THIS IS OUR MUSIC

Mäki Trio and the Finnish Dance Music Legacy in America

University of Tampere
Department of Music Anthropology
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Leena Rintala

Tampereen yliopisto

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Tutkimuksessa tarkastellaan amerikansuomalaista tanssimusiikkikulttuuria yhden yhtyeen, *Mäki Trion*, kautta. Michiganilainen perheyhtye turvasi suomalaiseen 1900-luvun alun paritanssiperinteeseen valsseineen, jenkkoineen ja polkkineen. Perinteestä pidettiin tiukasti kiinni; Suomen musiikkielämän uusia virtauksia ei soitossa kuulu. Amerikkalaisvaikutteet rajoittuvat enimmäkseen ulkonäköseikkoihin ja soitinvalintoihin: perinteikäs haitari yhdistetään ennakkoluulottomasti jazz-musiikista lainattuihin banjoon, saksofoniin ja lyömäsoittimiin.

Tutkimus rajautuu Yhdysvaltain suomalaiskeskittymiin 1920- ja 1930-lukujen taitteeseen. Aika oli amerikansuomalaisen kulttuurin kulta-aikaa. Ensimmäisen sukupolven suomalaissiirtolaisten määrä oli suurimmillaan, omat sanomalehdet välittivät tietoa, ja miltei jokaisella suomalaisten asuttamalla paikkakunnalla oli oma suomalainen seuraintalo, haali. Haalien suojissa siirtolaiskulttuuri kukoisti. Siellä näyteltiin, soitettiin, laulettiin, tanssittiin, voimisteltiin, lausuttiin ja kokoonnuttiin tapaamaan tuttavia. 1930-luvulta alkaen siirtolaiskulttuuri muutti vähitellen muotoaan amerikansuomalaisten sopeutuessa vähitellen valtakulttuuriin ja uuden siirtolaisvirran tyrehtyessä. Toisen ja kolmannen sukupolven amerikansuomalaisille suomalaisella kulttuurilla oli enää lähinnä symbolinen merkitys.

Tutkimuksessa yhtyeen musiikkia tarkastellaan Alan P. Merriamin luoman musiikin funktioanalyysin avulla. Tarkoituksena on selvittää myös, minkälaisissa paikoissa *Mäki Trio* esiintyi, ketkä muodostivat yleisön, millainen vastaanotto oli sekä poikkesiko konserttiohjelmisto levytysten materiaalista. Tutkimusaineistona käytetään *Mäki Trion* levytyksiä, lehti-ilmoituksia ja artikkeleita sekä valokuvia.

Tutkimuksessa selviää, että *Mäki Trio* on omalle aikakaudelleen hyvin tyypillinen yhtye, jonka pääasiallisia esiintymispaikkoja olivat suomalaishaalit. Yhtye oli suosittu kaikenikäisten suomalaisten keskuudessa. Siirtolaisten turvallisuudenkaipuu ja koti-ikävä loivat kysyntää suomalaiselle tanssimusiikille. Kielitaidottomille siirtolaisille oman kulttuurin ylläpitäminen oli keino selviytyä uusissa olosuhteissa.

Avainsanat: amerikansuomalaiset, siirtolaisuus, tanssimusiikki, Etelä-Pohjanmaa, 1920-luku, 1930-luku

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

As a result of a mass emigration in 1864-1924, over 300 000 Finns settled permanently in North America. In small Finnish communities in the New World, pre-migration traditions were maintained. Normally a newly arrived immigrant knew very little or no English and adjusting to new surroundings was by no means easy. At that time, all possible support and companionship from fellow Finns were highly valued. In those communities, social and cultural life flourished, and special community halls served as a second home for the immigrants. The local meeting rooms, Finn Halls, were arenas for the practice of a variety of cultural activities. The immigrants had carried with them in their heads and hearts theatre, music, gymnastics, poetry, and literature to their new homeland. On Saturday nights, people danced there the polkas, the waltzes and the schottisches while the network of Finnish American institutions and newspapers spread the word effectively across the communities. To start with, Finnish musical heritage was being nurtured as a group activity within religious, national, temperance and social movements in forms of choral societies and brass bands. But soon also soloists as well as dance bands found their place in the Finnish communities.

This thesis is an ethnomusicological study of the role of music, especially dance music, in the Finnish American communities in the 1920s and 1930s. Ethnomusicology studies music in its social and cultural context, as a basic human social behavior. Music is seen to be much more than just a sound structure. Alan P. Merriam defines ethnomusicology as a study of “music in culture” and “music as culture”. He says that “music sound is the result of human behavioral processes that are shaped by the values, attitudes, and beliefs of the people who comprise a particular culture” (Merriam 1964, 6). Music is humanly organized sound in a

particular cultural and social context, a product of the behavior of human groups (Blacking 1976, 10). As elsewhere, also in the Finnish American culture, music making cuts across all aspects of society. Music does not simply "reflect" or "represent" the people but rather produces them, and creates and constructs experiences (Frith 1996, 109).

The 1920s can be referred to as the "Golden Age" of Finnish American culture. This was the time right before the coming of the new forms of entertainment – radio, sound films and jukeboxes – and when the amount of working-age first generation Finnish immigrants was at highest. This study attempts to clarify the uses and functions of music in the Finnish America. As a model, I will use Alan P. Merriam's categorization of the functions of music (1964). I will look at the musical phenomenon as a response of the Finnish Americans to the pressures of Americanization, and as a form of musical adjustment to the larger community. How much did Finnish music actually change in America? What were the new functions given to it?

