# ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

## HUSITSKÁ

**Overture** 

Op. 67

Critical Edition based on the Composer's Manuscript Edited by Otakar Šourek

**FULL SCORE** 

#### "HUSSITE OVERTURE"

#### Dramatic ouverture for large orchestra, op. 67

Instrumentation: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in B flat, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, tympani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, harp (ad. lib.), strings.

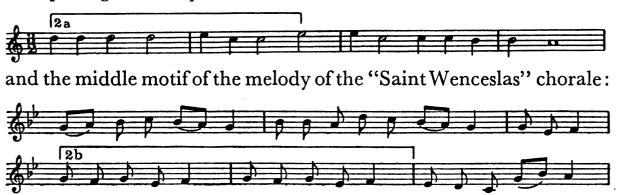
Written between August 8th and September 9th, 1883, at Vysoká.—First performed at the inauguration of the Academy in the new National Theatre in Prague, on November 18th, 1883, with Mořic Anger conducting.—Score, parts and four-handed arrangement (by the composer) published by Simrock, Berlin, 1884.—Duration: 14 minutes.

The dramatic overture entitled the "Hussite" was intended, in the same way as "My Home", for the theatre, but ceased to fulfil that function even before its first performance, so that it immediately assumed its place as a concert piece. Its original purpose, however, dictated the content and, at the same time, predetermined its fate as one of the musically and nationally most noble works in Czech concert music. It was one of those works which was created shortly before the opening of the new National Theatre (after the fire), and was permeated with the spirit of hopeful confidence in the future of the artistic and national life of the Czech nation linked with this event.

The impulse to the "Hussite" was given by the director of the

National Theatre, František Adolf Subert, who was preparing to write a dramatic trilogy for the new theatre dealing with the Hussite Age, and who asked Dvořák, even before he himself had started work on it, to write the orchestral overture. Subert summarised for the composer the content of the trilogy, of which no more than the first act was completed, as "The origin of the Hussite movement, the Hussite wars and, after the wars, the restoration of peace". The theme of the composition was thus tersely expressive in character, the action showed a natural inner development, while the matter was essentially suited to the musical medium. In addition, Dvořák grasped its inner purpose and tendency so that, in transposing it into the musical medium, he did not confine himself to the description of the storms of war, but deliberately laid the stress on its national ethical aspect, conceiving it as the expression of the struggle for the noble idea of national freedom, evoked by the death of the hero-martyr who had given this thought life and meaning, and finally achieved a solemn victory.

Outwardly the form of the classical overture again sufficed for the composer's treatment of this subject, with its slow introduction and broadly-planned quick part in sonata form. He gave musical expression to the associated thought-content of the subject in two of the five basic themes of the overture, the first of which comprises the opening two-bar phrase of "Ye who are God's valiant warriors":



Both these songs were favourites of the Hussite soldiery at the beginning of the fifteenth century, since when they have never diminished in popularity or significance, but are frequently quoted in modern Czech music.\* Thus in the "Hussite", Dvořák rightly quoted and combined fragments of both chorales. If the choice of these two themes was evidently a matter of personal bias, Dvořák's completely individual conception is also apparent in that, while not making either of them the principal theme of the sonata form, for which he chose new, independent ideas, he yet attributed to them a decisively important place, especially as regards the motif of the Hussite song, in the structure of the movement.

As has already been indicated, the overture begins with a slow introduction (Lento ma non troppo, C major,  $^3/_4$ ) illustrating, we may presume, the rise of the Hussite Movement. The wood-wind open the overture with a grave, broadly-phrased theme in a tone of elevated pathos embodying as it were the greatness and nobility of the ideas which kindled the movement:



The inner significance of the theme is very soon convincingly underlined by thematic fragments from the two chorales which follow the first theme in this combination:



The movement becomes somewhat quicker (*Piu animato*, C major,  $^{3}/_{4}$ ), and, over the movement of the harp passages and the pizzicato

