undermines a conclusive arrival on C-sharp from a strong dominant, and in mm. 158–159, with added sixth F, reflecting the upper voice conflict between E and E sharp (enharmonically spelled as F). This chord prefaces a serene resolution to C-sharp major in m. 164, very much like the moment cited above in Skogsrået, after which it continues to oscillate with C-sharp major when one might expect oscillation between tonic and dominant (Example 1). This progression is alluded to melodically as well in the skip from A to C sharp in the second theme's rising motive (Example 5).

Apart from the interaction of tonality and modality, another more specific harmonic aspect from *Skogsrået* also appears in the *Vorspiel*. Both Murtomäki and Timothy Jackson have pointed to the Neapolitan augmented chord as structurally significant in the harmonic unfolding of *Skogsrået*.[42] Murtomäki describes this chord as "the most distinct harmonic feature in the final section" and that it functions on two levels, on a larger scale as an augmented-sixth resolving to C-sharp minor, and at the local level as a Neapolitan seven resolving to the dominant.[43] Jackson reads the arrival of this chord in the recapitulation as the beginning of a bitonic auxiliary cadence on C sharp in the recapitulation (flat–II<sup>\*</sup>–V–I).[44] The C-sharp prolongations over the course of the work that preface this flat-II<sup>\*</sup>, at the beginning of the slow movement and the beginning of the recapitulation, are not read as strong tonic chords in the final key of C-sharp minor, but rather as passing between the initial C major (=B sharp) of the exposition and the Neapolitan augmented chord of the recapitulation (C–D–G sharp–C sharp). This chord appears in a similar context in the *Vorspiel*, where flat-II<sup>\*</sup> functions on the local level as augmented-sixth to C-sharp, which is subsumed within the prolongation of the flat-II<sup>\*</sup> functioning on a larger scale as Neapolitan.

A final connection with some of Sibelius's early works with regard to harmony is the consistent de-emphasis on or avoidance of a strong tonic at points in the *Vorspiel*. Jorma Daniel Lünenbürger mentions a similar idea in the avoidance of strong tonic cadences in Sibelius's Piano Quintet in G minor.[45] This idea is also related to what Jackson describes in *Skogsrået* and other works as the postponement of a definitive tonic arrival until later in the piece, a feature common to the unfolding of a large-scale auxiliary cadence.[46] The delaying of a definitive tonic arrival is closely associated with works that exhibit teleological genesis. This concept is reflected in the *Vorspiel* in the de-emphasis of tonic and the denial of strong tonic arrival points achieved in multiple ways throughout. Over the course of the movement, the C-sharp tonic is often subsumed within the prolongation of the Neapolitan or is passing between the Neapolitan and the dominant (Example 1). It functions as dominant in the prolongation of the subdominant during the transformation of the first theme. Even at the climactic moment the cadence on tonic lacks an arrival on scale-degree 1 in the melodic voice, a fact that is emphasized in the repeated descent in the top voice from scale degree five to two (Example 7d). When scale-degree 1 does arrive in the resolution that follows, the tonic chord is approached by and in alternation with the submediant instead of dominant.

# More Specific Characteristics Also Found in Sibelius's Style

There are also elements which suggest a more direct connection to characteristics of Sibelius's style. Harri Miettunen has pointed out that the 'S-motif', a step down from a central note and back, then a step up, appears very early in Sibelius's compositions.<sup>[47]</sup> Though it is often described as a four-note figure, in many contexts it returns to the central note after the step up. In particular, it is featured in the first movement of the above-mentioned Piano Quintet in G minor. It also appears in two early orchestral works, at the entrance of the choir in the third movement of *Kullervo* and inverted in the introductory theme (mm. 11ff) and in the eighth-note turn figure in the minor theme of *En saga*. In the *Vorspiel*, the 'S-motif' is most apparent in the eighth-note figure that shapes the ascending segment of the first theme (Example 2), which is inverted in the first part of the second theme (Example 5). This eighth-note figure consequently assumes a more significant role in the development as the tremolo turn figure accompanying the introductory chord progression just before the climax (Example 7b). Finally, an inversion of the 'S-motif', motive x, is composed out over large sections of the work (see asterisks marking 'motive x' in Example 1.)

Sibelius's early works also include the extensive use of pedal points. Some of the more prominent uses in his early orchestral music include the E-flat pedal which persists for nearly the entire "Intermezzo" of the *Karelia Suite*, Op. 11, making the brief shifts to the submediant early in the movement all the more poignant, and the A pedal (mm. 70ff) supporting the A-minor with added sixth chord which persists for much of the first 'scherzo' section in *Skogsrået*.[48] Pedals are also used to great effect in *En saga*, emphasizing certain structural pitches, in alternation with faster harmonic motion.[49] In general, these pedals create a sense of harmonic stasis, often shifting the focus to either motivic development in the other voices or gradually changing harmonic colors. Pedal points are also used in various ways throughout the *Vorspiel*. A pedal point on B sharp/C is held through the introduction, emphasizing the common tone in the alternation of G-sharp major and A minor, or the large-scale leading tone to C-sharp. An E is held through the slower second theme serving as an anchor against the canonic interplay in the upper voices. A pedal effect is also perceptible in the above-mentioned tremolo turn figure, surrounding G-sharp (mm. 132ff) and C (mm. 139ff), aiding in the build up to the climax.