The focus of this study is on *Mäki Trio*, a Finnish American family band from Caspian, Michigan. The western Upper Peninsula of Michigan is an area with a notable Finnish concentration. *Mäki Trio* was chosen for this study because it represents well the Finnish American dance music scene of the late 1920s. Its music is a good example of what the music was like in the community dances. *Mäki Trio* was also the first Finnish American family orchestra to issue recordings. The band covered wide distances on its tours across the Finnish American communities. The players were professional musicians earning their living by playing. They were second generation Finnish Americans having learned the Finnish playing style from Finnish musicians, mainly from their father Herman Mäki. In the United States *Mäki Trio* was a representative of a peripheral genre, but the band utilized efficiently the industry that was available those days, that is, record companies, radio and newspapers. The players acted in two worlds: having grown up in an essentially Finnish environment surrounded by Finnish cultural elements,

they were enculturated into the mainstream American society through the American school system. What they absorbed well from the Finnish culture was the musical tradition, transmitted mainly by their father Herman who was also a distinguished musician himself. Simultaneously with sticking to the Finnish traditions, *Mäki Trio* was aware of the musical trends prevailing outside the Finnish American circles. Nevertheless, these two musical traditions were kept separate from one another. In so doing, the members of *Mäki Trio* can be said to have been *bi-musical*. The term refers to musicians who are through active training and participation capable of comprehending two different musical styles, and it was first launched by Mantle Hood in connection to musicians mastering both Western and Oriental expressions (Hood 1960, 55-59). Merriam calls a similar situation where people absorb and use two culture systems with fluency a musical *compartmentalization* (Merriam 1964, 315).

1.2 Structure of the study

This study attempts to describe the social, economical and historical context in which *Mäki Trio* performed. In order to understand the development of the Finnish American communities, first the social conditions in the home country have to be taken into account. During the biggest wave of overseas emigration, Finland – then a part of Russia – was a poor, rural country on the threshold of industrialization. From the 1860s onwards, the Finnish people experienced a great social, political and cultural transition. The old, stable, rural society began to become modern and mobile due to the industrialization, diversification of industries and a rising standard of living. (Toivonen 1963, 245.)

Starting with some facts of immigration history I will then mention several factors that encouraged people to leave Finland and attracted them to move to North America. I will then explain the context in which the Finnish American musicians acted – the Finnish communities with their Finn Halls. The life and music of *Mäki Trio* will receive special attention when I will try to explain a response of one part of the immigrant generation to its American experience. It needs to be emphasized

here that the Finnish Americans were by no means a homogeneous group. They did not even share a common background because of social and geographical differences in their homeland. There were differences between the different parts of Finland: people in Ostrobothnia shared a different character than the inhabitants of, for example, Savo or Karelia. There were differences in what comes to the dialect people used, food, customs, sources of livelihood, and nature of people. But still the common home country, language, religion and musical heritage were enough to define them as a group. In the New World, the most significant divider between Finns was ideological; people were classified according to how they reacted to religion and politics. Based on this, Finnish Americans classified themselves as either “church people” or “hall people”. The latter group leaned more towards the socialist ideology than the former that was affiliated with religious activities. And because the church generally discouraged secular social dancing, it is among the “hall people” that the object of this study – the most active dancegoers – is found.

1.3 Research problem

The music of immigrant groups has been a subject for several studies concerning issues like acculturation, enculturation, modernization and Westernization (Slobin 1993, Stokes (ed.) 1994, Lipsitz 1994, Suutari 2000). The survival of musical traditions among immigrant groups varies from those who have merged into the mainstream of the host culture to those who have kept the traditions substantially unchanged. Most of the groups are situated somewhere between these two ends. Finnish American culture is a topic that has attracted scholars, especially historians. However, not that much has been written about Finnish American music. Juha Niemelä’s master’s thesis (Niemelä 1991) for the University of Turku concentrates on the Finnish American singers and songwriters, and Joyce Hakala’s study (Hakala 1997) introduces the early immigrant kantele players. In addition, there has been a series of articles about Finnish American music culture in the *Uusi Kansanmusiikki* magazine. So far Finnish American dance music is a genre that remains relatively untouched by researchers. A study comparable to

Pekka Suutari's study of Finnish dance music in Sweden (Suutari 2000) waits to be done.

Bruno Nettl has listed the characteristics that have to be taken into account when studying an immigrant group. The listing includes: the size of the group; motivation of immigration; the amount of contact maintained with the home country; the degree of physical, cultural and linguistic isolation; the cohesion of immigrants in the host country; cultural and musical differences; compatibility of an immigrant culture in its relationship to the host culture; and attitudes toward diversity and change. He also summarizes some basic research problems concerning the study of music of the immigrant groups: was an entire musical repertoire physically moved? Did the immigrants bring with them their musical specialists? Did they play a special, musically skilled role in the home country? Were they motivated to change their musical behavior? Would the maintenance of a musical tradition reinforce the maintenance of the whole cultural tradition? Would musical change symbolize acceptance of the host culture? Would music be used to remind the population of its heritage while other form of behavior conformed to that of the host culture? (Nettl 1983, 226-227.)

