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## The Role of the Reference Sources in the Critical Edition of Sibelius's Choral Arrangements

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§ At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) wrote several Karelian inspired or otherwise patriotic choral songs. Sibelius arranged many of these songs for different choral ensembles. In the following article I will discuss the problems arising, when preparing the critical edition of Sibelius's choral arrangements. I will focus especially on the role of the original version used as a reference source in the editing of the arrangement.

§ Al volgere del XIX secolo, Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) scrisse diversi canti corali ispirati alla Carelia o comunque patriottici; poi ne rielaborò alcuni per diversi complessi corali. Nel saggio intendo discutere i problemi che sorgono quando si prepara una edizione critica delle rielaborazioni corali di Sibelius. Metterò a fuoco soprattutto il ruolo della versione originale usata come testimone-base nella edizione della rielaborazione.

**T**he concept of arrangement carries a strong value judgment: an arrangement is not considered to be an independent entity, but it is an adaptation of an earlier, so called original work. The value judgment is also present in the idea that although the original and the arrangement seem to be two different versions of the same work, they are still understood as resulting from different kinds of acts: the original is an end product of composing whereas the arrangement is not.

In the following article I will present two case studies, through which I will show, how the concepts of originality and arrangement – and especially the value judgment they imply – have affected even the reading of the music text. I will also discuss the problematic role of the original song, used as a reference source in the critical edition of Sibelius's choral arrangements.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The critical edition of Sibelius's works for mixed and female choir a cappella will be published by Breitkopf & Härtel (in *Jean Sibelius Works* volume VII/1) in 2011.

Both of the cases are from Sibelius's choral works from Opus 18, titled *Part-songs for male choir*. Opus 18 presents an ideal example, since the question "original versus arrangement" has been a topic of debate throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> Sibelius changed the content of Opus 18 several times. During first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century 12 songs in total have been labeled by Sibelius under Opus 18.<sup>3</sup> In biographies it has been assumed that Sibelius composed all the 12 songs originally for male choir, and the mixed choir versions are, thus, arrangements.<sup>4</sup> This assumption is based almost solely on the title of the Opus: *Part-songs for male choir*. My recent studies have, however, cast a doubt on this assumption. Although the title of the Opus is given by the composer, not all the songs are, in fact, written originally for male choir.<sup>5</sup>

### **Case 1: Sortunut ääni (Opus 18/1)**

There is no conclusive evidence, which of the two versions of *Sortunut ääni* was actually written first. In every Sibelius biography or bibliography I have seen, it is repeated that Sibelius composed *Sortunut ääni* as a male choir song and arranged the song for mixed choir. When preparing the critical edition, I found out that there is no direct evidence to support this assumption. On the contrary, the evidence seems to point to the opposite direction: for example the first edition of the mixed choir version was published one year before the premiere of the male choir version.<sup>6</sup> This, naturally, is inconclusive as evidence, but it does cast at least a doubt over the traditional view on the order of the events.

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<sup>2</sup> For example in 1956 two Finnish choir conductors, Mr. Turunen and Mr. Vaula, begun an intensive public debate in newspaper *Uusi Suomi*, whether Sibelius wrote *Isänmaalle* originally for mixed or for male choir. Here the value judgment was obvious. These two men did not debate, in which order the versions were conceived, but rather which of the versions was the actual composition, and which only an arrangement. Furthermore, the debate included also connotations, whether male choirs as such were primer to mixed choirs or vice versa. The debate ended finally unresolved four years later, when Mr. Vaula died and, thus, was unable to answer the last article by Mr. Turunen. The case of *Isänmaalle* is ideal for this kind of debate, since the question of originality is merely a question of definition: although the song was published and first performed as a mixed choir song, and arranged by Sibelius seven years later for male choir, Sibelius had written the first draft of the song for male choir. Thus, the real question is, whether the first draft can be defined as the original composition, or is it "just" a first draft for the published original mixed choir song.

