

Atti del VI Seminario Internazionale di Filologia Musicale.

«La filologia musicale oggi: il retaggio storico e le nuove prospettive»

## Jean Sibelius *Symphony No. 1.* Sources and Critical Edition

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Jean Sibelius Works (The National Library of Finland)

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§ Jean Sibelius's First Symphony was premiered in 1899. The composer revised the work in 1900 and probably made further revisions before the publication (1902). Three primary sources were available for the Critical Edition of the Symphony, namely, the autograph score, the first edition of the score, and the first edition of the orchestral parts. The most problematic factor in this source situation was the lack of exact congruence between any (pair) of the sources. Sibelius's participation in the publication process of the Symphony does not appear to have been especially active. He was not a willing or scrupulous proofreader of his work. Although the first edition of the score represents the final text of the work and has been ranked as the main source in the Critical Edition, it could not be evaluated as reliable and decisive source in every respect.

§ La prima sinfonia di Jean Sibelius fu eseguita per la prima volta nel 1899. Il compositore fece una revisione della sinfonia nel 1900 e probabilmente anche prima della pubblicazione (1902). Per l'edizione critica sono disponibili tre fonti primarie: la partitura autografa, la prima edizione della partitura e la prima edizione delle parti orchestrali. L'aspetto più problematico della situazione delle fonti è la mancanza della congruenza esatta tra qualsiasi (coppia) fonte. La partecipazione di Sibelius nel processo di pubblicazione della sinfonia probabilmente non fu molto attiva. Non era un correttore di bozze zelante o scrupoloso con il proprio lavoro. Anche se la prima edizione della partitura rappresenta il testo finale del lavoro, ed è stata classificata come la fonte principale nella edizione critica, non può essere valutata come fonte affidabile e decisiva sotto ogni aspetto.

### Sources

It is probable that Sibelius worked from 1897 onwards on the material which would eventually appear as the First Symphony in 1899. The compositional process of the Symphony was intermingled with the creation of several other works from the late 1890s, especially that of the incidental music *King Christian II*. The Symphony was premiered under Sibelius's baton in February 1899. He revised the work in the spring of the following year, and the revised version was first performed in July 1900.

Sibelius hoped to get the Symphony printed as soon as possible, but had to wait more than two years for the publication, i.e. until autumn 1902. He may have made further revisions to the work between 1900 and the date of the publication. However, there is no mention of these possible revisions survived in the literary or other sources.

The primary sources in the Critical Edition of the Symphony (*Jean Sibelius Works I/2*) are:

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>A</b>                    | Sibelius's autograph score (1899-1902?; Sibelius Museum, Turku, Finland)   |
| <b>B-1*</b> and <b>B-2*</b> | Orchestral parts for the first performances (1899 and 1900, both lost)   |
| <b>C*</b>                   | Engraver's copy (lost)   |
| <b>D</b>                    | First edition of the score (published by Helsingfors Nya Musikhandel Fazer & Westerlund, but printed in Germany in 1902) |
| <b>E</b>                    | First edition of the orchestral parts (Helsingfors Nya Musikhandel Fazer & Westerlund, 1902)                             |

Having undergone several revisions, the autograph score of the Symphony contains many layers. It consists of various paper types and, judging from the markings and handwritings by different copyists, and the altered paginations, the folios of the manuscripts derive from different periods. The oldest layer probably represents the period of the first version, early in 1899. The second layer may derive from the period of the revisions in 1900. And the latest folios possibly date from the year of the 1902 publication.

The orchestral parts for the 1899 premiere and also the parts for the premiere of the revised version in 1900 (**B-1\*** and **B-2\***) are now lost. These parts were probably copied from the autograph score, as was the copy used as *Stichvorlage* for the first edition engraved in 1902 in Leipzig. The printed orchestral parts (**E**) were presumably based on earlier handwritten parts, possibly on those of the year 1900 (**B-2\***).

The central problem in the editorial work resulted from the fact that there are many differences between the autograph score, which itself is a complicated source, and the first edition of the score. The autograph score does not represent the final form of the work: even the numbers of measures within the movements differ from the final ones. Neither does the first edition fully correspond to the simultaneously produced printed orchestral parts. The handwritten woodwind, brass, percussion and harp parts deviate from the printed score in some details, and come closer to the reading in the autograph score. The engraved string parts, however, correspond more closely with the printed score. Thus, the printed parts are, in a sense, situated «somewhere between» the autograph and the first edition of the score. Because the first edition represents the work in its final form, it was an obvious choice as the main source for the Critical Edition.