In North America Finnish immigrants played, sang and danced the music they had familiarized with in their homeland. But in the new circumstances the functions were somewhat different. Music was still used, as in Finland, to build a collective group identity and a sense of belonging. In addition, music now also awoke strong associations and images as well as memories from childhood. It was also used for ideological purposes. In this study, dances are looked at as social activities, as a way for people to gather together. In dances Finns had a chance to meet people outside the work circles. And because most immigrant jobs were gender-specific, dancing was also a good way to meet representatives of the opposite sex. Occasionally people's interests may have been less in the music itself than in its associative social activities (see for example Blacking 1976, 43).

While the dance music in Finland changed along with new styles and new trends, Finnish American dance music remained in a traditional form. The immigrants simply wanted to listen to the music they were used to and that reminded them of their old homeland, and the bands provided the audiences with what was requested. Despite the influences brought by newly arrived immigrants and occasional visiting artists from Finland, Finnish American culture can be said to have flourished in isolation from the homeland. At the time when ragtime and jazz spurred the popularity of dances like the foxtrot, the tango, and the Charleston, in the Finnish communities the waltzes, the schottisches and the polkas continued to have a guaranteed success. The audience wanted to hear Finnish music; they had left Finland voluntarily and were aware of the Finnish culture while being loyal to their own group. The Finnish communities were often located in mining towns that were usually multiethnic and multicultural in nature containing several different nationalities. Thus it would be interesting to find out to what extent a Finn surrounded by for example Finns, Italians and Slovaks, was influenced by American culture.

In this study, I will discuss the Finn Halls as a microcosm of cultural pluralism. *Mäki Trio* will serve as an example of one culture form that was practiced within the Finn Halls. The members of the band were second-generation Finnish Americans i.e. American-born children of Finnish immigrants, who grew up in an environment strongly influenced by Finnish traditional music. The orchestra represents well the Finnish dance music of the period playing traditional dance tunes true to the Finnish tradition. There were also other Finnish dance bands playing the same type of music, of which many were also family ensembles. There are, however, factors that make *Mäki Trio* special among the Finnish American dance bands. First is the instrumentation. *Mäki Trio* played traditional music with modern instrumentation: a combination of accordion, saxophone, banjo and drums was a fusion of Finnish and American elements. Secondly, *Mäki Trio* published commercial recordings and gained success also that way. Third factor is that *Mäki Trio* was partly self-sufficient what comes to the repertoire. Arvo Mäki, the

accordionist, and Herman Mäki, the father of the band members, both composed music for *Mäki Trio*.

The questions that this study attempts to answer are: to what degree did *Mäki Trio* acculturate? What were the American elements in its music as well as in the performance practices? Was the music played Finnish music or some kind of a fusion? How was the Finnish culture preserved by their parents combined to the influences from other ethnic groups in the area, and American popular culture spread by the mass media?

1.4 Data collection

Compared to other ethnic groups, Finns have been exceptionally literate. During the period of this study, roughly every Finnish American adult could read and write. Thus it was only natural that from early on Finnish Americans were eager to publish their own newspapers that would serve as the main information channel. Newspapers spread the ideologies of the organizations while being a medium for ethnic identity as well. The papers included news from both Finland and the United States as well as letters from local correspondents. They announced local events and promoted Finnish businesses. From the newspapers one can get a picture of the nature and frequency of activities that were being organized in the Finnish communities; there were both paid advertisements and separate articles announcing forthcoming events. (Kero 1997, 147; 157.)

For this study, I have looked at the dance advertisements and stories in two newspapers, *Päivälehti* and *Raivaaja*. These two newspapers were chosen because they are both good sources of entertainment advertisements and because they were available on microfilms at the University of Tampere's library (these papers will be introduced in more detail in chapter 5.3). *Päivälehti* was published in Duluth, Minnesota, and *Raivaaja* in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. By limiting the research to two newspapers, I was able to cover dance places mainly in

Massachusetts, Minnesota and Michigan. *Mäki Trio* performed also in other parts of the country, but for practical reasons I left those venues outside this study. In looking at the dance advertisements the objective was to find out when, where and to whom *Mäki Trio* played. Who owned the performance localities, and who were the people who came to dance? What was the reception like?

In addition to the newspapers, *Mäki Trio*'s recordings have been one main source in this study. *Mäki Trio* issued a total of 14 songs in 7 recordings. I have looked at the repertoire, composers and instrumentation. I have also tried to find American elements in the music. An additional objective was to look at the outer appearance of the band. The image of the band can be seen in photographs taken of *Mäki Trio.* The Institute of Migration in Turku, Finland, hosts a collection of pictures of Mäki *Trio* that has been used in this study.

2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FINNISH AMERICA

2.1 Catching the “America Fever”

There had been Finns in North America already before the Great Emigration. New Sweden, a Swedish colony in Delaware, was settled in 1638-55, and a significant part of its inhabitants were Finns who had earlier moved from Finland to Sweden. Thousands of Finns, mainly from Savo and Karelia, had moved to the central parts of Sweden in search of better living conditions. It is estimated that 500-600 people of Finnish origin immigrated to Delaware. Later on, in the 18th and 19th centuries, some Finns moved to Alaska to fish and to hunt whales and fur. (Korkiasaari 1989, 21; 23.) Also, it happened occasionally that Finnish sailors stepped off a ship and settled in North America. This phenomenon became common especially in conjunction to the California gold rush after Swiss-German John Augustus Sutter had found gold in his lands in a valley of Sacramento in California in 1848. It caused a massive flow of people to come to California. (Henriksson 1990, 161.)