\* The chorale "Ye who are God's valiant warriors" was splendidly employed by Bedřich Smetana, in the last two parts of his monumental symphonic cycle "My Country", while Josef Suk, for instance, created his "Meditations on the Saint Wenceslas Chorale" an intimate chamber-music work for string quartet, and Vítězslav Novák, again, his impressive "St. Wenceslas Triptych", originally for organ, later transcribred for orchestra.

in the strings, the violins, flute and oboe draw this intimation of the later subordinate theme from the quick part of the overture (5), combined again with a fragment of the St. Wenceslas motif:



Thereupon it rises to a climax marking the re-entry of the introductory theme 1, which, in the glorious, hymn-like harmonies of the full orchestra, sounds like a great chorale wherein thousands of voices join in ecstatic prayer.

The quick part (Allegro con brio, C minor,  $^2/_2$ ) retains the main features of sonata form, the exposition and development being charged with dramatic tension foreshadowing the hard impact of conflict and struggle. The principal theme, with which the exposition opens, begins with two wide intervals of ascending fifths and then breaks into a diminished version of the Hussite motif, concluding quietly with an allusion to the St. Wenceslas chorale:



The development of this, in which the germ of fighting action is implicit and which, besides working up the materials of motifs 2a and 2b, also exploits the sharply accented rhythms of the thematic idea 4, is of considerable length and strongly agitated, rising to a powerful, defiant climax with the Hussite motif 2a:





The dynamic tension is first relaxed before the entry of the subordinate theme, which sings a melody of warm pathos, lively in movement and with a progressively rising melodic line:



This theme, too, is in places interwoven with a motif from the St. Wenceslas chorale (2b), and closes with a new, impressive statement of the Hussite motif (2a), the whole orchestra underlining the strong rhythmic accents, followed by a decrescendo passage based on the principal theme (3).

The development, which is perhaps the longest and most complex to be found in any of Dvořák's sonata movements, begins with a calm quotation of the two chorale motifs, motif 2b maintaining its grave and elevated character, while motif 2a appears in a restless diminished version. Both these motifs are then intertwined with several repetitions of the opening bars of the principal theme (3), while an alternating exposition of all the themes works up an atmosphere of bustle and stir and active preparation for battle. Ever and anon fragments of the Hussite motif are delivered in the sharp penetrating tones of fanfares rallying to the attack, while the excitement rapidly spreads to the whole orchestra which beats out, with thunderous hammer-strokes, the rhythmic pattern of the same motif. It is a passage of immense dramatic tension in which the last flames of struggle seem to shoot up, casting shadows before of the closing act of the tragedy of the defeat of the Hussite movement at Lipany. This is confirmed in the rapidly following dynamic collapse and feebleness of expression with which—in the transition to the recapitulation—above a deep pedal point, successive allusions are made to the spacious subordinate theme into which a muted horn,

faintly, as from a great distance, interpolates a quotation of the Hussite motif.

Dvořák, however, did not see the Hussite drama end tragically: in the afterglow of the flames of war, crimson-tinged with blood spilt in the fierce conflict, he senses the rosy dawn of a new national life and the victory of the idea for which the fight was waged. And so the recapitulation of the allegro part of the "Hussite" is borne forward on a rising tide of joyful aspiration. It is all in the festively bright key of C major. The principal theme, originally proud and defiant (3), is transformed into a delicate pastoral in the oboe, accompanied by the sinuous movement of the flutes and bell-like strokes on the triangle:



In the same glorious key the two chorale motifs sound forth triumphantly, as does also the subordinate theme (5) above the restless rhythm of the kettle drums, with an undercurrent of anticipatory excitement building up to an imposing coda in which, once more, like the symbol of the victorious future of the nation, there is declaimed with full and festive solemnity the noble introductory theme (1), a short stretto bringing the Overture to a brilliant close.