Sibelius's son-in-law, conductor Jussi Jalas, discussed performance questions with the composer. Jalas made notes from the discussions, and also published a book containing some details concerning performance. According to JALAS (1988, p. 36),

Sibelius was not interested in the proofreading of his works. He said that the proofs always had to be read in haste and, by that stage, the composer always had something new underway. In the First Symphony [Jalas means the printed score] there are no wrong notes, as such, but especially in the case of the small accents and dynamics, there are many things which have not been marked or cause misreading. Usually these places still become clear after comparing the exposition and the recapitulation.

In its main features, Jalas's description matches the experience emerged during the present editorial work. Details of dynamics and articulation gave especial trouble. However, the printed score also contains «wrong notes» and different types of inaccuracies and questionable readings. In these cases the autograph score was an extremely important, sometimes decisive, source.

The first edition of the orchestral parts did not fundamentally steer the editorial decisions, although it did occasionally throw extra light and afford support to them. Based on an analysis of the differences between the three key sources and also on grounds of analogy, it was possible in the Critical Edition to correct nearly 200 unequivocal errors and deficiencies, and around the same number of other inaccuracies found in the earlier printed score.

Even though a «missing link,» the *Stichvorlage*, has probably existed between the autograph and the printed score, a comparison between the surviving sources made it possible in surprisingly many cases to draw conclusions about the likely reasons for the various readings in the sources, also where and why an error or inaccuracy in the printed score might have occurred. As usual, the differences are often due to copyist's or engraver's (and possibly also publisher's editor's) involvement, and partly due to Sibelius's uneven and casual attitude to proofreading.

In the Critical Commentary of the Critical Edition, the various changes or mistakes made by the copyist or the engraver in the printed score and the printed parts have been described as «oversights,» «inaccuracies,» «misreadings,» or «misinterpretations.» These distinctions have been made in order to characterize and clarify the differences between the autograph and printed sources and also the probable origin of these differences in as informative and brief a manner as possible. Of course, lacking the engraver's copy, we cannot always know which errors were made by the copyist and which by the engraver. Furthermore, the lines of demarcation between these «error» categories cannot be wholly defined; for instance, it was not always easy to decide whether an error should be described as «an inaccuracy,» «a misreading» or «a misinterpretation.» Here follows an explanation of the adopted error categories:

«Oversight»

A detail in Sibelius's notation has gone unnoticed by the copyist. Some typical reasons for oversights:

- Sibelius did not write the marking precisely where it belonged to: for instance, a dynamic mark written anticipatorily in the previous bar or before the note head;
- in the autograph many different (layers of) markings have been written simultaneously;
- the reading in the autograph is unclear because of corrections or because the markings have been written partly over each other: for instance, a hairpin, a tie or a slur crosses over a dynamic mark.

«Inaccuracy»

Sibelius's original notation has not been followed precisely. Very typically, length and placement of hairpins (or >) were copied and/or engraved inaccurately.

«Misreading»

Errors caused by Sibelius's unclear handwriting (or some other reason): for instance, **mp** has sometimes been misread and miscopied as **mf** (and vice versa), poco **f** as più **f**, etc.

«Misinterpretation»

Typical instances:

- a) misinterpreted placement: beginnings and ends of slurs, hairpins, and dynamic marks;
- b) an overgeneralization: a marking intended for a single instrument (staff) or a certain group of instruments (staves) has erroneously been copied for other instruments; typically,
  - a marking or markings intended for a wind instrument solo (such as Cor. I) has been copied to other members of the instrumental group (Cor. II, III and IV);
  - *decrescendo* hairpins in the woodwind have also been copied to the brass in cases where Sibelius has marked a *dim.* for the latter instruments;
- c) excluding apparently redundant markings:
  - when Sibelius marked both a decrescendo hairpin and *dim.* simultaneously, one or other may have been excluded;
  - omission of repeated dynamic marks, such as **f f f**... for successive notes (which was a typical accentuation/articulation instruction used by Sibelius).