The modern migration from Finland started in the 1860s. The first “ordinary” immigrants to North America where Finnish miners working in Norway who were recruited to come to mine copper in northern Michigan. In 1866, fairly large groups of emigrants came from the Tornio River Valley and from the coastal areas of Ostrobothnia. Emigration from the interior parts of Oulu and Vaasa provinces began to occur at the beginning of the 1870s, and at the beginning of the 1880s, emigration spread to parts of southern Finland and northern Satakunta. By the 1890s, migration to North America was occurring from all the provinces of Finland. (Kero 1996, 43.)

According to the passport and passenger lists, during 1870-1929, a total of 389 000 Finns moved overseas. Because some people appear on the lists several

times, Reino Kero has estimated the real number to be 350 000. The majority of these people went to the United States, and only about 10% chose to go to Canada. The peak year was 1902, when 23 000 people left Finland. The World War I stopped emigration from Finland, but in 1920 a total of 60 000 people managed to cross the ocean before the United States set a quota system for arriving immigrants. In 1921, the quota for Finns was 3921 per year, and in 1924 it was tightened to be 471. The quotas cut off further immigration, and the wave of Finnish immigrants decreased and turned to Canada. (Kero 1996, 54-55; 73-76.)

Although we can talk about overseas emigration as a mass movement, to become an immigrant is always a deeply personal choice, and each immigrant has his or her own reasons for leaving the home country. Because such a large-scale emigration from Finland to North America occurred, certain “push” and “pull” factors behind the movement can be listed by looking at the social conditions both in Finland and in the United States.

The prime reasons impelling people to leave Finland were economical. Improved health care combined to a high birth rate and new agricultural techniques had made the population grow rapidly. Overpopulation caused unemployment and poverty. There was not enough land to farm for everyone, and new farming practices had cut the need for labor. At the same time, Finland was industrializing – although in a slow rate – which caused internal migration from the country to cities. But the few industrial centers could not provide countryside’s landless people with enough work opportunities. Since it was known that in the United States there were better wages and a lack of unskilled labor, these people often continued to move and migrated overseas. And because until late 1917, Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy under the jurisdiction of Russia, some men used emigration as a way to escape from the compulsory military service in the Russian army.

At the beginning of the emigration, Finland was a very rural country, although going through some significant social changes. At that time, the static society was

disappearing, and social mobility from one class to another started to appear. (Kero 1974, 5.) Middle and working class people were mobilizing to improve their opportunities in Finland. The late 19th century was also a time of a national awakening: a growing sense of nationalism developed among people, and new activities in intellectual and cultural life were being formed. People's Enlightenment Society was formed in 1874, inspiring to form elementary schools and libraries. According to A. William Hoglund, the awakening made people think in a new way, and the new ideas changed their minds so that the traditional way of living in the countryside was no longer the only way to live. Earning money as an industrial worker instead of farming was something new, as was doing work somewhere else, in this case in North America. (Hoglund 1960, 15.)

The emigration started in a context of peasants' difficulties and relative overpopulation. The reason why the flow of people headed so far overseas was the fascination of a better standard of living, for which there was a possibility in North America. The Europeans were interested in the United States for many reasons. The 1862 Homestead Act granted 160 acres (65 hectares) of free land to anyone who could commit himself to live on a farm and cultivate the land for five years. However, by the time emigration from Finland was at its highest, the best farming land was already taken. (Kero 1996, 144.) But there were other attractions that made the journey tempting for Finns. Most importantly, there was work to be done. In the 1860s and 1870s, the United States, with rich natural resources, suffered a shortage of labor in its mines, forests and rail yards, and later also in the factories in the East. This call was heard even in Finland where there was a surplus of population. Even though the immigrants did the lowest-paid, dirtiest and most dangerous work, from a Finnish perspective the wages were high, as was the standard of living. By working in a mine in the United States, one could earn five times the money a farmhand got in Finland (Kero 1997, 15). For many, earning money was the only reason to leave. In fact, for most people the intention was to return back to Finland right after having earned enough money to buy a farm or a house in Finland. Stories by returnees, as well as enticing letters from friends and

relatives already living in the United States, spread the “America Fever”. By no means, knowing somebody who was already there eased the decision-making. New means of transportation, that is, trains and steamships, facilitated moving from one place to another thus paving the way for mass emigration. In some places to emigrate became even fashionable, a trend that people wanted to follow. Still, there must have been people who left because of a mere desire for adventures. The United States had an image of an ideal – almost utopian – land of freedom, equality and democracy, symbolized by the Statue of Liberty. This democratic state was fascinating because it would function without a national church, an army, an aristocracy or a rigid class structure (Crunden 1990, 69). This is why some people who might have felt the social, religious or political atmosphere in Finland oppressing, wanted to exchange the conditions in the Old World for the promise of freedom, equality and opportunity in the New World. Whatever their motivations, one image united the ones who opted to emigrate. They were all dreamers of the American Dream, believing that vast limitless opportunities were waiting for them to take an advantage of.

