SYMPHONY NO. 1 IN F MAJOR, OP. 17, BY ZDENĚK FIBICH: AN AMALGAMATION OF CZECH AND GERMAN MUSICAL STYLES

by David Arthur Dunbar

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Haus Cocker O	Date: 12/1/17
Thomas Cockrell	
Donald Hamann	Date: 12/1/17
Chad Nicholson	Date: 12/1/17

Final approval and acceptance of this document is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copies of the document to the Graduate College.

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Von Cold	Date: 12/1/17
Document Director: Thomas Cockrell	

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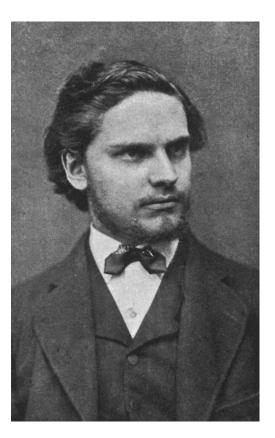
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Dedicated to my mother and father Maria Frieda Rachor (1938–2016) Edward Marshall Dunbar (1939–2011)

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Zdeněk Fibich (1871)

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	8
ABSTRACT	10
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	11
Intent and Scope of Study	11
Justification for the Study	
Review of Scholarly Literature	
CHAPTER TWO: ZDENĚK FIBICH	
Ethnic Background and Musical Training	15
Historical Reviews of His Music	17
Perceptions of Aural Derivation	19
Current Insights	22
CHAPTER THREE: NATIONALISM IN NINETEENTH CENTURY EUROPE	24
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF SYMPHONY NO. 1 IN F MAJOR	28
Overview	28
Analysis of the First Movement ("Allegro moderato")	29
Analysis of the Second Movement ("Scherzo")	30
Analysis of the Third Movement ("Adagio non troppo")	32
Analysis of the Fourth Movement ("Finale")	33
CHAPTER FIVE: CZECH MUSICAL INFLUENCES IN SYMPHONY NO. 1	35
Overview	35
Folk Music Influence	36
Comparison: Symphony No. 9 by Dvořák and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich	37
CHAPTER SIX: GERMAN MUSICAL INFLUENCES IN SYMPHONY NO. 1 Overview	
Comparison: Symphony No. 5 by Beethoven and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich	54
Comparison: Symphony No. 7 by Beethoven and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich	60
Comparison: Symphony No. 4 by Brahms and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich	
Comparison: "Scherzo" from Ein Sommernachtstraum by Mendelssohn and	
Symphony No. 1 by Fibich	
Comparison to Stylistic Characteristics of Anton Bruckner	
Fugato	77

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION	80
APPENDIX: Symphony No. 1 in F major, Op. 17, by Zdeněk Fibich (in full score)	82
First movement	
Second movement	
Third movement	148
Fourth movement	163
REFERENCES	210

LIST OF FIGURES

4.1	Analysis of the first movement including the primary melodic motives	29
4.2	Analysis of the second movement including the fugato subject	30
4.3	Analysis of the third movement including the primary melodic motives	32
4.4	Analysis of the fourth movement	33
5.1	Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor (I), ms. 91–94	37
5.2	Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor (I), ms. 91–97	38
5.3	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 122–125	43
5.4	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 122–129	44
5.5	Melodic inversion	46
5.6	Melodic comparison	47
5.7	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (III), ms. 27–30	48
5.8	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 5–8	52
6.1	Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor (I), ms. 380–392	55
6.2	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (IV), ms. 35–39	58
6.3	Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A major (II), ms. 214–221	61
6.4	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (III), ms. 43–45	63
6.5	Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor (IV), ms. 65–69	66
6.6	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 49–53	68
6.7	Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor (IV), ms. 65–70	69
6.8	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 49–53	69

6.9	Mendelssohn: "Scherzo" from <i>Ein Sommernachtstraum</i> , ms. 1–16	71
6.10	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 3–11	72
6.11	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 1–4	73
6.12	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (IV), ms. 28–35	74
6.13	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 138–145	75
6.14	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 158–169	77
6.15	Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 170–177	78

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that *Symphony No. 1 in F major*, Op. 17, by Zdeněk Fibich embodies musical style features associated with both Czech and German composers of the nineteenth century. The identification of these style features is accomplished by comparing and contrasting Fibich's *Symphony No. 1 in F major* with works by other prominent Czech and German composers whose music was performed and well-known at the time. Particular emphasis is placed on the aural similarities between Fibich's first symphony and that of other composers' works in an effort to show Fibich's unique hybrid compositional style.

A second area of focus is the rise in European nationalism during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Due to Fibich's mixed Czech and German heritage, nationalism is explored in order to ascertain what effect, if any, nationalistic bias might have had on the overall reception of Fibich's music and the composer's ability to have his music performed during his lifetime.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

Intent and Scope of Study

This study examines the *Symphony No. 1 in F major*, Op. 17, by Zdeněk Fibich (1850–1900) in order to show the composer's hybrid compositional style. Of primary interest are musical style features associated with composers of two ethnicities, namely Czech and German, which Fibich was able to synthesize to create his own musical language. This synthesis of musical styles is identified through a comparison of common compositional elements as well as aural similarities between Fibich's *Symphony No. 1 in F major* and those of other Czech and German composers whose music was performed and well-known at the time.

Additionally, the political and cultural context of Central Europe during the latenineteenth century, and in particular the rise of nationalism, is briefly addressed. This is to show, in part, how ethnic biases may have affected the composer's notoriety, as well as the ability in getting his music performed.

Justification for the Study

Fibich and his music have received very little attention from music scholars, as well as performers, in spite of the fact that Fibich is considered one of the greatest Czech composers of the Romantic Period.¹ This study is the first detailed examination and analysis of Fibich's *Symphony No. 1 in F major*, as well as one of the only detailed studies into his symphonic literature.

Nineteenth century reviews of Fibich's music, as well as modern commentaries, note that his music has aural similarities to that of notable German composers. However, none of these observations venture beyond a brief comment or two regarding the perceived derivative nature of the composer's music. This study is the first to provide specific empirical musical examples based on identifiable musical elements (melody, harmony, rhythm, etc.) and subsequently show *why* Fibich's music sounds German at times and Czech at others.

It is this author's opinion that the rise of European nationalism during the latter half of the nineteenth century contributed to Fibich's paucity of notoriety, including the frequency with which his music was performed during his lifetime and continued into the twentieth century. This effect was due in part to the composer's Czech/German background and extensive German musical training, which in turn is reflected in the music he composed. This study is the first to explore the concept of nationalistic bias and its affect on the reception of Zdeněk Fibich's musical output.

¹ Antonín Václav, "Fibich, Zdeněk [Zdenko]," Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, Oxford University Press, accessed September 18, 2016, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy1.library. arizona.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/09590.

Review of Scholarly Literature

With the exception of one biography from 1971 written in Czech (*Zdeněk Fibich* by Vladimír Hudec), there are no recent extended biographies of the composer. Articles on Fibich in biographical dictionaries such as the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* as well as articles provided by The Zdeněk Fibich Society² are the most useful sources of biographical information about the composer. However, even these sources only provide a general overview of the composer's life and are far from exhaustive in their content.

Full scores and instrumental parts of musical works by Fibich are largely unavailable outside of the Czech Republic. More than twenty scores can be found online, however most of these are of his solo works or chamber pieces. A small selection of his larger scale works, such as his operas and melodramas, are available for rental or purchase. In contrast, the full scores of many symphonic works by Smetana, Dvořák, and notable German composers are readily available.

Beyond a small collection of brief CD and concert program notes, there is no extensive scholarly literature on Fibich's *Symphony No. 1 in F major*. Regarding the composer's symphonies, there is one article by Patrick F. Devine, "The Fin-de-Siècle Symphonies of Zdeněk Fibich: Parallels and Contrasts," wherein the second and third symphonies of Fibich are discussed. However, the Devine article is only a general overview of those two works.

² Zdeněk Fibich, "CV," The Zdeněk Fibich Society, accessed 22 September 2016, http://www.fibich.cz/en/zdenek-fibich/the-zdenek-fibich-society.

There are numerous sources available for information on nineteenth century nationalism, and more than a dozen have been consulted for the nationalism component of this project. There are also several sources relating specifically to nationalism as it affected Czech culture during the late nineteenth century. However, there is little information regarding how nationalism influenced Czech music, and no sources on nationalism that mention Zdeněk Fibich specifically.

CHAPTER TWO:

ZDENĚK FIBICH

Ethnic Background and Musical Training

Born December 21, 1850 in Všebořice, Bohemia, Zdeněk Fibich (pronounced zdenjek fibiç) was of mixed parentage; his father, Jan Fibich, was Czech and his mother, Marie Römisch, was German. Fibich was bilingual, fluent in both Czech and German. His musical talents were cultivated early and his mother taught him piano beginning at age seven. At age twelve, under the guidance of a local parish priest named František Černý, Fibich fashioned his first composition: a hymn setting of *Pange lingua*, now lost. During his early years he attended schools in Vienna and in Prague. In 1865, Fibich moved to Leipzig where he continued his piano and composition studies. Among his teachers were Ignaz Moscheles (1794–1870) and Ernst Friedrich Richter (1808–79) at the Leipzig Conservatory, as well as Salomon Jadassohn (1831–1902) who instilled in him an interest in Bach and counterpoint.³

Between 1868 and 1870, Fibich continued his musical training in Paris and then in Mannheim, where he also pursued an interest in art and sculpture. In 1870, he returned to Prague where he concentrated on composition which, in addition to teaching, were his sole sources of income. One of his first works of importance was the composition, *Záboj*, *Slavoj a Luděk* (1873), which was the first tone poem written on a theme from Czech

³ Antonín Václav, "Fibich, Zdeněk [Zdenko]," Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, Oxford University Press, accessed September 18, 2016, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy1.library. arizona.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/09590.

mythology. This work predates Smetana's famous *Ma Vlast* (1874) which is commonly, although incorrectly, considered the first Czech tone poem.⁴

Fibich was also a pioneer of the concert melodrama, which became popular among the Czech people in the latter half of the nineteenth century. While most melodramas of the time consisted of spoken text alternating with incidental music, the melodramas of Fibich are characterized by spoken text over continuous music. Of the nine melodramas Fibich wrote, his last one, titled *Hippodamie* (1888–91), is a trilogy of fully staged melodramas of four acts each. Antonín Václav describes *Hippodamie* in the following manner:

In a further effort to balance words and music, [Fibich] assigned a speaking voice (with pitch and rhythm unspecified) to the continuous text against an accompaniment characterized by an intricate web of leitmotifs. Through careful control of texture and density in the orchestral writing he was able to avoid obscuring the simultaneously performed text, providing music that achieved a successful synthesis with the words.⁵

Over the next thirty years, Fibich would compose a large number of works representing numerous genres. In regard to the quality of his music, there appeared to be little disagreement among the sources consulted for this document. Antonín Václav, in his article on Fibich in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, states that

"after Smetana and Dvořák, [Fibich] was the most prominent Czech composer of the

⁴ Vladimír Štěpánek and Bohumil Karásek, *An Outline of Czech and Slovak Music, Part I: Czech Music* (Prague: Orbis, 1964), 61.

⁵ Antonín Václav, "Fibich, Zdeněk [Zdenko]," Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online, Oxford University Press, accessed September 18, 2016, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy1. library.arizona.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/09590.

second half of the 19th century."⁶ Václav then continued to say that "Fibich is often referred to as the greatest Czech Romantic composer. A cultured man with a broad knowledge of art and literature as well as an extensive familiarity with music of the past."

