

Some Thoughts about Musical Text, Manuscript and Čiurlionis' Music

The textological analysis of music compositions, which includes analysis of the text and the manuscript itself, seems to be one of the most fruitful methods developed in the last decades for rediscovering chronology of a compositional process and for a better understanding of a composer himself. This method is usual and successfully applied for literary works, and a lot is done also to apply this method for music, too. First of all, it depends on the critical editing and printing of music.

The role of text as a primary source that encompasses everything and provides the foundation for further research became stronger already in the beginning of the 20th century. Although text analyses were limited for a long time only to analysis of texts of literary works, this method and concept passed into other systems of human artistic expression that have language characteristics – such as music, painting, dance, and even scents. Today text (pronounced or written) is the foundation and a primary given thing of all humanities and liberal – philological thinking. According to Bachtin, "Where there is no text, there is no research and contemplation object. Whatever the research objectives are, only text may be the foundation" (Bachtin 1979: 281–282).

One of the most well-known researchers of the old Russian writings Dmitrij Lihachov defines text as a result of deliberate human activity (Lihachov 1983: 128). According to him, text is only a linguistic expression of a creator's idea, so everything that is not language is not text either (for example, text errors). Lihachov considers that when a textologist analyses a manuscript, first of all he has to identify what belongs to the text, and what belongs to the manuscript (Lihachov 1964: 9). We can find an analogous remark in the texts of Raymond Monelle where he says that "text is defined by what is not-text" (Monelle 2000: 151). In this way we define the limits of our analysis that are quite exact but also quite narrow.

As one can see in the newest musical publications, editors are more and more interested in that which is not text. Namely, editors find new meanings of the text itself and new possibilities for interpretation when they analyse not text. Of course, these are peripheral things and marginalia, but interest for them has increased in the contemporary society. And here already another, a wider point of view prevails that defines text as a coherent complex of signs and sees it everywhere where meaning exists (Daujotyte 1998).

According to one of contemporary russian editor Vaidman all topics of music textology may be generally divided into two spheres: analysis of text history and preparation of various texts for publication (Vaidman 1987: 125–126). Historical analysis of text in each level of formation when the manuscript is still being written by the author, when it is re-written by the copyist and edited by the editor and in all other cases where text is only corrected and changed belong to the first sphere. Preparation of scientific editions of musical works belong to the second sphere (type of publication, publication structure and arrangement of works, dating, identification of the main text, writing of commentaries, notographical and orthographical processing). For this reason musicologists shifted their attention from composers' clean copies to intensive and comprehensive analysis of drafts already in the beginning of the 20th century.

The method of *Genetic critics* formulated by Pierre-Marc de Biasi and described in the book "Introduction aux Méthodes Critiques pour l'analyse littéraire" (Biasi 1990) looks especially effective here. Although de Biasi talks about and analyses literary works, his method seems really universal and can be successfully applied to music. According to de Biasi, two sorts of genetic analysis exist: genetics of scenarios or "not yet text" and manuscript (written) analysis or analysis of text. The first one is suitable for analysis of all autographic documents that influenced the work's conception and preparation (context), and the second one is for written variants of manuscripts (text). Also genetic textology and genetic criticism are distinguished.

Genetic textology deciphers and analyses a work's manuscripts. Genetic criticism interprets the results of deciphering. Genetic textology and criticism have one aim which is to re-create the history of "text birth" and to uncover the mysteries of its creation. The aim of this method is to

highlight and to help understand the originality of the work's text by grounding oneself on the peculiarities of the process that produced this text.

Genetic textology spans all "material traces" of the work, everything that is directly or indirectly connected with the analysed work – primary manuscripts used in the work, drafts, variants of developing certain places and author's notes related with the work indirectly, the gathered material. The starting point of genetic criticism is the stating that the final text of the work is the result of a certain process. Genetic criticism analyses the time dimension of a text that is being born and is based on the presumption that even a relatively finished work is only the result of its genesis. When a work is analysed with the help of this method four phases of genesis are seen: preparation, writing, publishing, and after-publishing phases. Each of them also has several stages and functions that are characteristic of certain types of manuscripts. For example, two more levels may be found in the preparation phase: the survey or "before primary" level and the decision level. The writing phase is the phase of implementing the conception. Here is where the core of genesis – drafts – lies. That is auxiliary writing sources, the "writing file" (drafts used in the future work, variants of developing certain places), final clean copies and transcripts by the author. When the becoming of the manuscript itself and not the final result which is a manuscript finished by the author that was corrected most is chosen as a primary point, a constantly changing world where nothing is finally defined and where writing and composing is disturbed every second by the possibility of choice appears.

Coming back to the musical text we should remember its main characteristic that was noticed already by Jean-Jacques Nattiez. It is the dual acoustic and graphic nature of a musical sign (Nattiez 1973). The author's thought in the written score breaks into a new light spectre as if in a prism – we see only separate details of an unbroken creative process in it, so it is almost impossible to reconstruct the whole entire creative process only by the score. The score never matches the composer's primary concept because the creative impulse most often forms as a sound structure. So a conclusion arises, as Raymond Monelle notices, that when a score (music as text) is analysed, the existing possibility of deforming the meaning should not be forgotten (Monelle 2000).