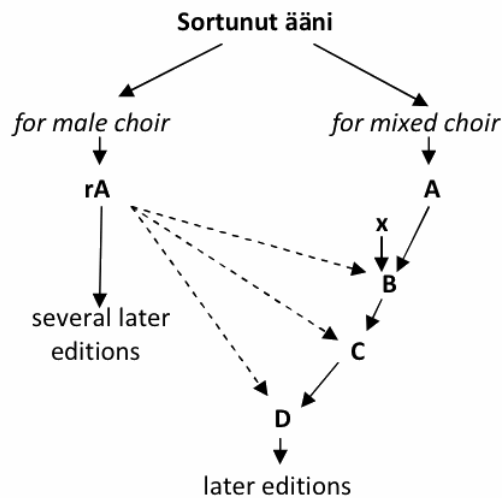
<sup>3</sup> The songs published as part of Opus 18 are: *Sortunut ääni*, *Rakastava*, *Isänmaalle*, *Venematka*, *Veljeni vieraila mailla*, *Terve kuu*, *Saarella palaa*, *Min rastas raataa*, *Metsämiehen laulu*, and *Sydämeni laulu*. In addition, Sibelius planned adding *Natus in curas* and *Herr Lager och Skön fager* in Opus 18, but they were never published in Opus 18.

<sup>4</sup> To mention few examples: Furuholm (1916), Tawaststjerna (1976), Hyökki (2003).

<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, Sibelius composed *Min rastas raataa* for mixed choir and never arranged it for male choir. The song was part of Opus 18 until 1930. The reason, why Sibelius placed the song systematically among the male choir songs in his work lists (even after 1930) remains unknown.

<sup>6</sup> The mixed choir version was published in 1898 and the male choir version was premiered in 21 April 1899. The first edition of the male choir version was published as late as 1901.

The source chain of *Sortunut ääni* is presented in Example 1. As seen in the example, there are no surviving manuscripts to either of the versions. Thus, the only sources for the song are the published editions. This is, in fact, the case in most of the songs of Opus 18. In the Example 1 letters **A** to **D** represent the mixed choir editions published in Finland during Sibelius's lifetime. Source **A** is the first edition and so forth. Considering the dynamic marks, there are several differences between the first editions. The example illustrates, how over the years every new mixed choir edition has incorporated details (mostly dynamic marks, but also other information) from the first edition of the male choir version (**rA**). The extent of the changes occurring from source **A** to source **D** is significant: in fact, all the dynamic marks that source **D** has in common with source **A**, are precisely the same marks that source **A** has in common with the first edition of the male choir version. In other words, basically all the passages, where the readings of the first editions differ from each other, the reading of the mixed choir version have been replaced by the reading of the male choir version. I believe the extensive transmission from the male choir version to the mixed choir version is a result of the fact that the male choir version has been thought to be the original version, and consequently, its reading to be the primer one.



**Example 1.** The source chain of *Sortunut ääni*.

- A:** Sävelistö 4 (1898) ed. Forsström.
  - B:** Kansanvalistusseuran sekaäänisiä lauluja 13 (1903) ed. unknown.
  - C:** Sävelistö 8 (1907/8) ed. Hahl.
  - D:** Fazerin sekakuorosarja 9 (1952) ed. unknown.
  - rA:** Suomalaisia ylioppilaslauluja 1 (1901) ed. Klemetti.
  - x:** Unknown source.
-

The changes occurring in the editions from **A** to **D** have affected significantly the performance practice of the song. There is a changed dynamic mark almost in every bar of the song. I will present here only two details. The first one is illustrated in Examples 2a and 2b. In Example 2a there are bars 1 and 2 from source **A**, and in Example 2b there are the corresponding bars from source **D**. In **A** there is a continuous crescendo wedge, which begins at the beginning of first bar and extends over the bar line all the way to second bar until the system break after third beat. In **D** the crescendo has been split into two consecutive wedges, each spanning the length of one bar. **D** is at the moment the most commonly used edition in Finland, and its reading has been interpreted in most performances literally: the consecutive wedges are often realized by returning to the lower dynamic level and the beginning of bar 2.