Historical Reviews of His Music

Music reviews from the late nineteenth century provide valuable insight into the perception of Fibich and his music in relation to his contemporaries. There are several compilations of period reviews, including an article in a musicological study by Vlasta Reitterová and Viktor Velek titled, "Wien um 1900 und die Wiener Rezeption der Werke von Zdeněk Fibich" ("Vienna ca. 1900 and the Viennese Reception of Works by Zdeněk Fibich").⁷ Within the Reitterová and Velek article are musical critiques of Fibich's works published during the composer's lifetime. In their summary, Reitterová and Velek describe that Fibich was a popular Czech composer of the time although admittedly within a limited scope:

Although incomparably fewer works by Fibich were performed in Vienna than by other Czech composers (quite apart from Dvořák, who clearly predominated), he did find his devotees and promoters in Vienna among journalistic, artistic, and private circles. Fibich was considered a modern composer with the courage to experiment, although he built on the bequest of his precursors and linked his work to theirs.⁸

⁶ Václav, "Fibich, Zdeněk [Zdenko]."

⁷ Vlasta Reitterová and Viktor Velek, "Wien um 1900 und die Wiener Rezeption der Werke von Zdeněk Fibich," *Musicologica Olomucensia* (Olomouc, Czech Republic: Palacký University Press, 2010).

⁸ Ibid., 61.

Eduard Hanslick (1825–1904), a prominent German-Bohemian music critic wrote the following review after hearing a concert by the Vienna Philharmonic containing a work by Fibich:

The second Philharmonic concert began with a play-overture by Zdenko Fibich, *Noc na Karlštejně*. On the title page of the score is it called *Une nuit à Carlstein*. Yes, not a single word in German! At least someone was kind enough to translate the title into German on the Vienna concert list, *Eine Nacht auf Karlstein*. And the Czech composers perform it mainly in German cities...The novelty of Fibich's music was met with lively applause. However, alongside the opera-overture [*The Bartered Bride*] by Smetana, which we also know from Philharmonic concerts, it cannot be compared. The latter is so delicate and graceful, it fits its name well, while the Fibich is much too demanding and noisy for a musical performance. The title, however, is not so much an issue for us. If the musical meaning of the principal motives were in proper proportion instead of being long and pompous in execution, we might be indifferent to the Czech theater being opened with it.⁹

Although Hanslick's review above of Fibich's Noc na Karlštejně is not necessarily

negative, it is important to note that it is much more critical than any review he wrote about the music of one of Fibich's peers: Antonín Dvořák. In fact, Hanslick and Dvořák had a "cordial personal relationship" and even performed duets together on piano.¹⁰ After sitting on a jury for the Austrian Ministry of Culture and Education, Hanslick wrote the following regarding music that Dvořák had submitted for a grant in 1874:

¹⁰ Gervase Hughes, *Dvořák: His Life and Times*, (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1967), 75.

⁹ "Das zweite Philharmonische Konzert begann mit einer Lustspiel-Ouvertüre von Zdenko Fibich. Noc na Karlštejně. Une nuit à Carlstein heißt sie auf dem Titelblatt der Partitur. Nur ja kein deutsches Wort! Man war übrigens so gütig, auf dem Wiener Concertzettel die deutsche Uebersetzung [*sic*] Eine Nacht auf Karlstein zu gestatten. Und doch trachten die czechischen Componisten hauptsächlich nach Aufführungen in deutschen Städten...Auch die Novität von Fibich fand sehr lebhaften Beifall. Mit der Lustspiel-Ouverture [*sic*] von Smetana, welche wir gleichfalls aus den Philharmonischen Concerten kennen, ist sie freilich nicht zu vergleichen. Letztere, so fein und anmuthig dahinfließend, führt ihren Namen mit Recht, während die Fibich'sche viel zu anspruchsvoll und lärmend auftritt für ein Lustspiel. Der Titel ist jedoch für uns nicht entscheidend. Wenn die musikalische Bedeutung der Hauptmotive in richtigem Verhältniß stünde zu deren langgestreckter pomphafter Ausführung, so könnte uns gleichgiltig sein, welches czechische Theaterstück damit eröffnet werden soll." Trans. David Dunbar, Ibid., 12–13.

The majority of the applications coming to the ministry were documented with bulky and extensive scores. They were usually presented by composers who could satisfy only the first two of the three legal requirements — youth, poverty, and talent — and lacking the third. Indeed, we were very surprised to receive examples of the extensive and still growing talent of the Prague applicant, Antonín Dvořák. We remember especially his symphony which showed such a talent that one member of the commission, Herbeck, took a lively interest in it.¹¹

Perceptions of Aural Derivation

Reviews of musical performances written during the late nineteenth century alluded to the idea that audiences and critics heard the influence of German composers as well as composers of other nationalities in Fibich's music. Audiences and critics of the time appear to have held specific expectations when attending concert performances and often criticized Fibich's music for sounding too 'German' for a Czech composer. For example, in his critique of Fibich's *Noc na Karlštejně* above, Hanslick writes, "The subjects, which are a little reminiscent of Gade and Mendelssohn, are alive and very usable, but not original. The length, breadth, and final heroic point of the piece is not significant enough either. The implementation and instrumentation betray a very skillful hand."¹²

¹¹ Miroslav Ivanov, *In Dvořák's Footsteps: Musical Journeys in the New World* (Kirksville: The Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1995), 18.

¹² "Die Themen, ein wenig an Gade und Mendelssohn erinnernd, sind lebendig und sehr verwendbar, aber nicht von originellem Gepräge. Für die große Ausdehnung und den heroischen Schlußspectakel des Stückes auch nicht bedeutend genug. Durchführung und Instrumentation verrathen eine sehr geschickte, tüchtig geschulte Hand." Trans. David Dunbar, Vlasta Reitterová and Viktor Velek, "Wien um 1900 und die Wiener Rezeption der Werke von Zdeněk Fibich," *Musicologica Olomucensia* (Olomouc, Czech Republic: Palacký University Press, 2010), 61.

It is important to remember, however, that Fibich was technically a Czech composer by name only, and was just as much German as he was Czech. Although it is impossible to say, it is important to note that Fibich may even have considered himself more of a German composer than a Czech composer. Additionally, as discussed earlier, Fibich received most of this musical training from German teachers, beginning with the piano lessons given to him by his German mother. An explanation for the criticism Fibich received may be tied to an extra-musical component such as nationalistic bias.

Hermann Jung, in his article "Zdeněk Fibich und Antonín Dvořák. Zur Charakteristik ihrer Symphonien," ("Zdeněk Fibich and Antonín Dvořák. The Characteristics of their Symphonies,") provides a more specific musical example of perceived aural derivation when he describes the second movement of Fibich's *Symphony No. 1 in F major* in the following manner: "The Scherzo, which is in 3/4 time, makes easy allusions to the 'Sommernachtstraum' ('Midsummer Night's Dream') by Mendelssohn, while the Trio, of course, incorporates the tempo of a poetic Bohemian polka in straight rhythm, ending with a transition back into a repeat of the Scherzo."¹³ A close examination of the two pieces that Jung mentions above reveals that the scherzos share meter (in 3 but conducted in 1) as well as tempo (Allegro). It is possible that the "allusions" to which Jung refers pertain to the overall compositional style and aural qualities the two works have in common. This observation is significant when

¹³ "Das Scherzo im 3/4-Takt lässt leichte Allusionen an die 'Sommernachtstraum'-Sphäre bei Mendelssohn aufkommen, das Trio freilich ist eine im Tempo zurückgenommene poesievolle böhmische Polka im geraden Takt mit einer auskomponierten Überleitung zur Scherzo-Wiederholung." Hermann Jung, "Zdeněk Fibich und Antonín Dvořák. Zur Charakteristik ihrer Symphonien." Trans. David Dunbar, *Musicologica Olomucensia* (Olomouc, Czech Republic: Palacký University Press, 2010), 153.

considering that most concert attendees would not have had access to the full scores of the music and, like Jung, would only be able to make observations and judgments based on what they heard.

Ethnic Czechs at that time were also keenly aware of German influence on their culture's music. Jiří Zahrádka mentions this influence in his article on Šárka, a Czech legend about the fight between women and men (which was set to music through operas by both Fibich and Janáček):

With the start of the Czech society's efforts for emancipation in the second half of the 19th century a new field for the right dramaturgy and topics of Czech operas came into being, together with the birth of Czech national opera. Besides comic operas, e.g. operas with countryside themes, there appear motives from Czech history (rather idealized) and also, under the influence of German opera, motives from Czech mythology.¹⁴

Additionally, Czech music critics were quick to recognize the influence of German composers on the works of Fibich. Following the premiere of Fibich's opera *Nevěsta messinská* ("The Bride of Messina") at the National Theater in Prague in 1884, critics were "frightened by Wagnerian and non-Czech aspects of the music; the opera public ridiculed it by changing the title from *Die Braut von Messina* to *Messinge Braut* (a brass bride, therefore cold—and the opera as well)."¹⁵ In his article, "From Melodrama to Opera via Music Drama and Historical Reprises," Jiří Kopecký provides even greater

¹⁴ Jiří Zahrádka, "Šárka in the Eyes of Czech Composers, Attractive as Well as Ill-Favoured," *Musicologica Olomucensia* (Olomouc, Czech Republic: Palacký University Press, 2010), 1.

¹⁵ Jiří Kopecký, "From Melodrama to Opera via Music Drama and Historical Reprises," *Musicologica Olomucensia* (Olomouc, Czech Republic: Palacký University Press, 2010), 63.

detail on the perceived aural derivation by music critics and the public to Fibich and his opera following the premiere:

Fibich was caricatured as a naïve artist who had been duped by a devious aesthetician. Dvořák did not stay in the background: "Dvořák asked various people to name random notes, and wrote them down so that he could make a witticism about *Nevěsta messinská*: 'From these notes, one could create Tristan!' ¹⁶

This stinging criticism from Fibich's friend and colleague, Dvořák, infers that people perceived his music as not being fully Czech during a time when the Czech people were struggling to preserve their cultural identity. The hybrid nature of Fibich's compositional style was therefore noticed and subsequently criticized by audiences and musicians of the time.

Current Insights

Modern sources also provide insight into the aural similarities of Fibich's music with that of German composers. In a classical music CD review for *The Guardian* website titled "Fibich: Symphony No 1; Impressions from the Countryside – review," Tim Ashley writes, "Standing in the shadow of Smetana and Dvořák, [Fibich] has a reputation as a tragedy merchant whose fondness for Wagner was deemed excessive by his nationalist contemporaries."¹⁷ Ashley continued, "The First Symphony (1883) is both classical in structure and warmly attractive, though the fugue in the middle of the scherzo

¹⁶ Kopecký, "From Melodrama to Opera via Music Drama and Historical Reprises."

¹⁷ Tim Ashley, "Fibich: Symphony No 1; Impressions from the Countryside – review," accessed 18 August 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/apr/11/fibish-symphony-1-impressions-review.

strikes a false note."¹⁸ Although it is unclear what the author means specifically by "false note," it may correlate with the overall perception of Fibich's music as sounding derivative. This fugue which Ashley mentions (which is more accurately identified as a fugato) is examined in greater detail later in this study.