But "Text is always open to infinity," Roland Barthes writes (Bart 1989: 425). "Music, apparently, is always speech, never writing," Monelle agrees (Monelle 2000: 168). And Charles Rosen adds: "Nevertheless, composers always seek to control and influence the performing of their works, so they are inclined to write their works down, although they understand that notation is not perfect" (Rosen 2001).

How is everything that we talked about reflected in a particular work of a musicologist? Here I would like to present a few of my personal insights and conclusions that were formed when analysing music manuscripts of Čiurlionis.

Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis is one of the most well-known Lithuanian composers and painters, the contemporary of Schoenberg, Mahler, Rachmaninov, and Richard Strauss. He is one of the most original and most interesting artists of the end of the 19th century – beginning of the 20th century. He left over 200 works of painting, approximately 600 drawings and drafts, and almost 400 musical compositions. The composer's path lasted only 14 years and experienced some great changes; and today we divide Čiurlionis' work into the early period from 1896 till 1903 that has all characteristics of romantic music, and the mature period (1904–1910), where he sought for new work composition formation principles, there was a clear turn toward atonality, and even rudiments of graphic music may be found in his work.

The first and foremost task of a textologist starting a detailed analysis of manuscripts of Čiurlionis and other composers is registration and evaluation of the manuscripts themselves. The success of all further work depends on how fully the archive (or at least copies of good quality on a desktop) is completed. In Čiurlionis' case we see that his creative inheritance had to withstand all cataclysms and political peripeteias of the 20th century. For this reason a big part of manuscripts were destroyed or lost. Today a few signs show that they existed. Firstly, it is the information that we find in the Čiurlionis' archive: hints in letters, fragments of music with meant dedications, title pages of orchestrated works that exist, etc. Another factor that tells us about the manuscripts that existed once is the consistency of the creative process. Traditionally all composers follow a certain sequence of putting a work into text: in the beginning a sketch of the work is made, then a full

draft of the work is written down, and at last the work is re-written into a clean copy with minor corrections.

It is interesting to note that Čiurlionis followed such sequence only in the beginning of his creative path. Around 1903–1906 he started leaving almost everything in drafts and unfinished sketches because he did not believe anymore that his work would be published or performed someday, and during 1908–1909 he left no primary work sketches – the work matured fully in his thoughts, and he wrote down the fully complete work text on paper. In this case we can make correspondent conclusions what to look for and what not to expect to find. These conclusions were recently confirmed by a batch of unknown music autographs of Čiurlionis found last spring in the archive of his sister Jadvyga Čiurlionytė that was kept in the library of Vilnius University. Nobody ever doubted that Čiurlionis, having studied composition only for two years, was not capable of creating a sonata or variations for piano without initial drafts, but we did not have them in the archive. And among the found manuscripts we found the initial manuscripts from which the same works were re-written into a clean copy later.

Another quite difficult problem that everyone who opens Čiurlionis' music autographs has is the capability of not to get lost and to find one's way through many sketches, fragments, details, episodes that make up two thirds of the whole archive. The reason is that very often one may find fragments of various works written down at different times and in different places on one page of a manuscript. And vice versa – sketches of the same work were written down on pages of several manuscripts. As a rule such fragments were not dated, they were inserted into each other, written down most often with the same pencil, sometimes they were struck through but corrected later. Such nature of manuscripts poses problems for editors of publications as well as for museum employees who have to register the collected archive. We can find registration mistakes already in the initial book of manuscript inventory. For example, for a long time two autographs that differ substantially were held by one name and together – choir *a cappella* "Sanctus" created in 1902 in Leipzig and Overture for a Symphony Orchestra. This Overture is a part of clavier and the title page of orchestrated score that did not survive. So in 1990 when the archive was reviewed even three new manuscript positions were formed.

Nevertheless we can identify limits of many fragments and sketches by several characteristic features: clefs – treble (G) and bass (F), key signs, and time. Čiurlionis always put a new creative idea or thought into text by starting the writing with these naturally necessary signs. This is an exclusive quality of Čiurlionis' manuscripts because if a work is written down not from the beginning (some middle part of a work is put down) or if it is continued on another page or another manuscript – as a rule, no such signs exist. Some editors of Čiurlionis' publications made mistakes and, as it was found out later, published work fragments as one composition because they did not give adequate attention to this characteristic.