Two rhythmic hallmarks of Sibelius's early style, triplets and a 'short-long-short' syncopation, also appear in the *Vorspiel*. Both of these rhythmic elements are used throughout the opening movement of the above-mentioned String Quartet in A minor, and in the thematic material for some of Sibelius's early orchestral music, such as the first theme of *Skogsrået*.[50] One prominent appearance of the syncopated rhythm is in the opening theme of the *Intermezzo* from the *Karelia Suite* (mm. 56ff). Triplets appear frequently throughout the *Vorspiel*. They are initially featured in fanfare style in mm. 5–14 of the introduction, ultimately serving as a pedal on the leading tone. They later appear in the articulation of the E minor and A minor harmonies in mm. 93–94 and m. 154, as arpeggiations in both the exposition (mm. 29ff) and the development (mm. 78ff), and in the articulation of the serene resolutions to C-sharp major in mm. 64 and 66. One instance of the 'short-long-short' rhythm appears in the transformed first theme during a brief melodic digression to A minor (Example 4).

Finally, Sibelius's orchestral works from around the turn of the century, namely *Finlandia* and the First Symphony, may have also been influential on the 1903 revisions of the *Geharnischte Suite*. Some of the same processes of thematic development and teleological genesis, previously addressed in relation to *En saga* and the *Vorspiel*, appear in *Finlandia* as well.[51] Other more specific points of similarity between the *Vorspiel* and *Finlandia* are the nature of their introductory chords, the hymn-like passages (i.e., the first theme in the case of the *Vorspiel*), and the fanfare-like motifs on a repeated note (*Vorspiel*, mm. 93–94). Pedal points, the 'S-motive', and horn crescendos at or growing to *fortissimo* (*Vorspiel*, build up to climax) are also features that appear in both *Finlandia* and the First Symphony.

\* \* \*

Considered in isolation these subtle details would perhaps not merit connection with Sibelius's early works. As a group, however, they offer a compelling argument that Busoni was indeed making use of certain characteristics he recognized in these early works. In any case, it seems clear that reflected in the *Suite* is a manner of composition that shares aspects in common with a contemporaneous Sibelius. With regard to thematic and harmonic aspects, the resemblance may be less a result of direct influence than of the models common to them at this stage of their compositional developments. On the other hand, the narratives surrounding Busoni's development as a composer often emphasize the lack of an individual voice prior to the late 1890s, something Busoni himself acknowledges in his own writings.[52] As a young composer and pianist with an impressive knowledge of repertoire, Busoni developed an extraordinary ability to imitate and build on the innovations of other composers in his early compositions. It would come as no surprise then that his development as a composer in the 1890s could have come at the impetus of what his immediate contemporaries were doing at the time, namely Sibelius and Richard Strauss. Whether with regard to the thematic and harmonic aspects Busoni was directly influenced by Sibelius or their own development simply intersected at this point in time, in the more subtle details of the *Vorspiel*, it may very well be the case that Busoni paid tribute to more than just his friend's "personal qualities."[53]

[1] Edward Dent, *Ferruccio Busoni: A Biography* (London: Eulenburg Books, 1974), first published London: Oxford University Press, 1933; and Della Couling, *Ferruccio Busoni: A Musical Ishmael* (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 2005), 104–106.

[2] Erik Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, Vol. 1, trans. Robert Layton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 44–47, and "The Two Leskovites," *Finnish Music Quarterly* 3 (1986): 2–9.

[3] Roberto Wis, "Ferruccio Busoni and Finland," *Acta musicologica* 49 (1977): 250–269; Antony Beaumont, "Sibelius and Busoni," in *Proceedings from the First International Jean Sibelius Conference, Helsinki, August, 1990*, ed. Eero Tarasti (Helsinki: Sibelius Academy, 1995), 14–20; and Barbara Hong "The Friends of Lesko, the Dog: Sibelius,

Busoni, Armas and Eero Järnefelt, Adolf Paul," in *Sibelius in the Old and New World* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 57–68.

[4] Andrew Barnett, *Sibelius* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 45, 47, 55–56; Tomi Mäkelä, *Jean Sibelius: Poesie in def Luft*, 2007, trans. Steven Lindberg (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 35–43; and Glenda Dawn Goss, *Sibelius: a composer's life and the awakening of Finland* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009), 76–80.

[5] Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 46.

[6] Dent, Ferruccio Busoni, 16-21.

[7] Ibid., 36-7.

[8] Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 16.

[9] Barnett, *Sibelius*, 6–7, 22.

[10] Antony Beaumont lists over 200 compositions or fragments before 1888 in *Busoni the Composer* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 356–366.

[11] Couling, Ferruccio Busoni, 55–56.

[12] Tawaststjerna, *Sibelius*, 45.

[13] Ibid., 47.

[14] Barnett, Sibelius, 22–27.

[15] In the case of Sibelius, see Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 163.