If the "Hussite" is a powerful and deeply moving work in respect of its music and content, its high purely musical values are amply testified to by the success it has had and continues to meet with on its performance abroad. Nor can we omit to recall that it was especially the celebrated German conductor, Hans von Bülow, who cherished a particular admiration for this work and performed it on innumerable occasions, countering any objections offered by his impressario with his decided: "What I perform I stand by. Dvořák is for me, along with Brahms, the most outstanding musician of the present day.." (in a letter dated November 27th, 1887).

#### Durata cca 14'

#### ORCHESTRA:

Flauto piccolo— Flauto I, II — Oboe I, II — Corno inglese — Clarinetto I, II — Fagotto I, II Corno I, II, III, IV — Tromba I, II — Trombone I, II, III — Tuba — Timpani — Triangolo Piatti — Gran Cassa — Arpa (ad. lib.) — Archi

### HUSITSKÁ

9. VIII. 1883































































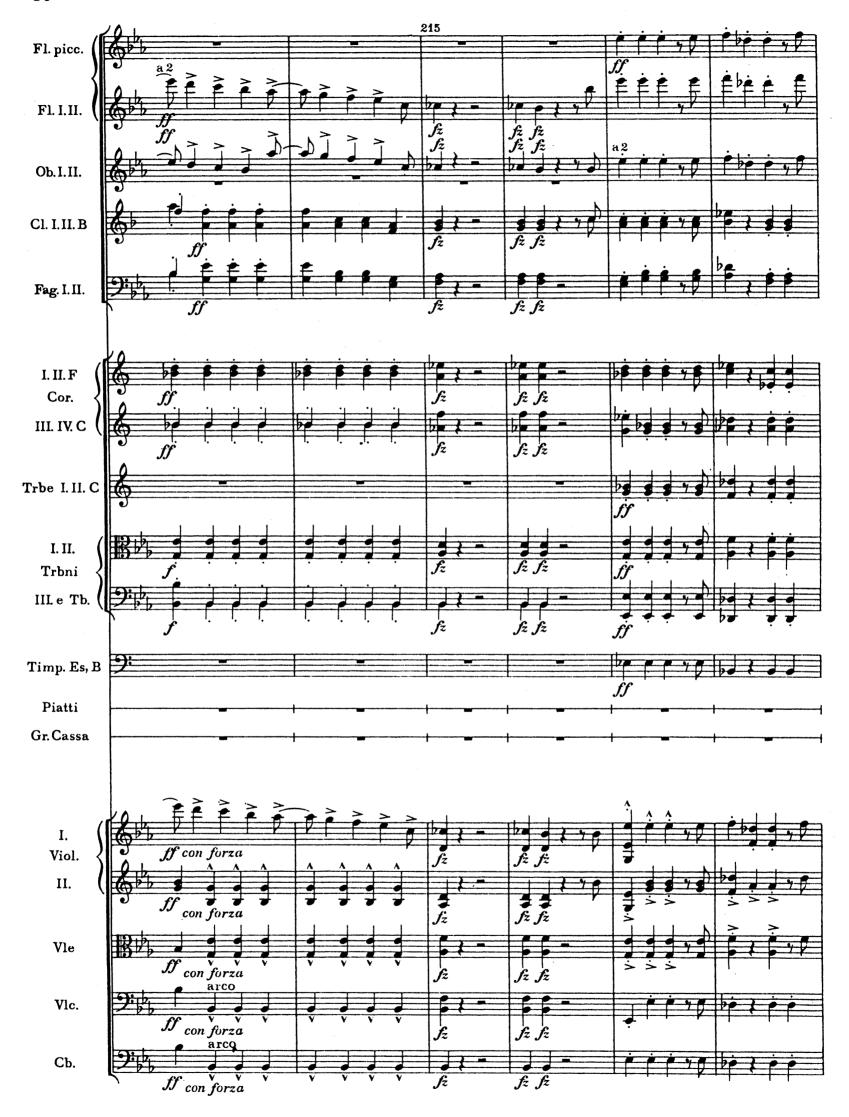


























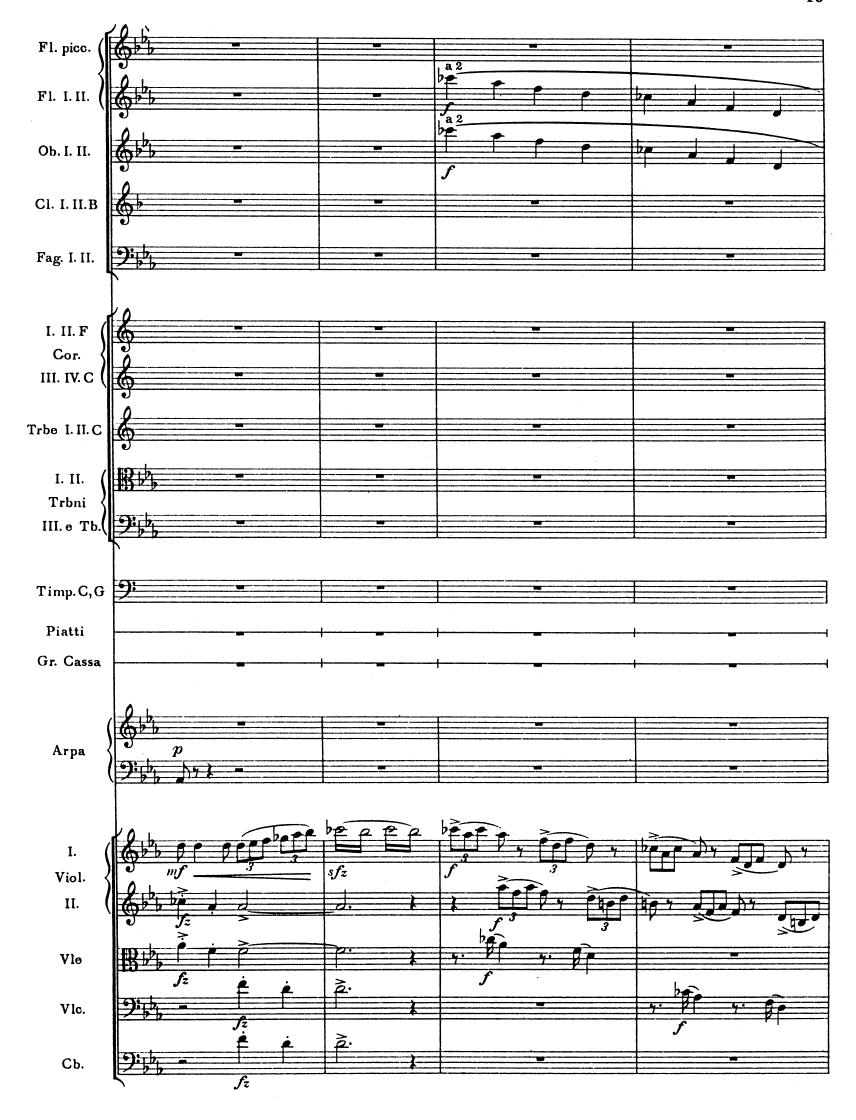


























<sup>\*)</sup> Simrock: con sordini











\*) Simrock: senza sord.

