Who were then these people who emigrated? Hoglund calls the great immigrant years a rural exodus (Hoglund 1960, 14). The emigration was essentially a departure of the landless from rural areas. A typical immigrant was a young, healthy, strong, unmarried man from the countryside, and many times from the area of Ostrobothnia. This area in the western coast of Finland had neither industrial centers nor forests to bring prosperity, and close contacts to Sweden made the Ostrobothnians hear the call of the west before the rest of the country. Here also population grew more rapidly than in other parts of the country, and the rate of industrialization was slower. People in Ostrobothnia had centuries-old contacts to Sweden and Norway and a long tradition of moving westwards because of the seafaring (Korkiasaari 1989, 27-28).

Anna-Leena Toivonen (1963) has studied the emigration from southern Ostrobothnia in detail, and according to her, 117 626 people emigrated during

1866-1930 from the area, forming 32.6% of the total amount of the emigrants. They were especially well represented in the early phase of the overseas emigration: in the 1880s, 52.3% and in the 1890s, 49.1% of all Finnish emigrants came from that area. The switch from sailboats to steamships in the mid-1850s ended the industry of shipbuilding and tar distillation, which had been important sources of income for Ostrobothnian peasants. Toivonen also lists some typical psychological characteristics of the Ostrobothnian mentality that might have affected the movement. She says that people were entrepreneurial, restless and unhappy, having a strong social self-esteem, self-confidence and a love of freedom. They were also used to doing things together. (Toivonen 1963, 27-28; 53.)

Outi Tuomi-Nikula compares people in western and eastern Finland and says that Finns in western Finland are cooperative and have an associative spirit. They are also fairly homogeneous and disposed to mass movements. (Tuomi-Nikula 1989, 31.) Heikki Ylikangas says that it was easy for people in Ylihärmä (a county in southern Ostrobothnia) to emigrate because they were familiar with individual enterprising and because they had the ability, in one way or another, to gather enough money for a ticket. The socioeconomic development in Ostrobothnia had led to a developmental dead end. The intense growth of population had made it impossible for industries to widen, and in a situation where there was no more land to be cleared and no farms to be divided, the society had started to fall into decay. Emigration solved the situation by preventing the growing masses to become poorer. Thus it can be said that the possibility to move to North America came as a lottery prize. It gave people back their dreams and goals, and success. It opened a way to a social rise for new segments of the society, and it also erased some criminal ingredients from the area. The expectations and reality came closer to each other. North America meant future and opportunities when the home country was a symbol for deterioration. (Ylikangas 1989, 155; 276; 283; 289.)

Almost 90% of all emigrants came from the countryside, and 70% of them were of ages 15-34 (Kero 1996, 105-107). Of all the immigrants, a total of 63% were men,

but the gender balance varies significantly according to the year and place of departure. In some areas, it was simply more acceptable for women to emigrate than in others. Men's eagerness to emigrate overseas can also be explained by the fact that women tended to move more to cities within Finland. In the early 1870s, 82.9% of Finnish immigrants were men whereas during the last five years of the 19th century the percentage was 58.5. In years 1870-1930, there were nine years when women outnumbered men in emigration statistics (Ibid., 102-103). This happened when hard economic times hit the United States. Men's jobs were sensitive to economical factors. When there was a hard time in the United States, men stayed in Finland. Women traveled chiefly to join their husbands or relatives or to work as domestics, which was a field not so much affected by economical conditions. (Toivonen 1963, 50.) And because proportionately more men than women returned, the gender balance was not that uneven after all. Totally, about one quarter of the Finnish immigrants did return permanently to Finland (Kostiainen 1990, 116). The reasons for return were as numerous as the reasons to leave, but for many, America was a disappointment. Against the beliefs the streets were not paved with gold.

Finnish men and women did not always move to same places. While men moved to mining towns and lumber camps, single women went to big cities like Boston, New York, Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Seattle. In 1920, Finnish women outnumbered men in five states, in Middle Atlantic region plus cities of New York, Chicago and Boston (Wargelin 1986, 18). They worked as maids, laundresses, waitresses, and cooks, and operated boarding houses for single men. Finnish maids had a good reputation of being clean, tidy, honest and hard-working. Having a Finnish housekeeper became even a status symbol for wealthy families (see for example F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel The Great Gatsby). According to Kero, such well-off families as the Rockefellers, the Roosevelts, the Fords and the Du Ponts, to name a few, relied on Finnish domestic workers (Kero 1996, 175).

2.2 Finnish communities – a home a half a world away from home

Finns who had left Finland for the United States during the Great Emigration formed a relatively small segment of their new home country's population. But because Finns concentrated heavily on certain areas, visible Finnish communities were being created. Today, names of places like Palo, Tapiola and Toivola remain as mementos of once so lively Finnish communities. Here I call the neighborhoods where Finns clustered together in an urban setting as "Finntowns". "Finntowns" were being formed to serve basic human needs in an alien environment, because people wanted to feel comfortable in a strange place, and, in P. George Hummasti's words, to meet "the needs for companionship and for the familiar" (Hummasti 1978, 85). Finns kept close contact with each other because of language problems and in order to relief homesickness and to ease adjusting to new conditions. Life in a new environment was far from easy. New ways and customs – and not the least new language – combined with the longing for family at home made the immigrant feel insecure. There was a need that the American institutions could not serve; a need for social, political, economical and religious immigrant institutions and organizations, which soon began to be founded as immigrants' community responses to their American experiences. Finnish immigrants found comfort and strength in organizations such as cooperatives, temperance societies, benevolent societies, workers' unions, and the churches. Laborer, who worked in mines, factories and lumber camps or as a domestic servant during the daytime, thus had several possibilities how to spend his or her free moments. For example, in Michigan's first "Finntown", Hancock, there were Finnish churches, a temperance hall, Suomi College, choruses and brass bands, a butcher's store, a general store and a bakery, tailors, a jewelry store, a butcher, a smith, forestry businesses, four taverns, newspapers, magazines, and a bookstore (Holmio 1967, 132-133). In a "Finntown" it was possible to run one's errands in Finnish. The variety of Finnish businesses and institutions met the basic practical and social needs so that it was not necessary to know any English to be able to cope in everyday life.