(Kantaletar 1: 67). Jean Sibelius.

Sopr.  
Alt.  
Ten.  
Bas.

Mi - kä sor - ti ää - nen suu - ren, Ää - nen suu - ren ja

**Example 2a.** Source A, bars 1-2.

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Ei liian hitaasti  
Ej för långsamt

Jean Sibelius, Op. 18 nr 1

Mi - kä sor - ti ää - nen suu - ren, ää - nen suu - ren ja so - ri - an,  
Vad har bru - tit to - nens väl - de, vad har stör - tat min stämma klar,

**Example 2b.** Source D, bars 1-2.

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The second detail worth noting is presented in Examples 3a and 3b. In source **A** there is a so called long accent in bar 6, which is quite typical of Sibelius's notational practice. Here it indicates an emphasis on the word *lailattele*. In

source **D** the long accent is replaced by a diminuendo wedge spanning the entire bar. The extension of the wedge is strange, since emphasizing the beginning of the word *lailattele* as indicated by the long accent in **A** would result in natural phrasing of both music and the Finnish text.



**Example 3a.** Source A, bar 6.  
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**Example 3b.** Source D, bar 6.  
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Both of the changes described above, which have affected also the performance practice of the song derive from the first edition of the male choir version. Bars 1-6 of the first edition of the male choir version are presented in Example 4. As the example shows, there are consecutive crescendo wedges in the male choir version in bars 1 and 2 instead of one single crescendo, and the diminuendo wedge in bar 6 spans almost the length of the entire bar. The Example 4 shows also other interesting details, such as fermata on bar line after bar 6 and the tempo indication *Ei liian hitaasti* [not too slowly] in the beginning. Both details are missing in **A** but are found in **D** (see Examples 2 and 3).

From the editor's point of view the question, how to regard the extensive transmission from the male choir version to the mixed choir version, seems

quite simple. In case of two versions, there are two autograph readings. Regardless of the order they were conceived – i.e. which of the versions is the original –, the two versions should be considered independent of each other and their readings should not be unified in the critical edition. Instead, the transmission from the male choir version to the mixed choir version should be regarded as corruption.

But the question is only seemingly simple. The closer examination of the first edition of the male choir version (Example 4) reveals an interesting detail: the entire song is laid out one bar per one system. The peculiar layout raises the question: could the layout be the reason why there are consecutive crescendo wedges instead of a single continuous one in bars 1 and 2? Based on the one-bar-per-one-system layout it can be argued that also in the manuscript of the male choir version there may have been a single continuous crescendo wedge spanning to the length of bars 1 and 2, which was then split by the typesetter in the publishing process.<sup>7</sup> Naturally, this interpretation cannot be confirmed, since the manuscript is lost, but it does cast a doubt over the traditional way of interpreting the song.

Instead of replacing the dynamic marks of the mixed choir version with the marks from male choir version, as is done in the editions of 20<sup>th</sup> century, should we do the reverse and replace the dynamic marks of the male choir version with the marks from the mixed choir version? It could be justly argued that it is perhaps the dynamic marks of the mixed choir version, which are closer to the composer's intentions. But by doing accordingly, we end up doing the exact thing I condemned above.

### **Case 2: Sydämeni laulu (Opus 18/6)**

The source chain of *Sydämeni laulu*, presented in Example 5, is fundamentally different from the source chain of *Sortunut ääni*. *Sydämeni laulu* is the only song of Opus 18, in which basically all the autograph manuscripts of both versions have survived to present day. In addition, the history of *Sydämeni laulu* is very well documented, thus, the question of originality does not raise a debate here: Sibelius composed the song for male choir in 1898 and arranged the song for mixed choir by commission of *Kansanvalistusseura* six years later in 1904.