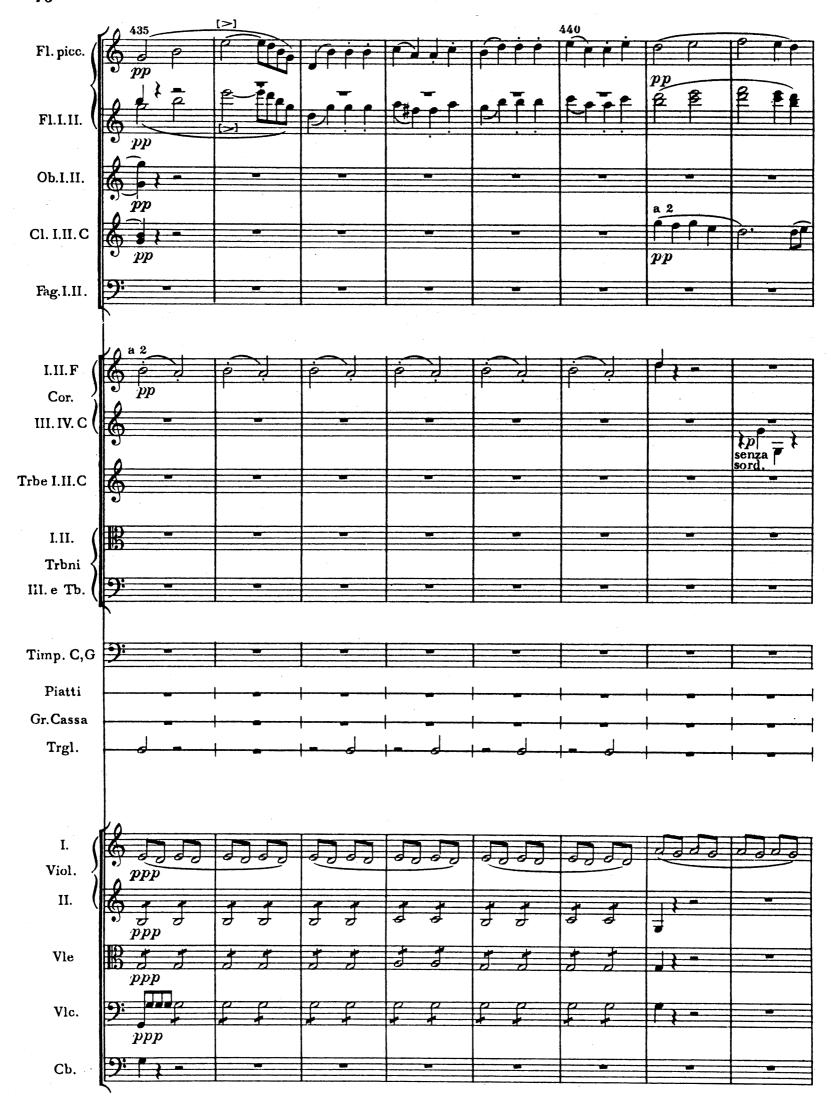


















































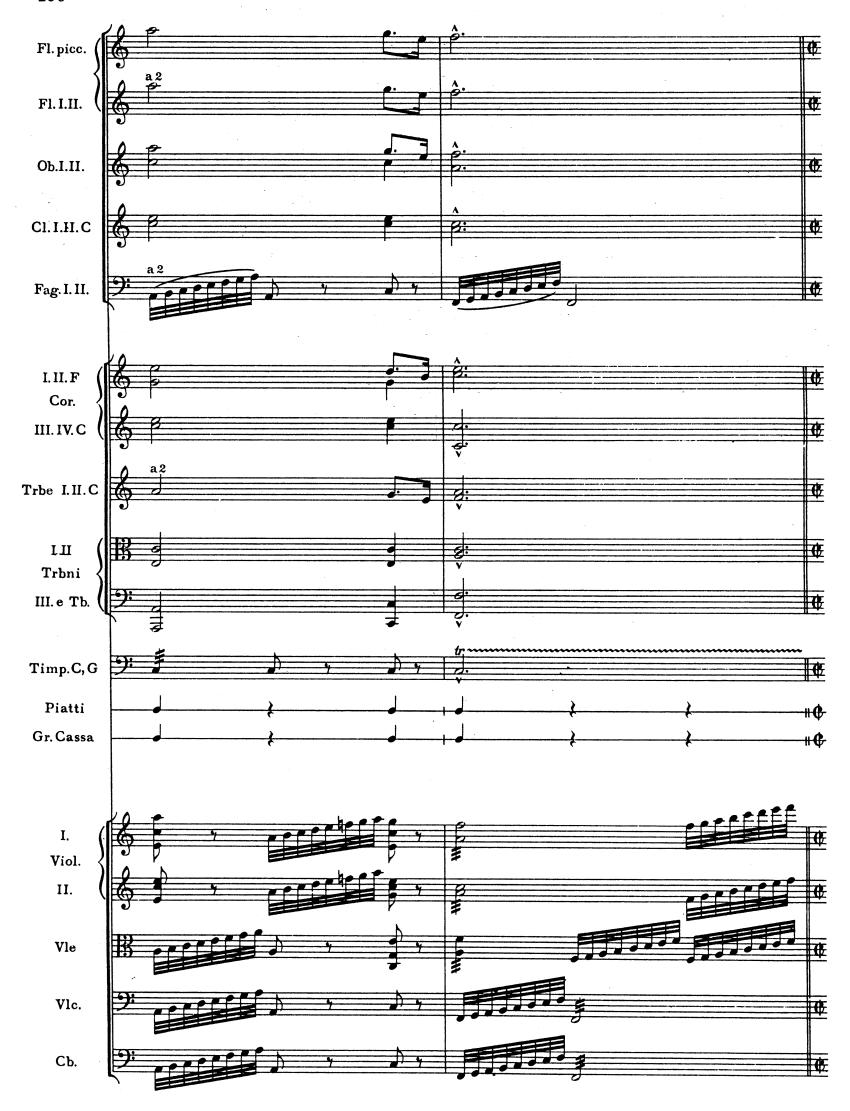


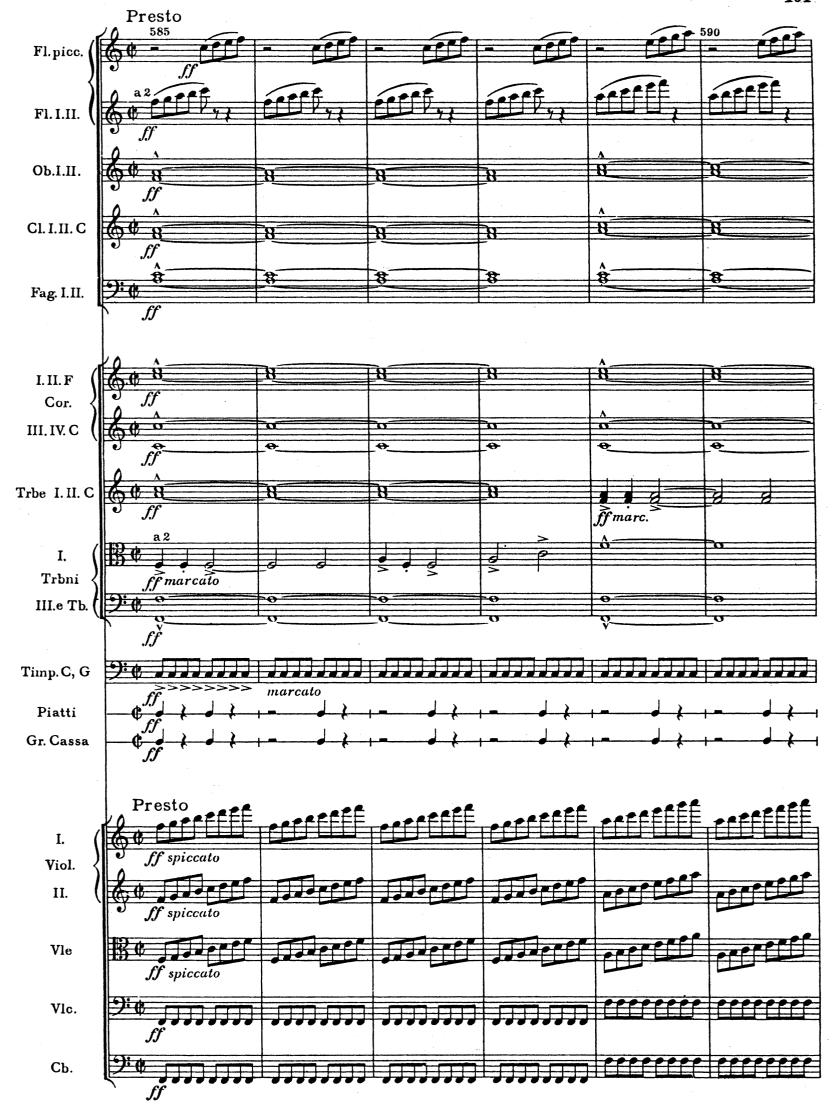
















# VYDAVATELSKÁ ZPRÁVA

#### PRAMENY:

a) Rukopis z majetku dědiců skladatelových. Obsahuje 61 číslovaných stran 20tiřádkového notového papíru, formátu 244:320 mm. Na první, nečíslované straně je nadpis:

Husitská.

Dramatická ouvertura pro velký orkestr
složil Ant. Dvořák
(op. 67).

Tuto ouverturu jsem psal
k novému otevření "Nár. divadla"
(Po vyhoření),
(v listopadu 1883).

Nad tímto nadpisem je nalepena vystřižená podobizna Hanse von Bülow s Dvořákovou poznámkou:

Hanuš z Bülova, první dirigent "Husitské" v Německu!