Coming to the New World, Finns settled in the Midwest states of Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin; in East in New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania; or in West in Washington, California, Oregon, Montana and Colorado. The most important Finnish areas were Michigan and Minnesota. In 1920, there were 20 000 Finns born in Finland in both states. (Kero 1996, 86; 124-133.) Why these particular areas? For Michigan and Minnesota, the primary motivation was the availability of jobs in the iron, nickel and copper mines. Another reason was that there were forests as well as free land for homesteading. In Massachusetts and other Eastern states, there were factories that needed workers. Oregon, on the other hand, was known for its wide forest areas. The coastal regions attracted fishermen, and big cities attracted women who would earn their living as housekeepers. (Kero 1997, 17.) In addition, Finns tended to go to places where there were already Finns. Knowing very little or not at all English, it was by no means easier and safer to get started in a new environment when surrounded by fellow countrymen. Also, newly immigrated Finns were eager to encourage their relatives and friends at home to come and join them, which was one reason for Finnish clusters.

Well-known “Finntowns” were for example Fitchburg in Massachusetts, Ashtabula in Ohio, Hancock in Michigan, Duluth in Minnesota, Brooklyn in New York City and Astoria in Oregon, and later on also Lantana and Lake Worth in Florida. P. George Hummasti has studied Astoria as a typical example of a “Finntown”. Astoria’s Finns were so active that the city became known as the “Helsinki of the West”, Astoria being the capital of all “Finntowns” west of the Mississippi River (Hummasti 1978, 84; Hannula 1991, 7). The process of Astoria’s development shares characteristics with many other “Finntowns” throughout the northern parts of the country. Hummasti equals the birth of “Finntowns” to America’s westward expansion. Frederick Jackson Turner stated in his widely debated frontier hypothesis[1] in 1893 that the American frontier turned from wilderness into a civilization in three phases. The pioneers came first to the area and transformed the wilderness so that the

[1] Turner introduces his hypothesis in an essay “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (1893).

settlers could come to establish farms and build schools. Finally the industrial workers and businessmen came and turned the borderland into a civilization for good. At the same time, the pioneers were already deeper in the wilderness. The frontier moved constantly westward creating a new human being and a new culture, which was not just a sprout of transplanted Europeans (Henriksson 1994, 49). Hummasti sees similar characteristics in the evolution of Finnish communities. Although there was no wilderness, Finns had their own kind of frontier to master. The first Finns in Astoria were deserting sailors attracted by salmon fishing in the 1860s. They were the pioneers: single men who found the environment, although already settled by other nationalities, to be alien and threatening to them. Only a settlement by more Finns would turn it into a community, which did not happen completely until Finnish women started to arrive. The original intention of those Finns was to stay there only for a short period of time and then return to Finland with the money they had earned. Some did it, but as more Finns moved in, creating the need for Finnish institutions and businesses, many people decided to remain there permanently. In 1865 a boarding house for Finnish fishermen was being built. The amount of Finns grew steadily, and by 1880 about 260 Finns had settled in Astoria. By 1905, Finns were the largest immigrant group in Astoria, outnumbering 2 027 in a total population of 11 045, and in 1920, there were 4 000 Finns, out of a total population of 14 027. (Hummasti 1978, 84-85; 96.)

Of Finnish institutions, the churches were the first to emerge in Astoria. The Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church, a follower of the Laestadian movement, started its operations in 1877. The Finnish Evangelical Church began its services in 1883. The Suomi temperance society followed soon, and built Suomi Hall which served as Astoria's Finnish community center until the Finnish Socialist Club, a workers' society founded in 1904, constructed its own five-story hall in 1911. Other institutions to emerge were the Cooperatives, labor unions such as a fishermen's union, a beneficial aid society Finnish Brotherhood, the Astoria Finnish Athletic Club, and different voluntary organizations. The organizations had their own subdivisions, for example the socialist chapter sponsored a choir, a brass band, a

gymnastic group and other sports groups, a speakers group and a theatre group. Meeting halls provided a place for social and cultural gatherings in a friendly atmosphere. Later on, Suomi Hall became the main headquarters first for the Astoria Finnish Athletic Club and then for the Finnish Brotherhood, remaining as the non-political center of the Finnish community life in Astoria. (Hummasti 1978, Hannula 1991, 7-10.)

Finnish businesses came also quite early to the picture. In 1880, Astoria had a saloon, a grocery store, several boarding houses, and later on more stores, public saunas, hardware stores, and taverns. As the community's population grew in size, there occurred a need for professional services such as doctors, dentists and lawyers, followed by the need of a means of communication, a newspaper. *Uusi Kotimaa* was published in Astoria in 1880-1890, *Lännetär* in 1891-1893 and again in 1897-1904, *Tyynenmeren Sanomat* in 1901-1905, *Lännen Uutiset* in 1905-1913, and *Toveri* in 1907- 1931 (Hummasti 1978, 87; 91-92).