Marcus Thompson, artistic director of the Boston Chamber Music Society, offers the following on Fibich: "Although considered a precocious talent who received superlative training reflecting influences from Bach and Mozart to Mendelssohn and Wagner, he is today treated as a missing link between Dvořák, Smetana and Janáček in the history of Czech music."¹⁹ This quote from a modern-day artistic director alludes to the idea that modern audiences may continue to hear the influence of German composers in the music of Fibich. Thompson's statement also highlights an important question: why would a talented composer who received excellent training be virtually unknown among scholars? One possible answer, from an historical perspective, may lie in the social, cultural, and economic upheaval of the late nineteenth century; a phenomenon known today as nationalism.

¹⁸ Ashley, "Fibich: Symphony No 1; Impressions from the Countryside – review."

¹⁹ Marcus Thompson, "Who is Fibich?" Boston Chamber Music Society, accessed 17 November 2016, http://www.bostonchambermusic.org/blog/2012/02/who-is-fibich.

CHAPTER THREE:

NATIONALISM IN NINETEENTH CENTURY EUROPE

Perception of the arts, including music, was influenced by nationalism during the late nineteenth century in Europe. While the underlying causes for the rise in nationalism varied from region to region, the phenomenon has been identified generally as follows:

In the narrower sense of the word, 'national' movements came into being as soon as several members of an ethnic group – usually those who had had access to higher education – decided to spread national awareness and offer a new national identity, presenting it as something of a specific value and a commitment for all members of the group. In most cases the focus was on cultural, linguistic and social goals, but at times political demands were added too.²⁰

The catalyst for nationalism in Europe can be traced back to the French

Revolution of 1789 and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars which ended in 1815. By that point, and in contrast to much of the rest of Europe, France was a model of a unified, modern nation-state. As Napoleon and his armies marched across Europe, they compelled a rise of national consciousness in France as well as in the opposing nations and introduced the idea that all people should determine their own destiny over the will of royalty and aristocracy.²¹ This was a fundamental tenet of the Enlightenment. These well-intentioned ideals, however, were overshadowed by nearly twenty-five years of war on

²⁰ Miroslav Hroch, *European Nations: Explaining Their Formation* (London and New York: Verso Press, 2015), 35.

²¹ R. R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World (Sixth Edition)* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 354.

the European continent and precipitated the gathering of delegates from numerous nationstates in the Congress of Vienna.²²

Designed to bring about peace and order in Europe, the Congress of Vienna assembled in September of 1814 and was convened in June of 1815, just nine days before Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo. The result was peace, but with it came a return to the dynastic climate of the eighteenth century where nobility and aristocracy had absolute rule. The actions of the Congress of Vienna pushed the ideals of nationalism and national identity underground, thus delaying the time when they would eventually resurface.²³

In 1848, revolutions began to erupt all over Europe in what some scholars have referred to as the "Spring of Nations" or the "People's Spring."²⁴ The significance and lasting effect of these widespread revolutions cannot be understated, as R. R. Palmer explains:

Fears haunting the established classes of Europe for thirty years came true in 1848. Governments collapsed all over the Continent. Remembered horrors appeared again, as in a recurring dream, in much the same sequence as after 1789 only at a much faster rate of speed. Revolutionaries milled the streets, kings fled, republics were declared...Never before or since has Europe seen so truly universal an upheaval as in 1848. While the French Revolution of 1789 and the Russian Revolution of 1917 both had immediate international repercussions, in each of these cases a single country took the lead. In 1848 the revolutionary movement broke out spontaneously from native sources from Copenhagen to Palermo and from Paris to Budapest.²⁵

²² Palmer and Colton, 418–19.

²³ Ibid., 424–25.

²⁴ John Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe: From the French Revolution to the Present* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 715.

²⁵ Palmer and Colton, 470.

The impetuses for each of these revolutions cannot be linked to one single cause because each region varied from another in its scope of issues. For example, in 1846 in Austrian Galicia (an area now part of Poland, Ukraine, and Romania), Polish nobles staged an uprising against the royalty who maintained absolute power. This action in turn prompted the peasants of the region to rise up against the nobles.²⁶ The years of 1845–47 were also particularly harsh because of crop failures and subsequent food shortages due to potato blight. Thousands of commoners died from starvation and more than four hundred food riots occurred in France between 1846 and 1847.²⁷ A result of the revolutions of 1848 was a strong resurgence of nationalism throughout Europe, this time to persist and intensify over the next fifty years, ultimately leading to the first major global conflict of the twentieth century: World War I (1914–18).

In areas of Europe considered as Czech and Bohemian lands (then part of the Austrian Empire), an abrupt change of power and a struggle between political forces began to shape the cultural, social, and political climate of the region after the revolutions of 1848. An elected parliament met in Vienna in 1848 with the intention of uniting Austria with German lands. Czech representatives František Palacký (1798–1876) and František Ladislav Rieger (1818–1903) strongly opposed the idea of unification in fear

²⁶ Palmer and Colton, 178.

²⁷ Wolfram Siemann, *The German Revolution of 1848-1849* (London: Oxford University Press, 1998), 39.

that Czech nationality would eventually "dissolve in a German sea."²⁸ Their demands were ignored and what followed was more than a decade of a "restriction of political rights, the centralization of polity,"²⁹ and other religious and cultural oppressions. This period became known as Bach's Absolutism, named after the minister Baron Alexander von Bach (1813–93) who was its architect and chief proponent.

After Austria's defeat in the war against (German) Prussia of 1866, an alliance with Hungary created the Austro-Hungarian Empire which lasted until the formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. This new political structure, however, provided no better conditions for the Czech people and their culture:

The relationship between the Czechs and Germans deteriorated over time. The Germans comprised around one third of the population...In certain areas, primarily in the border regions (the so-called Sudetenland), they even formed a homogeneous majority. In the second half of the 19th century, Czechs closed the gap on Germans in terms of culture and industry. They were also more numerous. Czechs wanted to retain the indivisibility of the country and to establish the use of the Czech language, both in dealings between citizens and authorities, and also between the administrative authorities themselves.³⁰

It was during this ethnically contentious period that Zdeněk Fibich composed his first symphony.

²⁸ Thomas A. Dine, "The National Revival and Revolution of 1848," American Friends of the Czech Republic, accessed 21 September 2016, http://www.afocr.org/czech-culture/czech-history.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Thomas A. Dine, "Efforts at a Czech-German Settlement." American Friends of the Czech Republic, accessed 22 September 2016, http://www.afocr.org/czech-culture/czech-history.

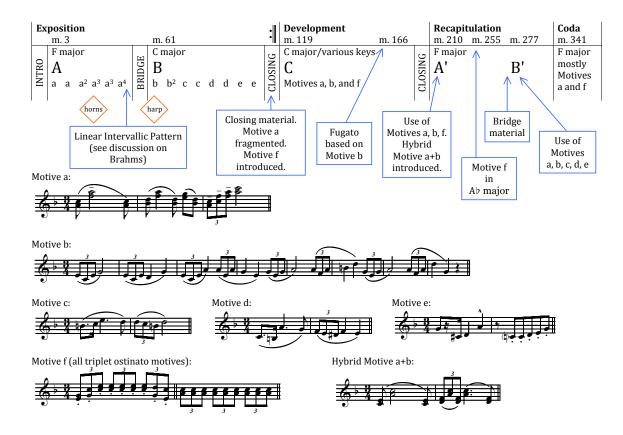
CHAPTER FOUR:

ANALYSIS OF SYMPHONY NO. 1 IN F MAJOR

Overview

Zdeněk Fibich began work on *Symphony No. 1 in F major* in 1877 but did not complete the piece until 1883. Composed in four movements, the symphony follows a fast-fast-slow-fast overall form, which was common for the time period. The tonality of each movement, and in respect to their relationship to one another, is also not unusual. The first movement ("Allegro moderato") is in sonata form and in the expected tonic key of F major. The second movement ("Scherzo") is a scherzo in A major and trio in D minor. The mediant key relationship between the first and second movements is also a familiar characteristic of overall symphonic form for works of this time period. The third movement ("Adagio non troppo") is in a double variation form and in the symphony's relative minor key: D minor. The fourth movement ("Finale") is in a sonata-rondo form and in the tonic key of F major.

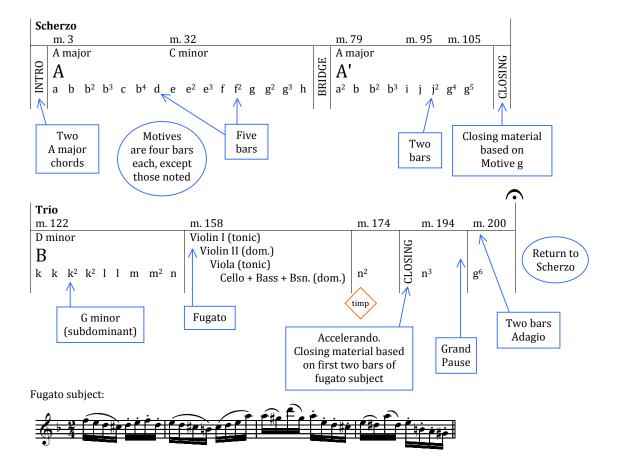
As previously stated, of Fibich's three symphonies, the first symphony has received little attention from music scholars. An analysis of the overall work and its four movements is necessary prior to comparing it with other composers' works. The aim is to find compositional commonalities between Fibich and other Czech and German composers in order to identify Fibich's unique hybrid musical style.



Analysis of the First Movement ("Allegro moderato")

Figure 4.1. Analysis of the first movement including the primary melodic motives

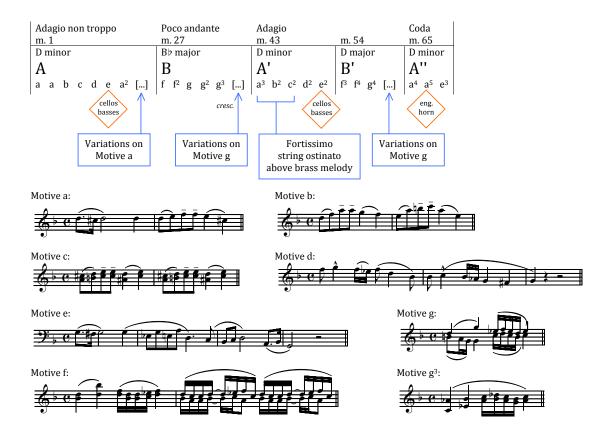
The first movement, "Allegro moderato," follows a sonata form with a common tonic/dominant key relationship between the primary and secondary key areas (shown as sections A and B in Figure 4.1) of the exposition. Motives presented during the exposition, which range from two to eight measures in length, are used as thematic material in the development section, which explore numerous key areas. Fibich then deviates from sonata form by composing a modified recapitulation, and modulating to the subdominant key of B-flat major after only six bars. He then treats the recapitulation almost as a second developmental section, which is an innovation pioneered by Beethoven who was driven by the necessities of the thematic and harmonic complexities of his musical material. The overall AB structure of the modified recapitulation remains intact, however thematic material is presented freely throughout the remainder of the section. These compositional style features show Fibich's creativity and willingness to experiment.



Analysis of the Second Movement ("Scherzo")

Figure 4.2. Analysis of the second movement including the fugato subject

The second movement, which typically was a slower movement in a symphony, is instead a Scherzo and Trio in A major and D minor, respectively. Although a fast, scherzo-like second movement was neither new nor unexpected by this point in the nineteenth century, it nevertheless broke from traditional overall symphonic form. As referenced earlier, Hermann Jung, in his article "Zdeněk Fibich and Antonín Dvořák. The Characteristics of their Symphonies," writes: "The Scherzo, which is in 3/4 time, makes easy allusions to the 'Sommernachtstraum' ('Midsummer Night's Dream') by Mendelssohn, while the Trio, of course, incorporates the tempo of a poetic Bohemian polka in straight rhythm, ending with a transition back into a repeat of the Scherzo." The trio section ("Poco meno vivace") is in 2/4 time (Jung's reference to "straight rhythm") and is also a notable deviation from tradition. These observations of compositional and aural similarity are significant and will be addressed in greater detail.