An interesting detail in the source chain is that the first edition of the mixed choir version – source **A1** in the Example 5 – became very popular and two extra prints were taken (designated as **A2** and **A3**). Each of the new prints was printed from different typesetting plates, and they include a unique set of misprints. Based on these misprints (among other details) it can be deduced, which of them were used as a source in making of **B** and **C**.

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<sup>7</sup> Typesetter's regularly split the wedges at the system break. An example of this is given below in case 2.

**2. SORTUNUT ÄÄNI.**  
**HVAD HAR BRUITT TONENS VÄLDE?**  
*Et liian hitaasti.*  
*Ej för långsamt.*  
 J. SIBELIUS.

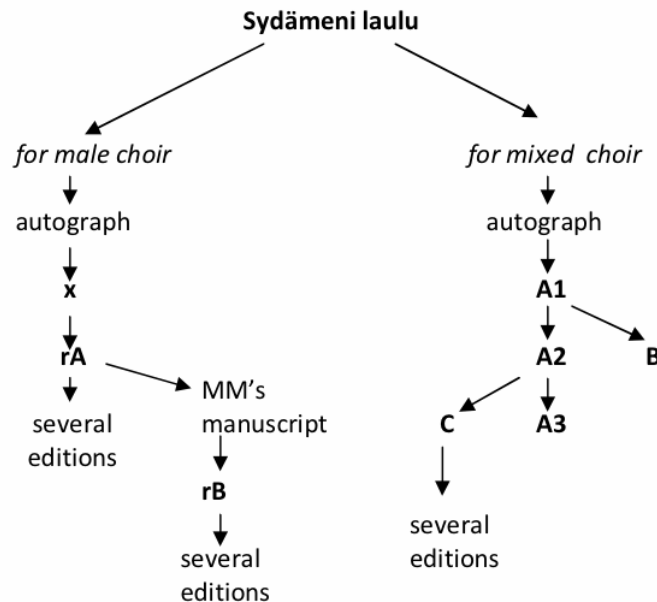
*mf* Mi...kä sor...ti ää...nen suu...ren,  
 Haud har bör...tt fo...nens väl...de.

*mf* Jok' en...nen jo...ke...na juok...si  
 Hov for...dom fla...tt som flo...den

*mp* Vä...si...vir...la...na vi...la...si,  
 som den bru...stän...de strömmens våg.

*mp* Lam...mik...ko...na lai...lat...te...li  
 usg...gar har som haf...vets sån...ger

**Example 4.** Source rA, bars 1-6.  
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**Example 5.** The source chain of *Sydämeni laulu*.

**A1:** Kansanvalistusseuran sekaäänisiä lauluja 16 (1904) ed. Huoponen.

**A2:** Second print (1908).

**A3:** Third print (1914).

**B:** Sävelistö 8 (1907/8) ed. Hahl.

**C:** Svenska Folkskolans Vänners Musikbibliotek A 15 (1914) ed. unknown.

**rA:** 2 Mieskvartettia (1899) published by K.F. Wasenius.

**MM's manuscript:** Copy by unknown hand currently held in The National Library of Finland in Helsinki. Copy served as typesetter's copy for **rB**.

**rB:** MM's "svarta böcker" vol. 5 (1901).

**Autograph fair copy for the male choir version (used as engraver's copy)** currently held in Sibelius Museum in Turku.

**Autograph fair copy for the mixed choir version (used as typesetter's copy)** currently held in The National Library of Finland in Helsinki.

The first editions of both versions are given in Examples 6a and 6b. There are significant differences in the editions – the most obvious difference being the second stanza: in the mixed choir version the second stanza is not written out, but marked with repeat sign and the text of the second stanza is laid below the text of the first stanza. In the male choir version the second stanza is written out and, remarkably, its music is not identical with the music of the first stanza. For example there is a rhythmical difference in the first bar of fourth system (*vainiolla*) when compared to the corresponding bar in second stanza (the first bar in the third system in the second page, *kellahdella*). The difference in the rhythm reflects the difference in the rhythm of the natural spoken Finnish *vainiolla* and *kellahdella* – again a typical feature of Sibelius's vocal writing.