Po straně je skladatelem dvakrát napsáno: Žižka.

Vlastní rukopis začíná na následující straně, která nese nahoře vpravo označení: "Na Vysoké 18 9/8 83". Pod notovým zápisem dole je poznámka: "NB Corno inglese ist in der I. te Oboestimme mit kleineren Noten einzutragen und auch vom I. Oboe zublasen". Na závěru díla je autorem připsáno: "Na Vysoké dne 9. září 1883. (a 11. září jsme jeli do Prahy)".

Rukopis je svázán do černé, poloplátěné vazby, vlevo nahoře je štítek s číslem "59". Bylo v něm velmi mnoho opravováno, škrtáno, vymazáváno a přelepováno, nenese

však stop, že by ho bylo užito jako předlohy pro rytí. Mezi tiskem a rukopisem je značné množství rozporů, zejména ve znaménkách dynamických a frázovacích.

b) Původní vydání fy N. Simrock v Berlíně, ediční číslo 8445, vydáno v r. 1884.

Za základ našeho vydání byl vzat tisk Simrockův, vydaný za života skladatelova a bezpochyby za jeho přímé účasti. Byl pečlivě porovnán s autografem. Podstatnější odchylky pramenů jsou uvedeny ve vydavatelských poznámkách (Annotazioni). Podle autografu byly v našem vydání opraveny zřejmé tiskové omyly a doplněny podrobnosti, ve vydání Simrockově opominuté. Dále podle obdobných míst autografu i tisku byla doplněna drobná přednesová znaménka. Závažnější doplňky vydavatelů jsou uvedeny v hranatých závorkách []. — Na místech našich orientačních písmen E, F, G... užívá autograf i Simrockův tisk znovu písmen A, B, C...