Analysis of the Third Movement ("Adagio non troppo")

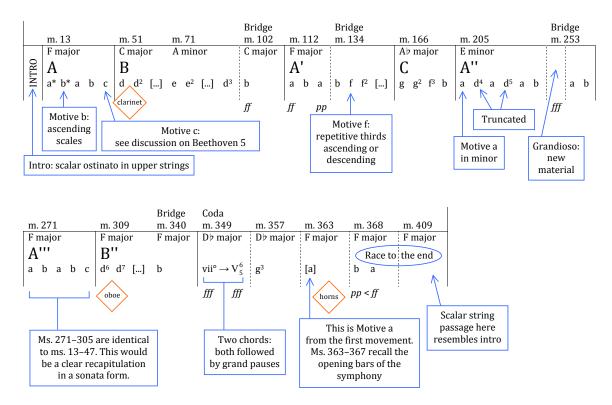
Figure 4.3. Analysis of the third movement including the primary melodic motives

The third movement, "Adagio non troppo," is in a double variation form. Several well-known German composers including Joseph Haydn pioneered this form. The primary key area (shown as section A in Figure 4.3) begins with a quiet, brooding melody in D minor and progresses in the style of a funeral march; "gravemente alla marcia funebre" is indicated in the score. Section B is in B-flat major, and along with a melody reminiscent of a folk tune, provides a lighter contrast to the darker opening section. In keeping with the double variation form, section A returns, but this time in

fortissimo with broad sixteenth notes in the upper strings employed as a counter-melody.

The movement closes with a final return of section B, and then section A as a coda,

ending in D minor.



Analysis of the Fourth Movement ("Finale")

* Because Motives a and b are used with such frequency during this movement, iterations of those two Motives are not numbered.

Figure 4.4. Analysis of the fourth movement

The fourth and final movement, "Allegro con fuoco e vivace," is in sonata-rondo form. The primary and secondary key areas (shown as sections A and B respectively in Figure 4.4) have a common tonic/dominant relationship: F major and C major. Section A returns in F major and then modulates to A-flat major at section C which is a common chromatic-mediant key relationship. It is not until the return of section A that Fibich begins to truly experiment with the form. The second return of section A is in the unexpected key of E minor. Additionally, all thematic material from the opening section is transformed from major to minor. Eventually, a modulation back to F major occurs, along with a return of section A. At this point, exactly thirty-five measures are identical to the opening section. In a traditional sonata form, this would mark the point of a true recapitulation. Section B returns in F major for one last time before moving onto an extended coda based on thematic material from section A.

With the exception of the few instances mentioned above where the composer deviates from tradition, the overall form of *Symphony No. 1 in F major* is unremarkable. An even closer examination of this work, however, reveals the composer's unique hybrid compositional style which subsequently begins to provide an explanation into the reasons why his music was so often considered derivative.

CHAPTER FIVE:

CZECH MUSICAL INFLUENCES IN SYMPHONY NO. 1

Overview

Every source researched for this study, both modern and historical, refers to Zdeněk Fibich as a Czech composer of the Romantic Period. These simple references to nationality and musical time period are provided at the beginning of virtually every general biography on every composer. While such labels may seem benign and informative, they do in fact carry with them significant inferences. They are intended to provide the reader with an instant general idea of what a composer's music is likely to sound like, based on the reader's knowledge of music by other composers of the same nationality and time period.

In the case of Fibich, it is a widely accepted fact that he was a Czech composer and that his music reflects the general style of that ethnicity for the time period in which he lived. In order to provide a balanced approach, a brief examination into how and why his music sounds Czech follows. However, it should be noted that the main focus of this study is to address the elements of his music that sound German, specifically those found in his *Symphony No. 1 in F major*. Fibich's Czech style is examined through a comparison of his first symphony with the ninth symphony of a well-known colleague: Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904).

Folk Music Influence

Both Dvořák and Fibich used folk tunes and dances as inspiration for their compositions. In his book, *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History*, Philip V. Bohlman discusses how folk music inspires composers and in turn can provide a musical identity to a particular culture. In a discourse on Dvořák and his use of folk melodies and rhythms, Bohlman states:

[Dvořák] used dance forms in his orchestral and chamber works and national imagery in tone poems to show the Germans and Austrians that a Czech nation really did exist, even though it was not yet independent...His greatest works, so we often read, do not use folk melodies, but rather they merely take an idea of folk music and use that as the point of departure for true invention and creativity...If the Austro-German tradition could not appreciate Dvořák for the universal meanings embodied by the Czechness in his musical language, the rest of the world, unfettered by the need to repress Czech nationalism, recognized his greatness.³¹

The 'greatness' of Dvořák which Bohlman mentions was due in part to the Czech-inspired folk melodies in his music. Fibich used folk tunes and traditional dance rhythms in much the same way: as inspiration for his own melodic and rhythmic material. Since this was the approach of Fibich and other Czech composers of the time, it is therefore not surprising that there are occasional moments of compositional and aural similarity between the works of these composers.

³¹ Philip V. Bohlman, *The Music of European Nationalism: Cultural Identity and Modern History* (Santa Barbara, Denver, and Oxford: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2004), 18.

Comparison: Symphony No. 9 by Dvořák and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich

At measure 91 in the first movement of *Symphony No. 9 in E minor*, Op. 95, (1893) by Dvořák, a folk-tune-inspired melody made up of two identical four-bar phrases in G Dorian mode is presented by the flute and oboe (Figure 5.1).



Figure 5.1. Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor (I), ms. 91-94

The repetitive rhythm, small melodic range (within a perfect fifth), and modal tonality of this melody all work to heighten its folk-like quality. The eight-bar melody is then repeated by the second violins, after which the composer uses the first two bars of the melody as developmental material (Figure 5.2).



Figure 5.2. Dvořák: Symphony No. 9 in E minor (I), ms. 91–97



Figure 5.2. continued, ms. 98–104



Figure 5.2. continued, ms. 105–111



Figure 5.2. continued, ms. 112–118



Figure 5.2. continued, ms. 119–124

At measure 122 in the Trio section of the second movement of *Symphony No. 1 in F major* by Fibich, a folk-tune-inspired melody similar to the Dvořák example can be found: an eight-bar melody consisting of two identical four-bar phrases presented by the flutes and oboes (Figure 5.3).



Figure 5.3. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 122-125

As in the Dvořák example, the full eight bars are repeated, although Fibich keeps his melody in the flutes and oboes. Instead of developing a portion of the melody as Dvořák does, Fibich repeats it in its entirety, transposed up a perfect fourth to G minor (Figure 5.4). This section of the Trio is also the same section in which Hermann Jung, as previously mentioned, described as incorporating "the tempo of a poetic Bohemian polka in straight rhythm."³²

These two melodies have compositional commonalities, but more importantly, they have recognizable aural similarities. As a result of their folk-tune-like qualities (namely their tonality, their short ranges, and their simple repeated rhythms), both melodies serve to strengthen the concept of a culturally unique Czech musical style.

³² Jung, 153.



Figure 5.4. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 122-129



Figure 5.4. continued, ms. 130–137

It is notable that the first two bars of these melodies are actually inversions of one another. This inversion, along with the leaping of thirds in the melodic line, creates an even stronger relationship between the two melodies (Figure 5.5).



Figure 5.5. Melodic inversion

Fibich composed the melody in this example between 1877 and 1883, which was at least ten years before Dvořák composed his melody. Although research at the present time does not show for certain, it is probable that Dvořák had heard Fibich's first symphony and may even have been familiar with the score. Whether Dvořák was inspired by Fibich's melody is speculative, and ultimately irrelevant to this study. However, the commonalities these two melodies share begin to show a unifying sound that could be considered uniquely Czech.

There is another instance in the same two symphonies where Dvořák and Fibich use folk-tune-inspired melody in a way that connects them. At measure 68 in the third movement of the Dvořák symphony, the opening seven notes of a well-known melody from the *Poco sostenuto* section is similar to a melody in the first movement of the Fibich symphony at measure 177. Both melodies in this comparison are written for flute at the outset, and then also the oboe in the case of the Dvořák. Additionally, both melodies skip the fourth degree of the scale, essentially outlining a pentatonic scale and thereby strengthening their folk-tune-like qualities. With the exception of a *pianissimo* string accompaniment, very little else in the orchestration is found in common. In spite of this, the similarity between these two passages of music can be heard (Figure 5.6).

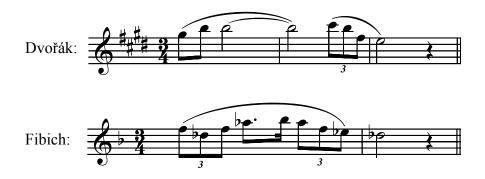


Figure 5.6. Melodic comparison

Fibich's reflection of Czech musical style is also found in his use of orchestration and harmony. At measure 27 of the third movement of the first symphony, the composer writes a melodic passage for the woodwinds which features primarily parallel thirds (Figure 5.7). The strings play a subdued accompaniment beneath this melody at the dynamic level of *piano*. A passage in the first twelve bars of the symphony is also orchestrated in a similar manner (Figure 5.8).



Figure 5.7. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (III), ms. 27-30



Figure 5.7. continued, ms. 31–35



Figure 5.7. continued, ms. 36–39



Figure 5.7. continued, ms. 40-42



Figure 5.8. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 5-8

This orchestration technique of winds in thirds over a simple string accompaniment has been identified as a Czech musical style trait by Patrick F. Devine, who, in an article briefly discussing the second and third symphonies of Fibich, writes:

History has judged Fibich's music to be less Czech than Smetana's or Dvořák's, and anyone seeking native melodies or folk dances such as the *furiant* in these two symphonies will be disappointed. However, on a more local level the composer taps into certain elements and gestures which are attributed to the two older composers; these include the familiar use of parallel thirds in woodwind instruments over a static string support...I argue that contrary to received opinion this music *does* sound Czech at times, if largely by association.³³

As shown in Figures 5.7 and 5.8, this style trait is also reflected in the first symphony. There are no direct quotations of native melodies or folk dances to be found. Instead,

Fibich takes the idea of a folk melody or rhythm and skillfully crafts his own material as

his fellow Czech composers did. These examples allude to the premise that Fibich's

music, and in particular, his first symphony, does reflect a style that could be considered

uniquely Czech.

³³ Patrick F. Devine, "The Fin-de-Siècle Symphonies of Zdeněk Fibich: Parallels and Contrasts," *Musicologica Olomucensia* (Olomouc, Czech Republic: Palacký University Press, 2010), 85.