With all these social, political and economical activities, the Finnish community had gradually become a home, a new home in the New World. Finnish businesses not only served their customers in their own language but also provided them with goods and services that could not be found elsewhere. Finnish restaurants, grocery stores and bakeries made sure that the immigrants would get the type of food they wished to eat. Drugstores sold Finnish-style medicines, and Finnish saunas and masseuses were naturally an integral part of a Finnish neighborhood (Wargelin 1988, 12). A unique creation was the dialect the immigrants used. American Finnish is a dialect based on Finnish with many phonological characteristics from American English. It was formed as loan words got a Finnish phonetic and morphological form and were added to Finnish. Especially words relating to the working environment: mines, lumber camps and kitchen, got adopted. Because most Finnish emigrants were originally from the countryside, the language was somewhat old-fashioned local dialect. (Virtaranta 1992, 32.)

Another powerful Finnish neighborhood that has received scholarly attention is the Minneapolis “Finntown”, studied by K. Marianne Wargelin (1988). The first Finnish families in Minneapolis arrived in the 1860s and they were followers of the Laestadian movement, which is a radical brand of Lutheranism based on the teachings of Lars Levi Laestadius. Nevertheless, it can be said that the “Finntown” was born around the turn of the century. It flourished until the early 1960s, reaching a Finnish population of about 4 000. Finns who lived there often worked in constructions or railroad yards, or as domestics, carpenters, tailors, shoemakers and factory workers. The appearance of Finnish activities in Minneapolis resembles the development in Astoria. Finns started to run first restaurants and boarding houses, after which other businesses, like a steamship ticket office and a money exchange, came along. A Finnish-language newspaper, *Uusi Kotimaa*, started in 1881, a Finnish Evangelical Church and a temperance society *Vesa* organized in 1894, and a Finnish Women’s Society was founded in 1895. The opening of a Finnish public sauna in 1914 completed the Finnish community. New activities emerged as younger Finnish immigrants with more “worldly” interests started to accompany the Laestadian families. Dancing, choirs and bands, and secular clubs such as the Finnish Workers Society brought more variety to the life in the “Finntown”. (Wargelin 1988, 11-16.) An important fact to be noticed here is that as an ethnic community, a “Finntown” provided real benefits to its members. The societies aided those in need, and attempted to improve the educational and cultural level of their members. Neighbors, friends, and organizations took care of the poor, and open positions in Finnish-dominated workplaces were given to fellow Finns. This network of mutual support, or ethnic solidarity, was something that the general society was unable to offer.

2.3 Finn Halls

During the first decades of the 20th century, a significant part of the leisure time in Finnish communities was devoted to activities in the local Finn Halls. As meeting places and centers of Finnish social, educational and cultural life, they provided a stage for a multitude of cultural activities. The halls were modeled after community

halls in Finland, and they were normally owned and maintained by workers' unions, temperance societies, socialist clubs or cooperatives. It was quite normal for a town to have several Finn Halls because every association wanted to have its own meeting place. The biggest halls supported libraries, restaurants, and saunas, and were sometimes also rented out for outsiders. For example, the five-story Finnish Socialist Hall in Astoria, Oregon, had a theatre with a large stage and 825 permanent seats, a little gym, two kitchens, several meeting rooms, a library, a hardwood dance floor, and two apartments for the caretakers (Hannula 1991, 9). Already in 1890, there were dozens of Finn Halls in the United States, and by World War I they could be counted in hundreds (Kero 1997, 171). Reino Hannula estimates that a total of 600 Finn halls were built, bought, or rented by Finns (Hannula 1991, vii).

Finn Halls provided a significant venue for the practice of Finnish music, dancing, politics, temperance, drama and poetry. They served as a performance stage for artists, staged plays and hosted meetings and athletic sessions. Specially programmed community festivals (*iltama*), which were put into practice after a Finnish tradition, were the most popular events in the halls. During the later half of the 19th century, these events became popular among different organizations in Finland. The gatherings were a mixture of folk culture and high culture including speeches, music performances, poetry readings, humor, acting, and dancing. They were a combination of a programmed social festival and a dance. Couplet singers and comedians made sure people enjoyed the program. Often times the evening ended with either a dramatic performance or general dancing accompanied by a brass band, accordion, or dance band. These evening festivals formed the economical basis for the organizations. They were not only a good source of income but also a place for distributing ideologies as well as a way for working people to practice music, theatre, lyrics and dance. (Kurkela 1983, 50; 53-54.)

There were both programmed festivals and mere dance festivals with no other program. For Finnish American dance bands providing entertainment for hard-

working and fun-loving immigrants, the Finn Halls were rewarding performance stages in both cases. Dance was normally an integral part of a festival attracting people and thus guaranteeing economical success (Kurkela 1983, 54). From the 1920s onwards, Finnish films started to be shown in Finn Halls, too. In a Finn Hall, the hardships of everyday life could be forgotten for a moment. Immigrant's life was not, after all, just hard work.

3 FINNISH AMERICAN MUSIC CULTURE

The importance of music in the Finnish American culture cannot be underestimated. Music making had varied and complex roles in the social life of Finnish communities which had their own singers, instrumentalists, choirs and bands. The local Finn Halls were places where these musicians could be listened to. The wage labor and shortened working hours had increased the free time and created a need for new forms of leisure activities. No longer were people tied to their work for the whole day. After the day's work was over, the laborer was free. Naturally the entertainment industry took advantage of this new situation of an increased amount of leisure time and money available.