Similar text motivated difference is found also at the very beginning of the male choir version. There is a fermata on the bar line between first and second bars reflecting the structure of the text (the comma). In the second stanza the fermata is missing. First two bars of the second stanza (first bars in the last system of the first page) consist of a single sentence and stopping at the bar line would not make any sense for anyone speaking Finnish. All these details of the second stanza of the male choir version are found also in the manuscript and the edition presented in Example 6a is actually very close to the reading of the autograph manuscript.

Sibelius's autograph manuscript for the mixed choir version is presented in Example 7. Comparing the manuscript to the first edition (in Example 6b) reveals that the first edition is faithful to the reading of the manuscript, and even the repeat structure derives from Sibelius's own hand. Also the lack of tempo indication in the edition is explained by the fact that there is no tempo indication in the manuscript.<sup>8</sup> In fact, the only deviations from the reading of the manuscript are clear misprints – for example the treble clef on the lower staff in fourth system.

Although the first edition (in Example 6b) reproduces the manuscript (in Example 7) accurately, one can justly ask: is the manuscript really intended by Sibelius to be printed in this form? Did he really want to unify the text based details of the second stanza? But instead, could it be possible that the reading in the manuscript was intended as kind of a shorthand notation, which the publisher or more accurately the typesetter has taken literally? Interestingly, all the editions published in Sibelius's lifetime have retained the repeat structure and the reading of the mixed choir version is uninfluenced by the male choir version.

It is interesting to realize, how accurately the first editions have actually been produced. In Example 6a there is an excellent example of typesetters' accuracy. In the last bar of the first page there are two short crescendo wedges instead of one continuous, as in all the corresponding bars. In the autograph manuscript there is a single continuous crescendo wedge also in this bar. However, the first edition was not made based on the autograph manuscript, but on a copy that was possibly prepared for the first performance (marked **x** in the source chain in Example 5). In source **x** there is a system break at the middle of the bar (between *illan* and *tullen*) and the crescendo wedge is therefore split in two shorter wedges in **x**. The altered reading of **x** has been retained in the first edition, despite the absence of the system break. This is a good example of the typesetters' accuracy; they tend to reproduce literally even those marks that are not supposed to be reproduced.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> This may explain also the missing tempo indication in the first edition of *Sortunut ääni* (Example 2a). In fact, there are no tempo indications in any of the surviving autograph manuscripts of the arrangements of Opus 18.

<sup>9</sup> The typesetters in Finland during that time were not usually musicians themselves and therefore did not understand the content of the music text they were typesetting.

**Sydämeni laulu.**  
(A. Kiril.)

Jean Sibelius.

*Lento assai.*

Tenor  
I. II.

Bass  
I. II.

tuu . di . tel . la  
hel . mas . sa Tuo . ne . lau  
im - men.

On - pa kul . lan  
lys - ti ol - la  
Kul - ta . keh . doss'

kel . lah . del - la  
kuml . lel . la keh . rä . jä  
lin - tuu.

Tuo . nen vii - ta,  
rau . han vii - ta!  
kau - ka - na on

vai . no, rii - ta,  
kau - ka - na ka . va . la  
maail - ma.

Tuo . nen leh . to, ei . nen leh . to!  
Siell' on hie - no

hie - ta . keh . to, sin . ne . pä lap . se . ni  
saa - tan.

Siell' on lap . sen  
lys - ti ol - la, Tuo . nen her - ran

vai . ni - ol - la  
kai . se . a Tuo . ne . lau  
kar - jaa

Siell' on lap . sen  
lys - ti ol - la, il - lan tul - len

K. F. W. 41.

**Example 6a.** Source ra.  
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## 2. Sydämeni laulu.

(A. Kivi).

J. Sibelius.

*p*

1. Tuo-nen leh-to, öi-nen leh-to, Siell'on hie-no  
 2. Siell'on lap-sen lys-ti ol-la, il-lan tul-len

*ritenuto.* *ten.*

hie-ta-keh-to, sin-ne-pä lap-se-ni saa-tan.  
 tuu-di-tel-la hel-mas-sa Tuo-ne-lan im-men.