CHAPTER SIX:

GERMAN MUSICAL INFLUENCES IN SYMPHONY NO. 1

Overview

Because of Fibich's extensive German musical training as well as his dual ethnicity, it may not be surprising that his music reflects the works of German composers as well as Czech composers. As will be detailed below, these moments of aural similarity between Fibich and other composers are often brief. However, critiques, both historical and modern, show that these moments of similarity are long enough to catch some listeners' attention, subsequently leading to a perception that Fibich's music is derivative. According to Devine, Fibich's work is always original and never approaches the point of copying another composer's work.³⁴

Comparison: Symphony No. 5 by Beethoven and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich

In comparing *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67, (1808) by Beethoven and *Symphony No. 1 in F major* by Fibich, passages of similar dynamic contrast and orchestral texture are identified which link the two works together. Beginning at measure 389 in the first movement of the Beethoven, a rapid succession of accented repeated eighth notes in all the strings is presented *fortissimo* (Figure 6.1). An abrupt silence throughout the orchestra is followed by the symphony's iconic rhythmic motive which was introduced at the beginning of the piece, but in this instance at the dynamic level of

³⁴ Devine, 85.

piano. Another dramatic silence is then followed by a return of the previously heard *fortissimo* eighth-note texture, and then a third moment of silence.

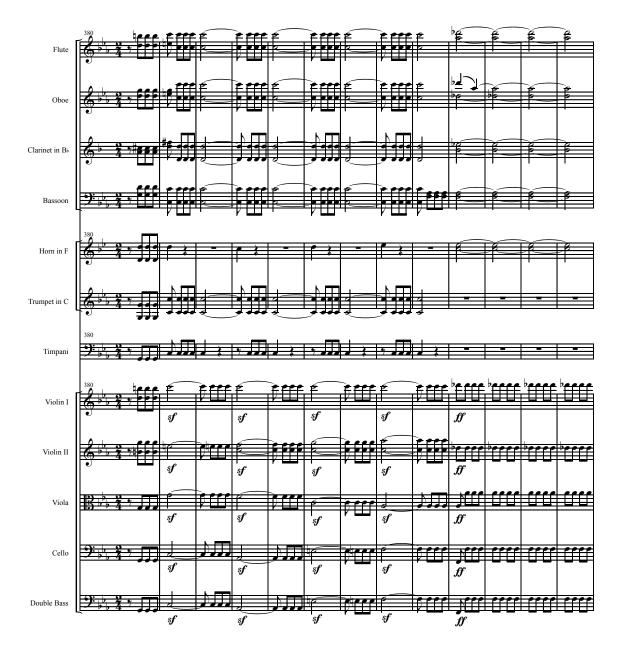


Figure 6.1. Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor (I), ms. 380-392



Figure 6.1. continued, ms. 393-404

This technique of abrupt dynamic and textural contrasts is a commonly recognized signature of Beethoven's musical language. In an examination of the second movement of Beethoven's *Piano Quartet No. 1 in E-flat major*, WoO 36, composed in 1785, Barry Cooper writes: "This is an unmistakably Beethovenian movement and arguably the best in the whole set; its powerful, driving rhythms, sharp dynamic contrasts and incessant sense of urgency and seriousness mark a new and original sound in the Classical style, and one that was to be greatly exploited in his later music."³⁵

Beginning at measure 38 in the fourth movement of Fibich's first symphony, a melody composed of a rapid succession of *fortissimo* eighth notes occurs and is followed immediately by silence (Figure 6.2). This is similar to the passage in the Beethoven example. The Fibich passage continues, and, as in the Beethoven, moves from moments of great volume and full texture to instances of silence broken only by softer motivic development.

³⁵ Barry Cooper, *Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press), 125.



Figure 6.2. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (IV), ms. 35-39

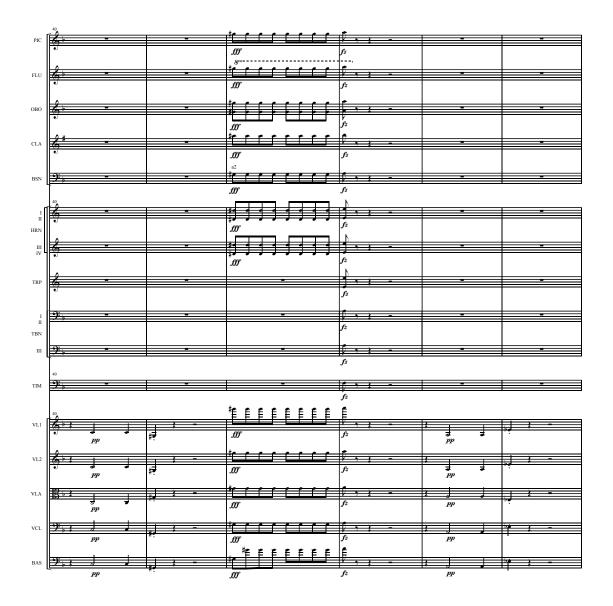


Figure 6.2. continued, ms. 40–45

The two passages sound similar to one another by nature of the compositional elements they have in common. Audiences and music critics of the late-nineteenth century may have noticed a resemblance to the Beethoven fragment upon hearing the Fibich passage in this example, in spite of its brevity. This aural similarity may then have contributed to the general perception among Czechs that Fibich's music sounded too 'German' for a Czech composer, and among Germans that his music didn't sound 'Czech' enough.

Comparison: Symphony No. 7 by Beethoven and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich

At measure 214 of the second movement of *Symphony No. 7 in A major*, Op. 92, (1812) by Beethoven, the opening theme of the movement is presented *fortissimo* in the strings and brass (Figure 6.3). Above this melody, the woodwinds provide a countermelody of running sixteenth notes, primarily scalar, and also *fortissimo*. This eight-bar excerpt is in A minor and is the apex of the overall arching form of the movement. This movement and its main theme are well-known, and unmistakable to those who are familiar with Beethoven's symphonies.



Figure 6.3. Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A major (II), ms. 214-221

At measure 43 of the third movement of the first symphony, Fibich composes a seven-bar passage similar to the Beethoven excerpt above (Figure 6.4). In this case, Fibich places his melody from the opening of the movement in the woodwinds and brass with the strings providing the sixteenth-note scalar counter-melody, reminiscent of the Beethoven example. The key is D minor, and the full orchestra plays at the dynamic level of *fortissimo*. As in the Beethoven excerpt, this point is the apex of the overall arching form of the movement. Upon hearing this passage in Fibich's first symphony, audiences and music critics may have noticed its resemblance to Beethoven, and consequently labeled the music as derivative. However, it is this author's opinion that Fibich was consciously emulating this particular passage from Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7*, and, as a consequence, developing his own unique hybrid musical style.



Figure 6.4. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (III), ms. 43-45



Figure 6.4. continued, ms. 46-49

Comparison: Symphony No. 4 by Brahms and Symphony No. 1 by Fibich

Another example of aural similarity, found between Fibich and a prominent and iconic German composer, is heard by comparing an excerpt from the fourth movement of *Symphony No. 4 in E minor*, Op. 98, by Brahms, and an excerpt from the first movement of *Symphony No. 1* by Fibich. Completed only a year apart (the Fibich in 1883 and the Brahms a year later in 1884), the two symphonies share several qualities which are worth noting. The instrumentation for both is nearly identical. The two movements being compared are in different keys but do share the same 3/4 time signature. Although these general qualities are not unique for the time period, they do become relevant when examining the two pieces of music in a search for similarities.

At measure 65 in the Brahms, the violins begin a sixteenth-note melodic line with the winds, horns, and lower strings providing a harmonic foundation (Figure 6.5). This melody and harmonic construct continues at the dynamic level of *forte* for four bars and then ends with a *fp*. The four-bar phrase is harmonically, melodically, and sequentially characteristic of a linear intervallic pattern of two measures each. There is a mediant relationship between the first two bars and the second two bars of the linear intervallic pattern, with the latter two bars transposed up a minor third.



Figure 6.5. Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor (IV), ms. 65-69

At measure 49 of the Fibich, we find a notably similar passage to the Brahms excerpt (Figure 6.6). Fibich composes a sixteenth-note melodic line in the upper strings, supported by the winds, brass, and basses. As in the Brahms, this passage contains a fourbar linear intervallic pattern of two measures each with a rising mediant harmonic relationship between the first two bars and the last two bars. The pattern then ends and moves from *forte* to *p subito*. Additionally, the minor and major seconds and continuing oscillating character of the melody in the Brahms (starting on beat two of measure 65), parallels Fibich's treatment of his melody. This strengthens the aural similarity between these two passages of music. A side-by-side comparison of their harmonic progressions also shows how similar the two passages are (Figures 6.7 and 6.8).

When used separately, these compositional elements do not refer the listener to any particular composer. However, when all are used in combination, a more defined musical style emerges, which could link the two pieces aurally. It is possible that audiences and music critics in the years following the Brahms symphony premiere might have made a connection to that composer upon hearing Fibich's first symphony because the Brahms passage in this example is well known. This connection could have lead to the perception that Fibich's music was derivative. However, it is this author's opinion that such moments of aural similarity will naturally occur due to Fibich's hybrid Czech/German musical style, particularly in light of his ethnic background and influential German musical training.

67



Figure 6.6. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 49-53



Figure 6.7. Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor (IV), ms. 65-70.

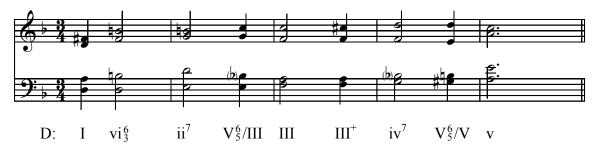


Figure 6.8. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 49-53.

Although these harmonic progressions are not unique, when combined with the additional elements these two passages share in common (melodic contour, ascending bass line, dynamics, orchestration, texture, minor key, duration of the passage), a case for their aural similarities can be made. It should be noted as well that the aural similarities are unlikely to have been noticed immediately because the two symphonies were completed only a year apart from one another and were new to audiences. However, at the time of Fibich's death in 1900, the Brahms symphony was well known, particularly after having been performed countless times over the preceding sixteen years. Listeners at that time may have noticed a resemblance to the Brahms upon hearing this passage

from the Fibich symphony, thus contributing to the perception that Fibich's music is derivative.

Comparison: "Scherzo" from *Ein Sommernachtstraum* by Mendelssohn and *Symphony No. 1* by Fibich

As mentioned in Chapter Two, Hermann Jung observed that the scherzo section in the second movement of *Symphony No. 1* by Fibich makes "easy allusions to the 'Sommernachtstraum' ('Midsummer Night's Dream') by Mendelssohn."³⁶ The opening eight bars of the scherzos from both works (minus the two-bar introduction in the Fibich) share the following musical elements: a quiet dynamic level, a common meter, light articulation, a relatively thin orchestral texture, similar tempos, and both are conducted in one (Figures 6.9 and 6.10).

Since Jung provided no specifics, it is impossible to know for certain to which section of the Mendelssohn he was referring. This author concedes that it is possible Jung heard a completely different reference to *Ein Sommernachtstraum* (1826) in the Fibich scherzo. The Mendelssohn scherzo is only one suggested possible selection based on the identifiable musical elements they have in common. Ultimately, the most important point is that Jung nevertheless *did hear* the influence of a German composer on the work of Fibich and it was significant enough for him to make note of it.

³⁶ Jung, 153.



Figure 6.9. Mendelssohn: "Scherzo" from *Ein Sommernachtstraum*, ms. 1–16



Figure 6.10. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 3-11

Comparison to Stylistic Characteristics of Anton Bruckner

According to Patrick F. Devine in his article on the second and third symphonies

of Fibich, Anton Bruckner (1824–96) is the inspirational source for several musical

elements in Fibich's symphonies:

Although one is reminded of Brahms and Tchaikovsky by occasional features in Fibich's symphonies, the most marked influence comes from the symphonic oeuvre of Anton Bruckner. Whether or not these influences are consciously emulated is not important, as the Czech composer sounds sufficiently distinct so as never to suggest a direct connection with the Austrian. Nevertheless quite a number of traits could be pointed out, including the use of tremolando-type openings, chorale phrases for wind and brass, the combination of a theme with its own inversion, arrangement of the orchestral forces in blocks, ornamental triplet figures and sequential falling sevenths.³⁷

A closer look at Fibich's first symphony reveals three of the Bruckner style features identified by Devine.