It must be remembered that professor Vytautas Landsbergis worked very hard and accomplished a lot analysing Čiurlionis' manuscripts. In more than 40 years he edited almost all Čiurlionis' music. But we have to admit that Landsbergis did not include a big part of music written by Čiurlionis in the catalogue compiled and published by him in 1986. So the author of this paper started a palaeographic research of the archive already in 1990 and analysed the written material (basis and inscriptions), nature of the writing (font), the writing (manner), and the positioning of writings on a page. Analysis of the written material allowed to identify a lot of fragments and sketches that were "overlooked" by scientists who had worked on them earlier. Each manuscript or a piece of paper of a notebook has its own characteristic qualities: records of the publishing house, way of binding, a certain number of staves, and differences between staves. Such analysis provided a possibility to form quite a clear image of what paper was used by Čiurlionis and when. This, of course, allowed to correct the chronology and location (place of creation) of music writings on the pages.

Another very important factor was the writing tool itself (the pen). All Čiurlionis' music manuscripts were written with only two pens – pencils of various colour or ink. The most important thing is that it was possible to identify the dates of several fragments by the writing tool – in the first place, written with a violet or, to be more precise, chemical pencil. It was possible because Čiurlionis wrote notes with it as well as worked with sketches of future paintings. We know the dates of the paintings. So it is not difficult to identify in reverse order the time and sometimes the place of writing down of some musical fragments.

Eventually the palaeographic analysis allowed to compile a catalogue of Čiurlionis' music autographs that did not survive of almost the same size as the one of known existing manuscripts. This analysis showed that, first of all, Čiurlionis cared for the fixation of the musical ideal, putting it into text.

Instrumental dependency was not the main factor. Usually it is difficult to identify what instrument the composition is meant for or should be performed by. The examples of such instrumental indeterminacy pose another intriguing question – maybe these examples are interconnected in some way? Because after carefully review of all Čiurlionis' creative work it may be clearly seen that the whole creative path of the artist had one idea, one big opus that existed in the smallest details like the deity in the painting "Rex", but also it was the core of the whole existence. In the same way as Alexander Scriabin sought to create his "Mystery", Čiurlionis tried to implement his *idée fixe*, i.e. the idea of the creation of a peculiar, "strange", "fantastic", as he writes in his letters, world, and this idea was partly realised in painting and in music – Čiurlionis named a series of paintings and a composed symphonic poem created in 1907 by this name of "The Creation of the World".

Nevertheless the existing manuscripts show that the creation of this fantastic, artistic world was going on until the last moments of his life – in the latest music manuscripts, dated February 1910, Čiurlionis wrote two big sketches for an orchestra with a pencil – a symphonic poem "Dies irae", and a second symphony, called "Pastoral, Lithuanian" ("Pastoralinė, lietuviška") (parts 1–2). It is important that Čiurlionis inserted fragments of pieces for piano in both these works (Fugue *c-moll* (VL 219), "Our Lord" ("Tėve mūsų") (VL 260), Prelude *d-moll* (VL 325), Fugue *b-moll* (VL 345), variations for piano "Bėkit, bareliai" (VL 279), and "Oi giria, giria" (VL 276)). That means that Čiurlionis clearly treated all his piano pieces as sketches of one big orchestral work, a work that was being created during all his life and that was started to be realised only in the last minutes of his life.

So the artist's "The Creation of the World" ("Pasaulio sutvėrimas") is not only a series of paintings or a symphonic poem, it is more of a reflection of an eternal process of universe creation, and the artist disgorge into it only for a moment and can leave only a slight trace.

Čiurlionis probably felt that, as Algirdas Julius Greimas wrote, "the history of a man, nations, the humanity [...] has some deeper meaning, that a person's behaviours obey some metarational principle" (Greimas 1991: 18). So the surrounding world to Čiurlionis was, as Vytautas Landsbergis noticed, "not chaos, but an entirety of connections, besides, connections of the ground and the sky; so the subsistence of a human being is a part of something, and his creation may express itself as a sign of the great master works" (Landsbergis 1997: 9).

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Santrauka

Keletas M. K. Čiurlionio muzikinio teksto ypatybių

M. K. Čiurlionio muzika greta tipišku muzikos komponavimo priemonių pasižymi keletu tik jai būdingų teksto bruožų, kurie tarsi nėra patys reikšmingiausi, bet atskleidžia giluminius teksto formavimo principus ne tik Čiurlionio, bet ir kitų menininkų kūrybiniame procese. Tai meninės muzikinės minties struktūrinė išraiška, užsimezgantys teksto struktūriniai ryšiai tarp atskirų kompozicijų ir net tarp skirtingų meno šakų (Čiurlionio muzikos, dailės ir literatūrinės kūrybos), muzikinio teksto simetrija, grafinis (vizualinis) muzikinio teksto rezultatas, unikalus multimeninės raiškos žodynas ir su juo susijusi garsų simbolika, galiausiai paties teksto neužbaigtumas (*non finito* principas) bei nematerializuoti (neužrašyti) muzikos tekstai. Šie bruožai, pranešimo autoriaus nuomone, yra išskirtiniai, atskleidžiantys unikalias Čiurlionio muzikinių tekstų savybes, kurios savo ruožtu leidžia geriau suprasti muzikinio teksto formavimo dėsningumus.