*mf* *mf*

Siell'on lap-sen lys-ti ol-la, Tuo-nen her-ran  
 On-pa kul-lan lys-ti ol-la, Kul-ta-keh-doss!

*mp*

vai-ni-ol-la, kait-se-a Tuo-ne-lan kar-jaa.  
 kel-lah-del-la, kuul-lel-la keh-rää-jä--lin-tuu.

*pp*

Tuo-nen vii-ta, rau-han vii-ta, kau-ka-na on

*riten.*

vai-no, rii-ta, kau-ka-na ka-va-la maailma.

**Example 6b.** Source A1.

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Sydämen laulu  
(A. Kivi)

7. Sibelius

ritenuto

Sops.  
Alt.  
Ten.  
Bass

V.E. Tuonen lehto sinen lehto Siellä on hiemo hieta, kehto,  
K.E. Siellä on lapsen lehti olla illan tullen tun-di-tella,

Siinsepä lapseni saatan. Siellä on lapsen lehti olla,  
helmassa Tuonelan immonen. Onpa kullon lehti olla,

Tuonen herran vaimi-olla, kaitso Tuonelan karjua.  
Kulta kirkon, kellen-della, kumulla kehräys lintua.

Tuonen viite, rauhan viite, kaukana on vaino, piite,  
Kaukana kavalat maailma.

**Example 7.** Autograph fair copy of the mixed choir version. Published with the permission of the legal successors of Jean Sibelius.

## Conclusions

I have presented above two very different cases. In the first one, *Sortunut ääni*, the reading of the mixed choir version is very much influenced by the reading of the male choir version – even to the extent that in the editions used nowadays practically all the dynamic marks have been taken to the mixed choir version from the male choir version that was in those days thought to be the original composition. I showed that it may even be argued that the reading of the mixed choir version – whether it is the original version or not – is possibly closer to the composer's intentions due to the peculiar layout of the male choir version.

In the second case, *Sydämeni laulu*, the two different versions have in fact remained different, and the reading of the mixed choir version is uninfluenced by the reading of the original male choir version. In this case I argued that the reading of the mixed choir arrangement may have been intended by Sibelius as kind of a shorthand notation and, thus, the reading of the original male choir version – especially the rhythmic details of second stanza – should be taken into account also when editing or performing the mixed choir version. I believe that also in this case the concept of originality is at work. Since *Sydämeni laulu* is one of the few songs, in which the manuscript has survived, the editors have wanted to maintain the *original* reading of the autograph manuscript.

From these two cases presenting opposite examples it is evident that the role of the reference sources must in each case be individually evaluated. Although it seems that the mixing of the sources is well argued in both cases presented above – such as adding the tempo indications to the arrangements or writing out the differing second stanza in *Sydämeni laulu* –, my study, however, points to the direction that whenever the first editions differ from each other, the difference derives in all likelihood from Sibelius's manuscript; the first editions tend to reproduce the reading of the manuscript in remarkably accurate way. Therefore, the reading of the main source has been decided to retain in *Jean Sibelius Works* as it is. But due to the crucial importance of the information given by the reference sources, the differing readings of the original version are not just listed in the Critical Commentary, but they are included as footnotes in the music pages. The footnotes are also printed in the practical edition prepared by Breitkopf & Härtel based on the critical edition. In addition, the close relationship of two different versions is explained in detail in Introduction and Source Evaluation, thus, giving the performer chance to make an informed choice.

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**Sakari Ylivuori** è uno dei curatori dei *Jean Sibelius Works* e ha in preparazione il volume VII/1 che contiene le opere corali. Sta proseguendo gli studi alla *Sibelius Academy* come studente specializzando, e scrive la sua tesi dottorale sui testimoni delle opere di Sibelius per coro misto *a cappella*.