The opening of the first movement is written for violas playing unmeasured tremolo on a dominant C pedal, along with the fourth horn (Figure 6.11).



Figure 6.11. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I), ms. 1-4

³⁷ Devine, 85.

At measure 28 of the fourth movement of the first symphony, Fibich composes the opening theme of the movement in a chorale-like setting in the winds and brass (Figure 6.12).



Figure 6.12. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (IV), ms. 28-35

At measure 138 of the second movement, the violas and first bassoon play the inversion of a theme simultaneously being played by the violins and oboes (Figure 6.13). This combination of a theme with its own inversion continues through measure 153 and is passed between numerous instruments of the orchestra.



Figure 6.13. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II), ms. 138-145



Figure 6.13. continued, ms. 146–153

Fugato

The fugue, as a compositional technique and stand-alone form, reached its zenith with the works of J. S. Bach. Later composers incorporated fugal writing into their works, including, but not limited to, large orchestral works. For example, in his third, seventh, and ninth symphonies, Beethoven used fugato as a means of formal development as well as heightening dramatic tension.

In the development of the second movement of Fibich's first symphony, the composer introduces a fugato (Figure 6.14). Beginning in the first violins, the four-bar subject is passed through the string section from top to bottom. When the cellos,

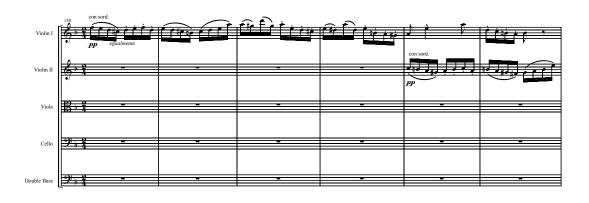




Figure 6.14. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II) ms. 158-169

basses, and second bassoon play the fourth and final statement of the subject, the fugato abruptly ends with a *fortissimo* timpani solo (Figure 6.15). Incidentally, a fugal passage at m. 195 in the second movement of Beethoven's ninth symphony is interrupted by the timpani in a similar manner.



Figure 6.15. Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II) ms. 170-177

Many symphonic works of the nineteenth century incorporated fugal writing, so the inclusion of a fugato in Fibich's first symphony is not unique. Since many German composers were pioneers of contrapuntal passagework, a fugato could be considered a Germanic musical style trait by association. If audiences or music critics of the time had noticed the fugato in Fibich's first symphony, it might have lead to the perception that the Czech composer was consciously trying to imitate German composers. It is this author's opinion that Fibich was indeed trying to generate German credibility for his music by emulating the works of Beethoven and other great composers.

In regard to the musical examples discussed in this study, research is unclear whether Fibich was intentionally referring to any specific piece or composer. These similarities may simply be coincidental, or part of the composer's evolving hybrid musical style. However, as this study has shown, moments of aural similarity between the music of Fibich and other German composers have been noticed by listeners, and may have had an effect on the overall perception of his music.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

CONCLUSION

The analysis of *Symphony No. 1 in F major* in this study, along with its detailed comparison to music of other prominent composers, show that the work contains commonalities with compositions by both Czech and German composers. These findings, in addition to the sources cited herein, support the premise that an amalgamation of musical styles is a characteristic of Fibich's compositional language.

Intentionally or not, Fibich punctuated much of his music with passages that were compositionally and aurally similar to sections of works by prominent German composers. Because Fibich was Czech and German, he may have drawn from the best of both of his musical ethnicities and experiences, and in a way, became a 'hybrid composer' in the process. For music critics, patrons, and performers of the time, this synthesis of styles may explain why his music was often heard as derivative in nature. For Fibich, this synthesis of styles could have been the natural evolution of his unique musical language, as composers are often products of their own backgrounds and environments.

The research of Reitterová and Velek shows that Fibich had difficulty getting his music performed during his lifetime, and that "incomparably fewer works by Fibich were performed in Vienna than by other Czech composers."³⁸ Research for this study similarly shows that very few concert programs today include any works by Fibich. Nationalistic biases of the nineteenth century may have contributed to Fibich's music being performed

³⁸ Reitterová and Velek, 61.

less during his lifetime in relation to that of his Czech peers. Nationalism may also play a less explicit role in Fibich's dearth of recognition today simply because his music is perceived as not as 'Czech' as other Czech composers.

Composers of the nineteenth century were aware of the nationalistic collective thoughts of European peoples and some strove to develop a musical sound that could be directly associated with their own particular heritage. We know this is true when we consider the words of Bedřich Smetana:

And the aim is to prove that we Czechs are not only performing artists, as other nations call us, and, as they say, that our talent rests only in our fingers and not in our brains; but that we are gifted with creative force, yes, that we have also our own and particular music.³⁹

Not only does the music of Fibich embody, as Smetana describes it, that "particular music" which is considered as Czech, but also that "particular music" which is considered as German. While Fibich's audiences and critics during the nineteenth century may have listened to his music with a nationalistic bias, an enlightened modern world should discard such prejudices out of hand. For ultimately, this synthesis of musical styles, possibly once considered a weakness, this author asserts, should be admired as one of Zdeněk Fibich's greatest strengths.

³⁹ Jiří Berkovec, *The Praise of Music: Five Chapters on Czech Music and Musicians* (Prague: Orbis, 1975), 61.

APPENDIX

Symphony No. 1 in F major, Op. 17, by Zdeněk Fibich (in full score)

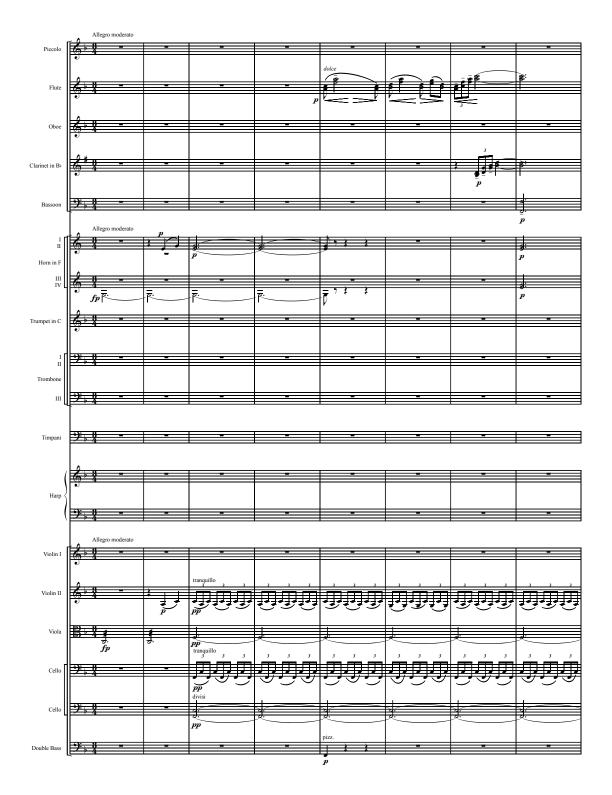
I. Allegro moderato (p. 83) II. Scherzo (p. 128) III. Adagio non troppo (p.148) IV. Finale (p. 163)

Instrumentation:

Piccolo Flute (2) English Horn Oboe (2) Clarinet in B-flat (2) Bassoon (2) Horn (4) Trumpet in C (2) Trombone (3) Tuba Timpani Percussion Harp Violin I Violin II Viola Cello Bass

This study edition of the full score of *Symphony No. 1 in F major* was prepared by the author as a supplemental reference for this project and for educational purposes only. It is not intended to be used in a performance setting.

Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I)

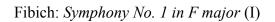




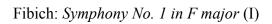










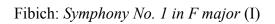










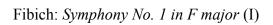






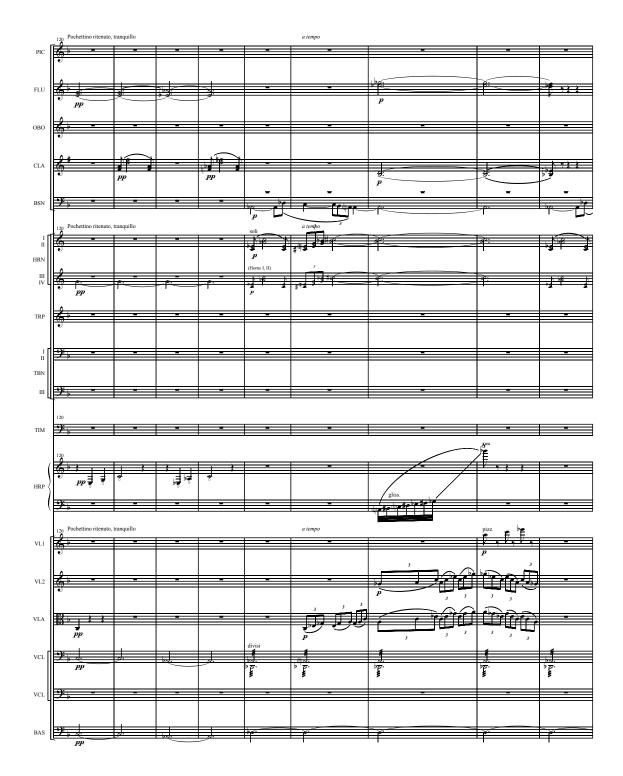


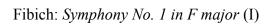




















Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I)



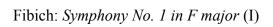




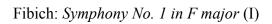










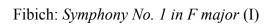
















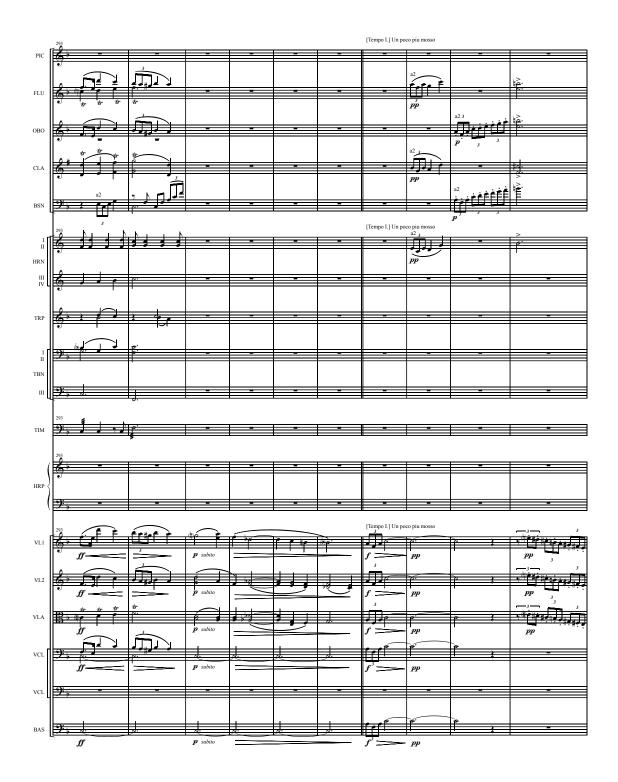






Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (I)