The above distinctions have been used when expedient and when reasons for the differences can be determined clearly enough. It should be added that differences between the autograph score and the printed sources may also appear «with no visible reason,» even when the composer's original notation as such seems clear and unambiguous.

## **Editorial problems**

In the following I shall discuss three examples of different kinds of problems encountered in the editorial work on the First Symphony, with their solutions

in the Critical Edition. The first of these illustrates problems deriving from the several layers and heterogeneous nature of Sibelius's autograph score. Probably due to the revisions made in the third movement of the Symphony, mm. 318-323 appear twice in the autograph, on pages 22 and 41. In the Critical Edition, these parallel pages have been designated as **A(a)** and **A(b)**. The printed score and parts are based on the latter of these. Chronologically **A(b)** is later of the pages, and Sibelius seems to have copied it directly from **A(a)**. This evidently happened rather quickly. In **A(b)** there are obvious deficiencies which indicate that Sibelius has been an inaccurate copyist.

Perhaps the most striking example of carelessness is the absence of the timpani part in mm. 322-323 in **A(b)**. The timpani play in **A(a)**, whilst in **A(b)** these measures are left blank. Comparison between these and movement's corresponding mm. 61-64 confirms the reading of **A(a)** as correct. Thus, in the Critical Edition the timpani part in mm. 322-323 has been completed in accordance with **A(a)** and by analogy with mm. 61-64. This solution deviates from the reading in the main source, i.e. the first edition of the score.

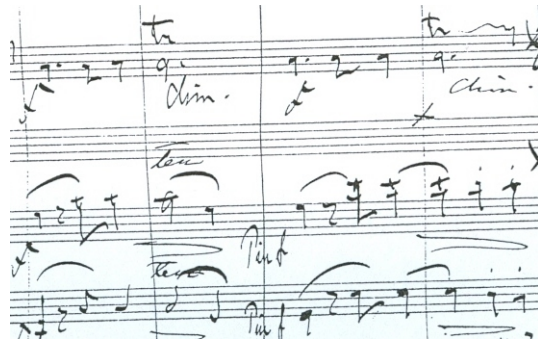
The second problem probably results from copyist's difficulty in interpreting Sibelius's handwriting, and the composer's lack of attentiveness during the proofreading. Measures 143, 145, and 146 in the *Scherzo* contain many questionable details (see Example. 2):

1. in the printed score, in m. 143 the half note in the cellos is *B*, but in the autograph score (more likely) *A*;
2. in the printed score, in m. 145 the last eighth note in the first and the second violins is *c*<sup>1</sup>, but in the autograph score *a*;
3. in the printed score, in m. 146 in double-basses there is a third *B-d*<sup>#</sup>, but in the autograph score only a single *B*.

The editorial solutions in the Critical Edition are as follows:

1. Sibelius made changes to the viola and double-bass parts in this measure. In the violas, the upper note of the original third has been crossed out. Originally the double basses had *B*, but Sibelius later changed the note to *A*. The note on the cello staff is somewhat unclear, but Sibelius probably changed the original *B* to *A* by reshaping the note head. Did the copyist misinterpret the note, and did Sibelius fail to notice the misplacement when proofreading? That is probably the case, and in the Critical Edition *A* has also been printed for the cellos.
2. In the printed score there is an evident (copyist's or engraver's) error which was overlooked by the composer during the proofreading. With all probability, the passage in the violins should correspond with that in m. 141 (and in the autograph score). The reading in the Critical Edition is in accordance with the autograph score.

3. Could Sibelius have added the  $d\sharp$  for the double basses later? But why in this measure only, since there is a third in the cellos already in m. 141. It is rather unlikely that the addition would derive from the composer. A third in the double basses in a low register would, in this connection, be highly exceptional. Probably the copyist or the engraver has inadvertently copied/engraved the third in the cellos for the double basses as well. Also at this point, the Critical Edition follows the reading in the autograph score.



**Example 1a.** Movement III, mm. 320-323; timpani and first violin staves on the autograph score page 22.

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**Example 1b.** Movement III, mm. 320-323; timpani, harp and first violin staves on the autograph score page 41.

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**Example 2.** Movement III, mm. 143-147; string instrument staves on p. 15 of the autograph score.

