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***The institutional process of improving Finnish Lutheran church music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries***

In the first half of the nineteenth century, according to contemporary specialists, the standard of church singing in Finnish Lutheran parishes was poor. One reason for this was that the office of churchwarden ('lukkari' in Finnish) was not first and foremost to be a musician. In addition, there were only a few organs in Finnish churches. Therefore, church singing was unaccompanied and in unison. Moreover, the hymnal was over hundred years old, and due to lack of chorale books people sang hymns by using local chorale variants, in other words different way in every parish. Around the middle of the century, discussions on hymn singing got under way. Many people considered institutional process as a tool to unify and improve church singing. The aim of this paper is to describe, how music in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland was changed and improved by these processes. I focus on two subjects: 1) Churchwarden-organist schools as the first professional musical education institutions and 2) the Church Synod’s role as an establisher of cultural control in church singing. In the year 1870, a new church law changed the profession of churchwarden; now the churchwarden had to be a musician. This presupposed the organization of appropriate professional education. That is why four different churchwarden-organist schools were founded in Finland. They were the first musical institutions, which established cultural norms for the church music. In addition, in 1886 the Church Synod authorised the new Finnish and Swedish hymnals. Since that church singing was not suffering from the lack of a generally accepted hymnal, and the wild era of different kinds of chorale books and collections of liturgical music ended. At the end of the century, a published chorale book edited by Richard Faltin and Immanuel Colliander, including the Mass arranged by J. A. G. Hymander, was in general use in almost every parish. Hymander’s Mass was not authorized by the Church Synod, but it nevertheless became a ‘semi-official’ collection of liturgical music. In the early twentieth century, the Church Synod started also a process to get an officially authorized collection of liturgical music.

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