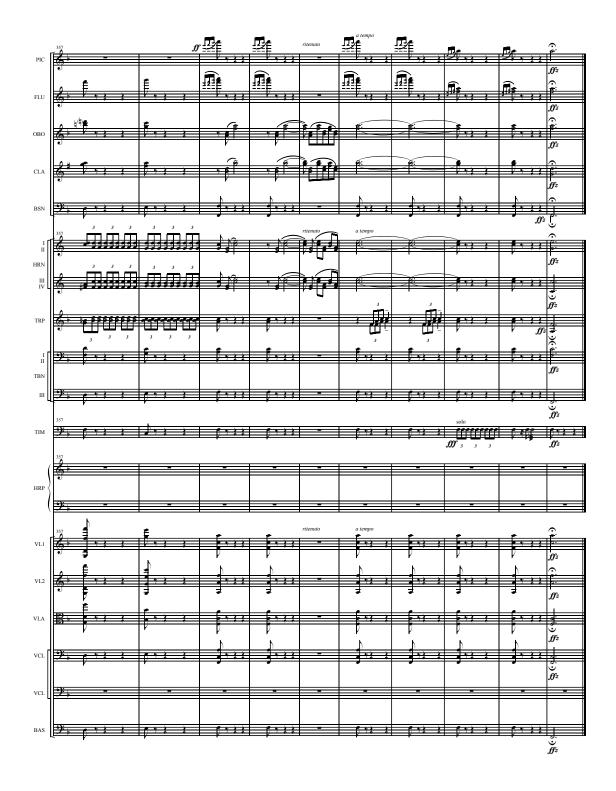














Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II)



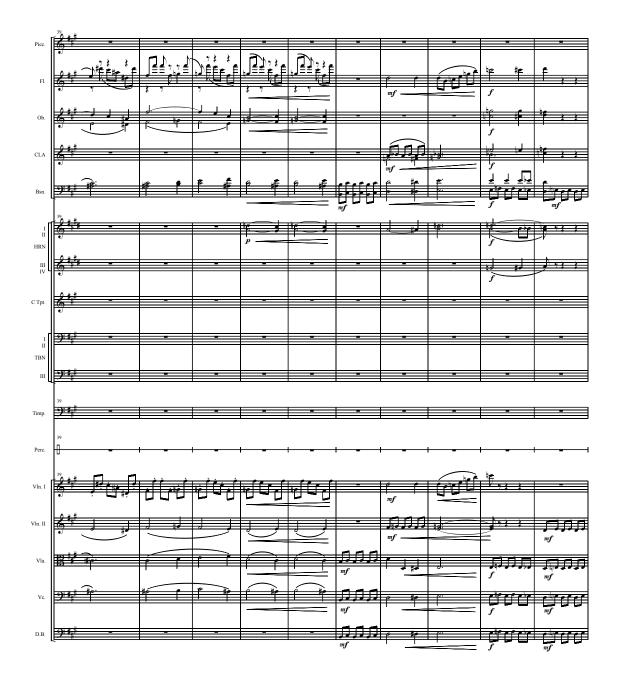
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Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II)



Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II)



Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II)



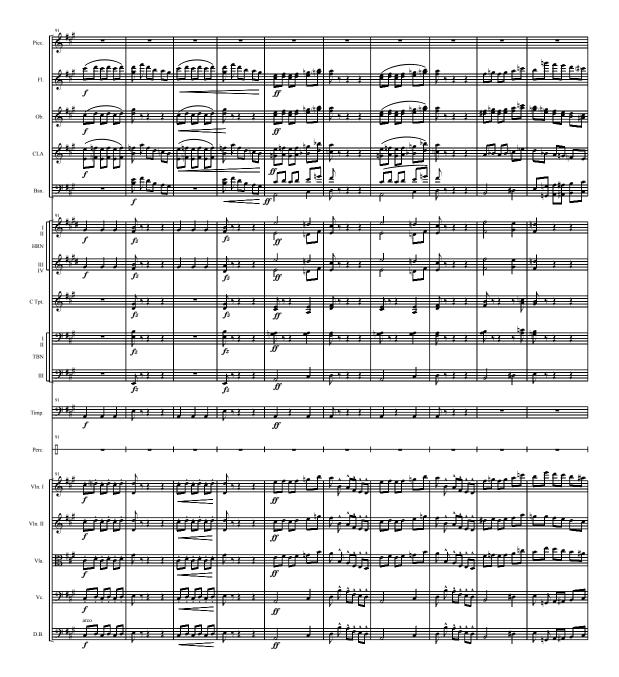


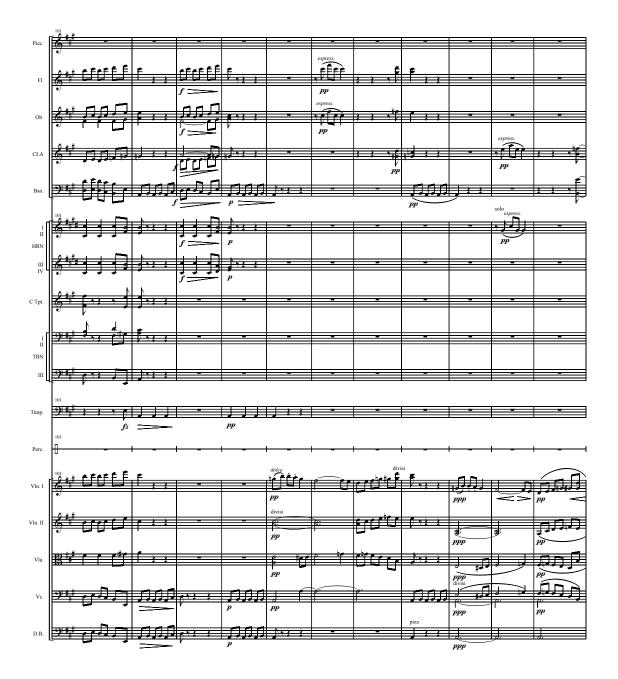
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Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (II)





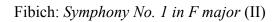


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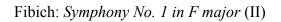






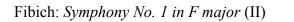




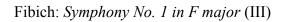
















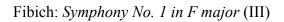


















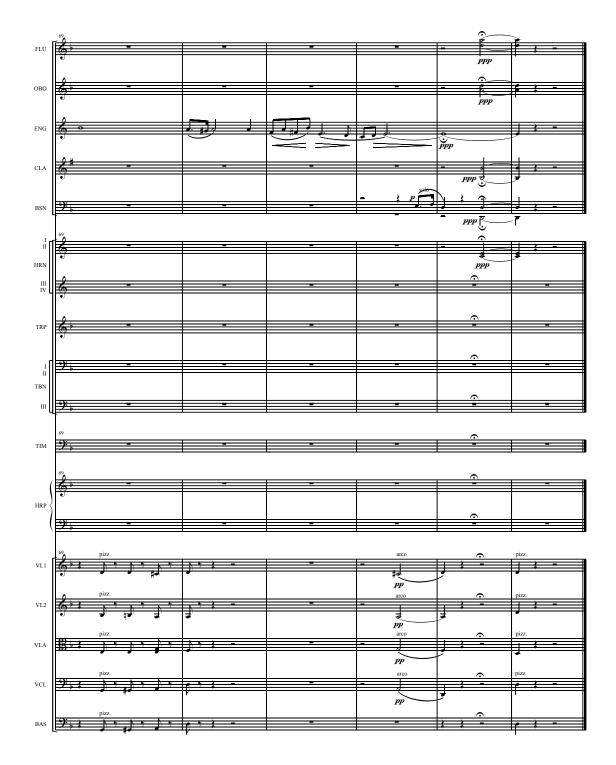


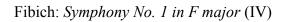


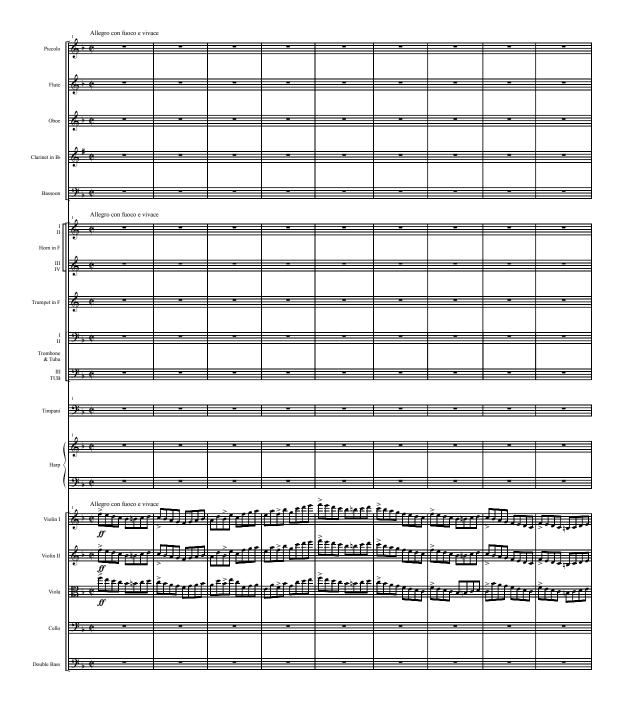


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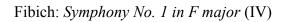




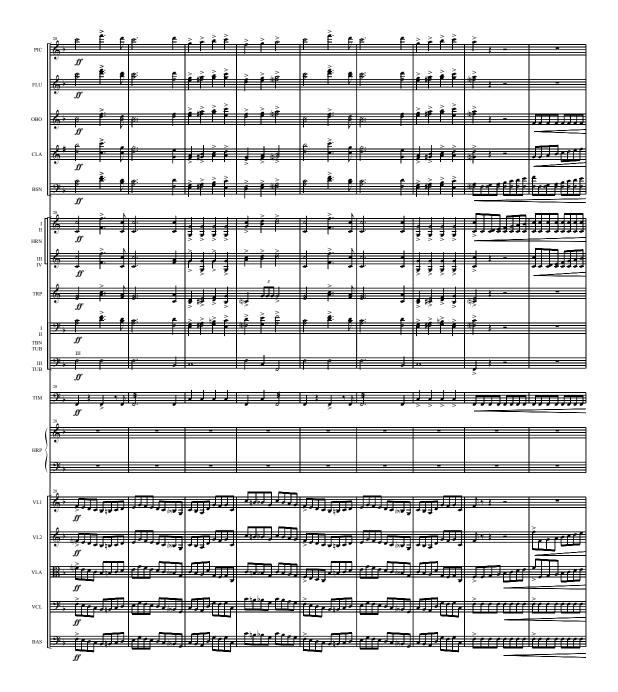


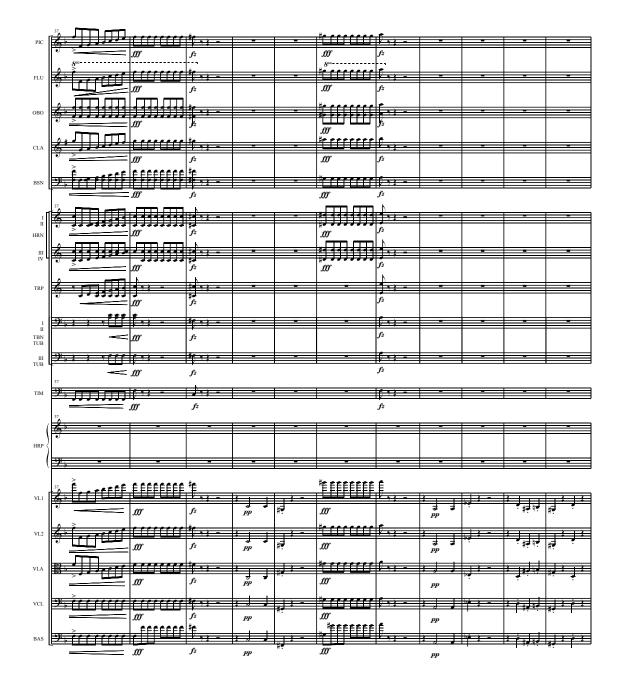


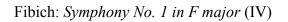
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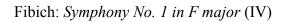