### ZKRATKY:

A = autograf

S = vydání Simrockovo

SN = naše vydání SNKLHU

[!] = přepsání v autografu nebo chyba v tisku

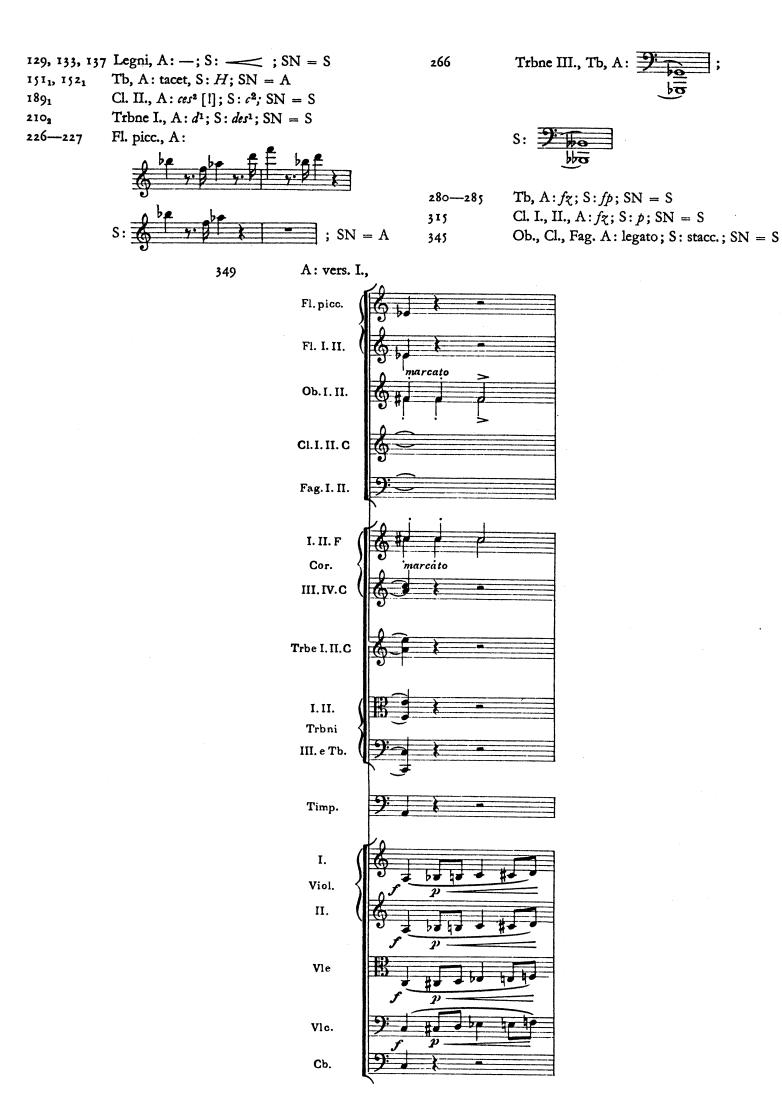
Vers. I. = původní znění, změněné skladatelem již v autografu.

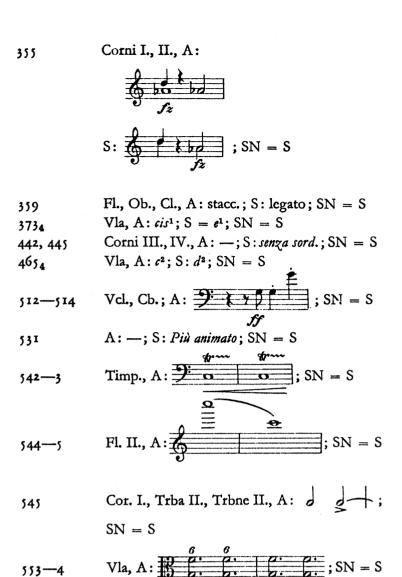
Velká arabská číslice označuje takt, připojená k ní malá číslice označuje příslušnou notu (ev. akord) v taktu; pomlky se nepôčítají.

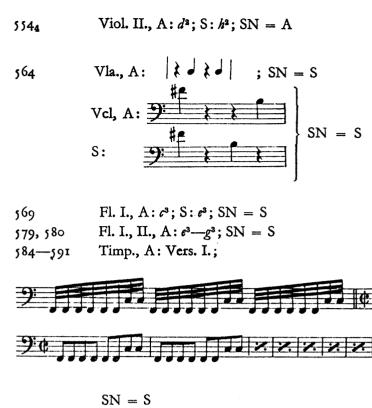
## VYDAVATELSKÉ POZNÁMKY

#### ANNOTAZIONI









SN = S { Cor. I., II. A:  $h^1 - d^2$ ; S:  $g^1 - h^1$ , { Cor. III., IV., A:  $c^2 - c^2$ ; S:  $c^2$  a due; SN ex analogia 601—606

Ant. Pokorný, K. Šolc