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The third problem, of metronome indications, concerns each movement of the Symphony, but the kernel of the problem lies in m. 38 of the Finale. The First Symphony is the only work among Sibelius's symphonies to have metronome indications printed in the first edition of the score. With the exception of the two pencilled additions discussed later, the autograph score does not include metronome markings, and it is not known at exactly what stage of the revision or publication process the metronome markings were added, and by whom. In the printed parts there are no metronome indications. Sibelius's list of metronome indications published in 1942/1943 in Breitkopf & Härtel's leaf «Jean Sibelius: Metronombezeichnungen zu seinen Symphonien» contains markings which do not appear in the first edition of the score (see source **H-2** in the Table below). Sibelius's *Handexemplare* of the First Symphony do not throw any additional light on the metronome markings.

As mentioned earlier, apart for the two additions in pencil in the fourth movement of the Symphony, Sibelius's autograph score does not contain metronome markings. In the Finale the autograph score has only one clear metronome marking and one possible metronome marking added in pencil in two unidentified hands. Firstly, *Meno andante* in m. 38 has the marking half note = 108 (Example 3a). Secondly, the following *Allegro molto* (m. 50) bears the marking 144, which possibly also refers to the tempo (quarter note = 144; Example 3b). Each of these indications differs from those given in Sibelius's list of metronome markings published in B&H's leaf. The first of the markings in the autograph score is especially striking: the pencilled

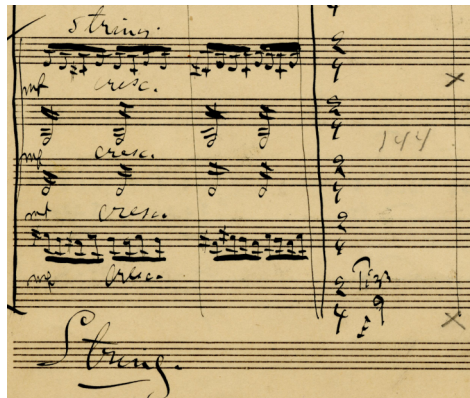


tempo at *Meno andante* (half note = 108) is twice as fast as in the printed score and in the metronome marking list.



**Example 3a.** Movement IV, mm. 38-41; string staves on the autograph score page 5.

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**Example 3b.** Movement IV, mm. 48-50; string staves on the autograph score page 6.

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At the beginnings of the first and last movements, no metronome value has been given. Nor do the *Molto tranquillo* in the second movement (mm. 85ff.), the *Lento (ma non troppo)* in the third movement (mm. 159 ff.), or the *Andante assai* (mm. 163ff.) in the finale have metronome indications. It is possible that Sibelius did not find it necessary or did not want to have metronome values to be printed for the clarinet solo introduction of the first movement or for the opening of the *Finale (Quasi una fantasia)* in the score. However, the later metronome indication list also contains metronome values for these openings.

In the fourth movement, mm. 38-47, the recording conducted by Sibelius's friend Robert Kajanus in 1930 comes close to the metronome marking given in the autograph score, even though the tempo is not exactly as fast as half note = 108. Kajanus's tempo at *Allegro molto*, however, is close to quarter note = 160. Thus, the tempo as marked in the autograph score and heard in the Kajanus recording contradicts the tempo instruction in the printed score and in the list of metronome markings. Considering that Kajanus had absorbed the tempo conceptions from Sibelius himself – something the composer also declared – and that Sibelius especially appreciated Kajanus's performances of his works (including the 1930 First Symphony recording, which he rated as exemplary), the First Symphony recording can be regarded as offering significant information on authentic performance tradition.



Therefore, in the Critical Edition it also has been included amongst the sources for the Symphony (source **K**).

The metronome markings appearing in the different sources have been given in the following Table. Jussi Jalas's copy of the printed score (source **F**), which contains performance instructions indicated as deriving from the composer, has been included among the sources in the Table.