[16] Ibid., 45. See also Dent, Ferruccio Busoni, 85.

[17] A term defined by James Hepokoski in *Sibelius: Symphony no. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 21–23.

[18] Beaumont, *Busoni the Composer*, 48. On the Sibelius side, Mäkelä also makes this connection in *Jean Sibelius*, 40, and Hepokoski in *Sibelius: Symphony no.* 5, 21–22.

[19] Mäkelä, Jean Sibelius, 41.

[20] Busoni, The Essence of Music and Other Papers, trans. Rosamond Ley (New York: Dover, 1957), 20.

[21] Veijo Murtomäki, "Sibelius's symphonic ballad *Skogsrået*," in *Sibelius Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 95–98.

[22] Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 50-1, 64. See also Barnett, Sibelius, 57-58.

[23] Folke Gräsbeck, "Jean Sibelius: The Five Complete Piano Trios," in *Sibelius in the Old and New World* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 29.

[24] Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 161.

[25] Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 165; and Barnett, Sibelius, 99.

[26] Tawaststjerna, Sibelius, 166; and Barnett, Sibelius, 99.

[27] Barnett, Sibelius, 150–151.

[28] Jürgen Kindermann, *Thematisch-chronologisches Verzeichnis der Werke von Ferruccio B. Busoni* (Regensburg, 1980), 217.

[29] Busoni, Letters to his Wife, trans. Rosamond Ley (New York: Da Capo Press, 1975), 54.

[30] Goss, Sibelius, 94.

[31] Ibid., 94–95.

[32] This concept echoes Liszt's poetic idea in his tone poems. Busoni would later argue that "representation and description are not the nature of music," and that a program imposes upon the original musical idea its own developmental process and thus becomes a limiting factor, *Sketch of A New Esthetic of Music*, trans. Dr. Th. Baker (New York: G. Schirmer, 1911), 9.

[33] Veijo Murtomäki, "The Problem of Narrativity in the Symphonic Poem *En Saga* by Jean Sibelius," in *Musical Signification: Essays in the Semiotic Theory and Analysis of Music*, ed. Eero Tarasti (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1995), 472: "Instead of illustrating a story or plot, Sibelius reveals only general programs in his symphonic poems." See also Daniel Grimley, "The Tone Poems: Genre, Landscape, and Structural Perspective," in *The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 99.

[34] Goss, Sibelius, 95.

[35] En saga, Op. 9 (two versions), in Jean Sibelius Works-A Critical Edition, Orchestral and Symphonic Works, Volume I/10, ed. Tuija Wicklund (2007).

[36] Tim Howell, *Jean Sibelius: Progressive Techniques in the Symphonies and Tone Poems* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1989), 207-10. Veijo Murtomäki, "The Problem of Narrativity in the Symphonic Poem *En Saga* by Jean Sibelius," 477–484.

[37] Howell's discussion of the thematic process is in the context of his broader idea that the later revisions paralleled developments in Sibelius's symphonic thinking at the time. He points out, in dialogue with Nils-Eric Ringbom's "The Two Versions of Sibelius' Tone-Poem 'En Saga' " (Turku, 1956), that these changes involved formal compression and a higher degree of tonal and structural uniformity, the latter evident in a "greater consistency in thematic treatment, variation, combination and development of material, and the elimination of particularly incongruent elements" (203). While this is certainly true, with regard to his specific description of the motivic and thematic connections in the section on thematic process, those relationships did not change significantly from the first to the second version.

[38] Howell, Jean Sibelius, 207.

[39] Murtomäki, "The Problem of Narrativity," 479.

[40] Howell, Jean Sibelius, 208.

[41] Murtomäki, "The Problem of Narrativity," 485, and "Sibelius's Symphonic Ballad Skogsrået," 114–115.

[42] Murtomäki, "Sibelius's Symphonic Ballad *Skogsrået*," 122; and Timothy L. Jackson, "Observations on Crystallization and Entropy in the Music of Sibelius and Other Composers," in *Sibelius Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 214–218.

[43] Murtomäki, "Sibelius's Symphonic Ballad Skogsrået," 122.

[44] Jackson, "Observations on Crystallization and Entropy," 217.

[45] Jorma Daniel Lünenbürger, "Sibelius's Berlin Period and the G minor Piano Quintet," in *Sibelius in The Old and New World*, 145.

[46] Jackson, "Observations on Crystallization and Entropy," 188.

[47] Harri Miettunen, *Finlandia*, translated by Jaakko Mäntyjärvi in *United Kingdom Sibelius Society Newsletter*, no. 59 (2006).

[48] Murtomäki refers to this section as a 'scherzo', or the B section of a smaller ABA form within the larger form, "Sibelius's Symphonic Ballad *Skogsrået*," 122.

[49] Murtomäki, "The Problem of Narrativity," 485.

[50] With regard to the String Quartet in A minor, see Barnett, Sibelius, 48.

[51] These features are discussed in James Hepokoski, "*Finlandia* Awakens," in *The Cambridge Companion to Sibelius*, 81–94.

[52] Busoni, The Essence of Music and Other Papers, 53 and 78.

[53] Goss, *Sibelius*, 94.

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