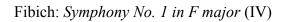








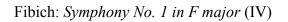






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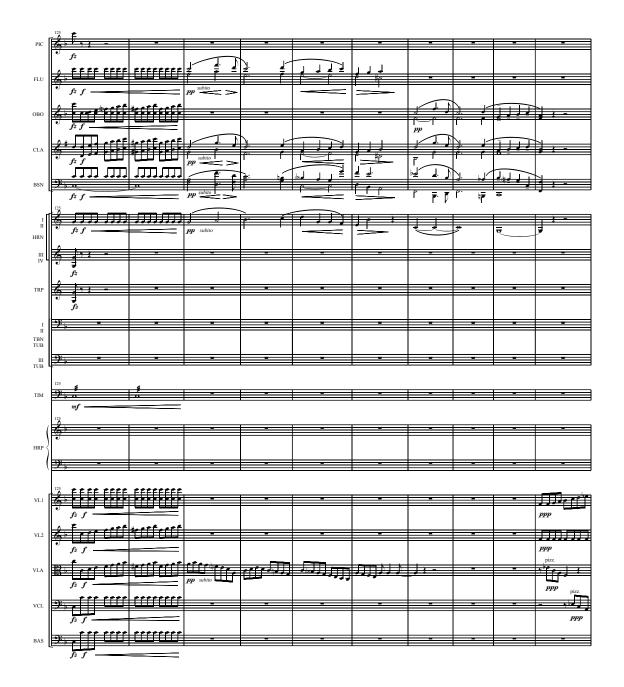






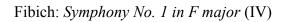








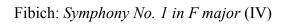
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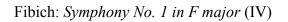
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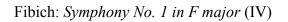
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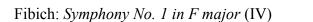




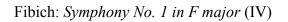












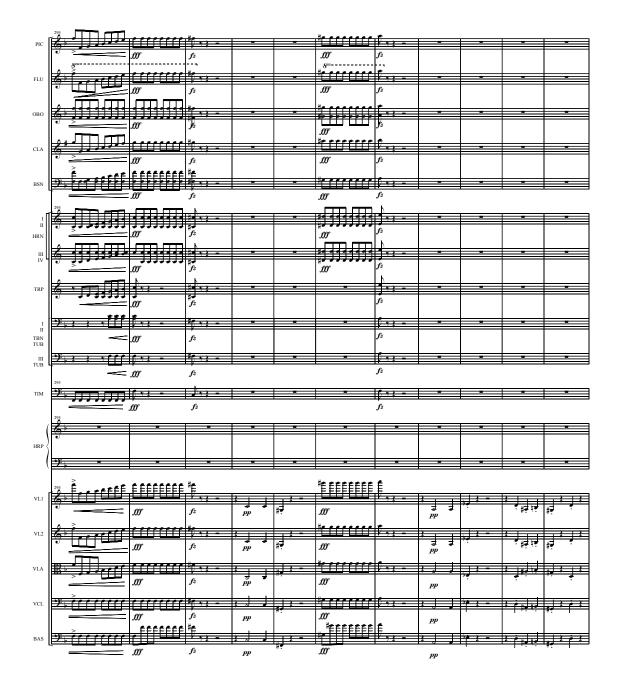


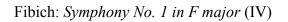




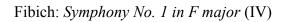








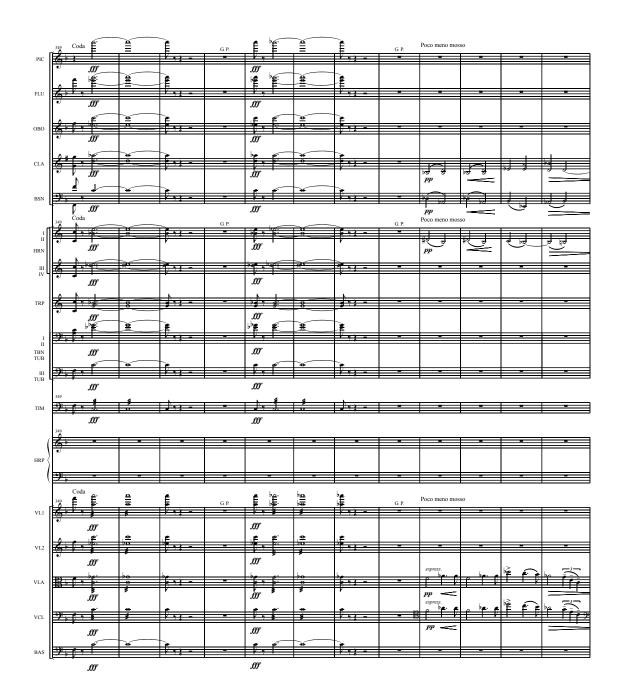








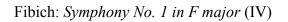


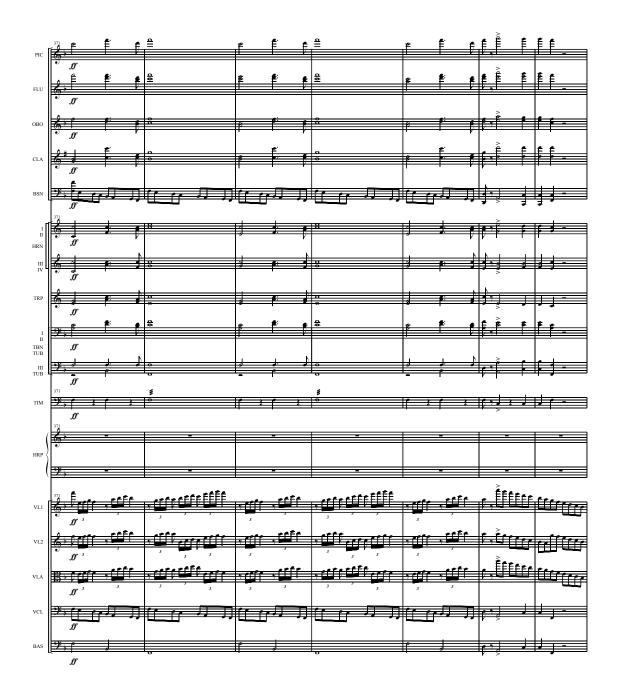


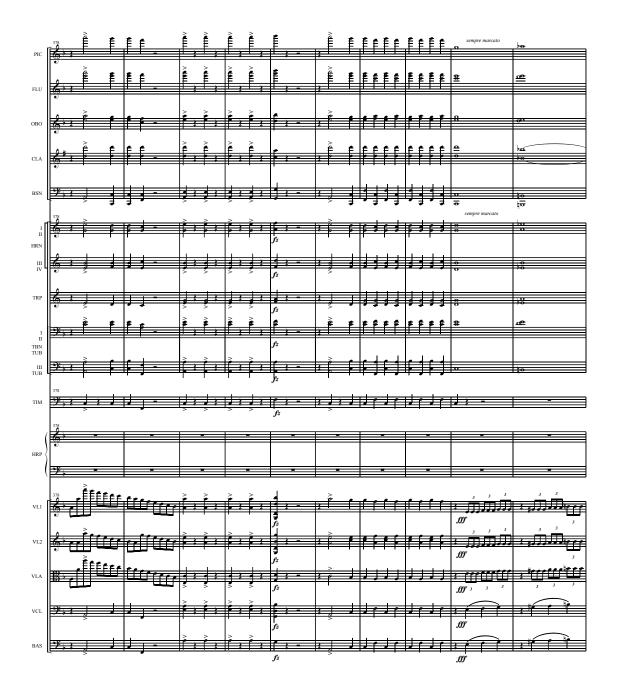
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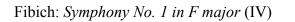


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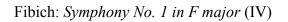


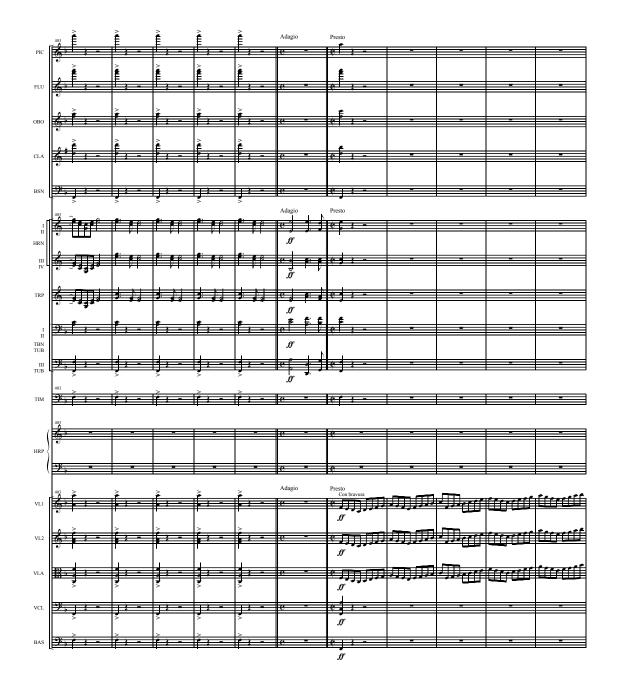


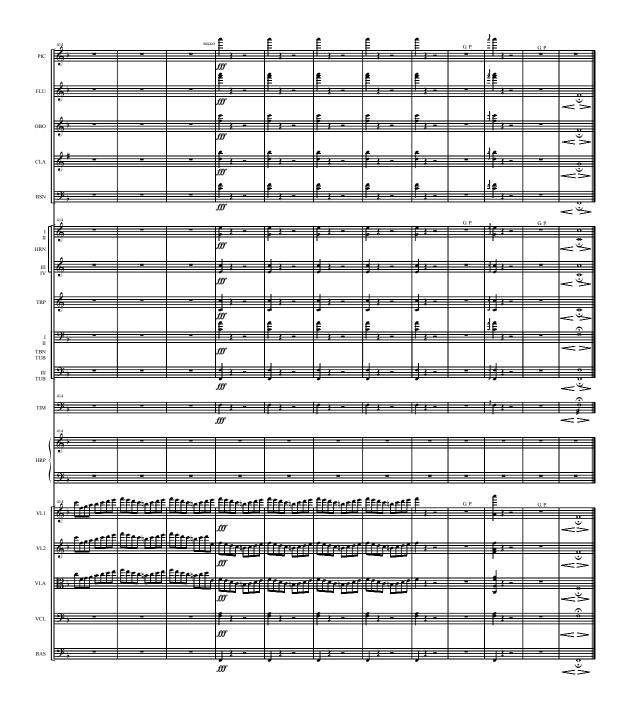












Fibich: Symphony No. 1 in F major (IV)

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David Arthur Dunbar (b. 1970)

Bachelor of Music (BM) in Choral Music Education (1995) Brigham Young University Provo, UT

Master of Music (MM) in Orchestral Conducting (1998) University of North Texas Denton, TX

Scoring for Motion Pictures and Television (SMPTV) Certification (2003) University of Southern California Los Angeles, CA

Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in Orchestral Conducting (2017) University of Arizona Tucson, AZ