**I** *Andante, ma non troppo – Allegro energico* (m. 29)

Measure	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>H-2</b>	<b>K</b>
1	–	♩ = 48	♩ = 48	♩ < 48
29	♩. = 108	♩. = 84	♩. = 108	♩. ≈ 100

**II** *Andante (ma non troppo lento)*

Measure	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>H-2</b>	<b>K</b>
1	♩ = 54	–	♩ = 54	♩ ≈ 42-48

**III** *Allegro*

Measure	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>H-2</b>	<b>K</b>
1	♩. = 104	♩. = 84	♩. = 104	♩. ≈ 100

**IV** *Andante (poco stretto – a tempo) – Meno andante* (m. 38) – *Allegro molto* (m. 50)

Measure	<b>A</b>			
38	♩ – 108 (pencil, not in Sibelius's hand)			
50	[♩ =]144 (pencil, in Sibelius's hand?)			
Measure	<b>D</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>H-2</b>	<b>K</b>
1	–	–	♩ = 48	♩ ≈ 50
38	♩ = 108	<i>printing error</i> ♩ = 80	♩ = 108	♩ (!) ≈ 100
50	–	♩ = 160	♩ = 168	♩ ≈ 160

**Table.** Metronome markings/tempi appearing in the First Symphony sources.

The conductors Jussi Jalas and Simon Parmet discussed the problems of metronome markings in the First Symphony in their writings. Jalas writes specifically about the tempo at the *Meno andante* (JALAS 1988, p. 38): «the metronome number on page 111, for one, is a clear printing error, because 'meno andante' means speeding up of the tempo[...]» Parmet was equally sceptical towards Sibelius's metronome markings, especially in the case of the First Symphony. According to Parmet, the metronome markings in the printed

score do not derive from Sibelius himself, but were added by the publisher (PARMET 1955, p. 10). Even though this would not have been exactly the case, the derivation of the markings has remained uncertain.

The metronome markings in the printed score and other sources come across as somewhat arbitrary and highly questionable. Even though printing the metronome indications in the Critical Edition would have been a decision loyal to the main source, it might also have been interpreted as a statement in favor of their reliability, even if their questionable and otherways problematic nature was discussed in the Critical Commentary. Therefore, in the Critical Edition, the metronome indications have not been printed directly in the score, but in the footnotes, where the reader's attention also is guided to the Critical Commentary and a thorough discussion on the question. Moreover, pages 5 and 6 of the autograph score have been included as facsimiles in the edition. On the one hand, this solution retains in the score the information of the main source, and on the other hand, points out the problematic nature of the metronome markings: problematic they indeed are, at least from the text-critical perspective.

### **Conclusion**

Although the editorial problems discussed in this presentation have been lead to solutions deviating from the readings in the main source, I have attempted to show that the result in the Critical Edition (JSW) is not an arbitrary mixture of sources based on the editor's personal predilections or imaginative viewpoint. In an edition striving as close as possible to the composer's intentions concerning the musical text, the editorial solutions were necessarily often based on the autograph, even though this may have led to contradictions with readings in the main source. Details from the autograph have, however, not been included casual fashion with regard to the textual frame of the main source. The present edition has fully exploited the internal analogies of the main source as well as information offered by the other sources, and has drawn upon extensive experience gathered concerning Sibelius's notational practice and style.

This discussion has been focused on the score, which in a way is the crucial component in an edition of a musical work. However, it should be remembered that in addition to the scores, the critical editions offer many other types of information. The JSW edition of Sibelius's First Symphony also includes performance instructions and changes to the score documented as being given by the composer himself, as well as a complete list of sketches for the work. Thus, the JSW edition is intended to offer for musicians and scholars, as well as other interested, a multidimensional picture of the young composer's masterwork.

### **Bibliography**

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**Timo Virtanen** joined the editorial staff of the critical edition *Jean Sibelius Works* (JSW) in 1997, and since 2006 he has worked as editor-in-chief in the project. His editions of Sibelius's First and Third Symphonies (JSW I/2 and I/4) were published in 2008 and 2009 respectively, and his edition of the two versions of *Cassazione* (JSW I/11) will be published in 2010.

**Timo Virtanen** dal 1997 fa parte del comitato di redazione dell'edizione critica *Jean Sibelius Works* (JSW), e dal 2006 ricopre la carica di responsabile scientifico del progetto. Le edizioni da lui curate della prima e terza sinfonia (JSW I/2 e I/4) sono state pubblicate nel 2008 e nel 2009, e l'edizione delle due versioni di *Cassazione* (JSW I/11) sarà pubblicata nel 2010.