3.1 Choirs and orchestras

Finnish American institutions strongly supported the musical activities within the communities. There were choirs and brass bands in almost every Finnish American community. In Finland the amateur bands and choral societies came into being from the 1880s onwards. Starting industrialization, favorable economic conditions and liberalism had freshened up the mental atmosphere, and the nationalist movement and the educational strive of the enlightenment resulted in mass movements whose aim was to conform and educate Finnish people. Organization culture provided different means of producing and performing music than the traditional folk culture. Choirs and brass bands were earlier known only from the spheres of military music and student circles. It was new that large amounts of people would sing and play together led by a director. The music of these new organizations differed from the traditional peasant music. It consisted of arranged folk songs, and the organizations were eager to publish their own songbooks. (Kurkela 1989, 23; 396.)

The first brass bands were formed among the volunteer fire brigades, factories, youth associations, temperance unions, sports clubs and workers' unions, encouraged by newspapers and the Enlightenment Society. They flourished in the countryside as well as in the cities, and the players came from all social classes. Music had an instrumental role in the organizations. Bands and choirs provided program for different festivities such as dances and summer festivals that were arranged in order to raise money for the organizations, promote their cause, spread the values and recruit new members. And for the band members, playing together with like-minded people was a way to socialize. (Karjalainen 1995, 20-21, 33; Jalkanen 1981, 224.) As a result of the gradual closing down of the Finnish army in 1901-02 and 1905-06, the military musicians needed to be placed and the instruments dispersed with a result that the number of brass bands increased in Finland. (Karjalainen 1995, 47-49; 70.) The 1910s marked the golden era for brass bands in Finland, and they flourished until a new fashion, jazz, came to Finland in 1926 making the brass bands more or less useless (Jalkanen 1981, 225).

The breakup of Finnish army battalions in Russia resulted in the immigration of some of the unemployed military instrumentalists to America. From the 1880s on there is information about several Finnish American bands and choirs sponsored by the temperance societies and socialist organizations. The most famous bands were *Humina* in Ashtabula, Ohio, and *Louhi* in Monessen, Pennsylvania. *Louhi* band was attached to Voiton Lippu (Victory Banner) Temperance Society Hall. The *Red Lodge Finnish Band* from Red Lodge, Montana, became the official band of the Montana National Guard and was renamed the *Red Lodge Military Band* in 1903. These bands provided program for official ceremonies as well as dance music over the class distinctions. (Kero 1997, 184-185; Hannula 1991, 99; 130.)

The members of brass bands were often dockworkers, miners, or farmers. Mark Levy says that a membership in a band was "an expression of nationalism, ethnic pride, patriotism, and good breeding for men". (Levy 2001, 874.) It was sometimes difficult to find conductors for the choirs as well as women for mixed choirs in

mining towns. The choirmasters were either elementary school teachers or cantors while most bandleaders were former military bandsmen. In the beginning, the repertoire was Finnish, but gradually American music started to appear as well. It is estimated that at the end of the 1920s, more than 400 Finnish American choirs were acting, of which one half belonged to the churches. The bands used first only brass instruments, but later reeds and strings were adopted so that even symphonies could be performed. Their repertoires included arranged Finnish folk songs, church hymns, socialist songs, temperance society songs, US band marches, and opera overtures. Schottisches, waltzes, and polkas were also played. (Levy 2001, 874.) After the World War I, the brass bands stepped aside as orchestras with various instruments came along. Despite these factors and the emergence of jazz, the brass band tradition survived. (Kero 1997, 185-186.)

3.2 Immigrant songs

Finnish American music is not simply music that is transplanted from the "pre-migration culture". The birth of a separate genre of Finnish American music can be best seen in the song repertoire of Finnish American couplet singers. Finnish American musicians that became known in the home country were either couplet singers or accordionists. As was the case in Finland, also in North America accordion passed kantele playing in popularity. Kantele playing was taken to North America, but its role has been mostly symbolic, and it has been used as a vehicle for nostalgia. A good source of reference on immigrant kantele players is Joyce Hakala's study (Hakala 1997) where 24 kantele players who came to North America before 1930 are introduced.

Nettl says that the rural function of a song is often lost in the city context and then the music of folk songs becomes more important to members of an ethnic group. According to him, the quality of a tune is a greater factor in the survival of a song than are its words. (Nettl 1979, 131.) However, in the Finnish American culture, immigrant songs featuring lyrics about immigrant experiences were highly popular.

The songs strengthened immigrants in the new situations and related their experiences back to Finland (Rahkonen 2001, 825). Juha Niemelä has studied immigrant singers and songwriters and their songs in a master's thesis (Niemelä 1991). In Finnish American culture, the folk singer was not anymore one of an anonymous mass, but a specialized artist. The couplet song culture flourished especially in the late 1920s and early 1930s with artists like Leo Kauppi, Antti Syrjäniemi, Arthur Kylander and Hiski Salomaa, who were all popular also in Finland. The entertainers also continued to tour the Finn Halls during the Great Depression although all the recording activities had then ceased. (Niemelä 1991, 190.)

Hiski Salomaa and Arthur Kylander have a special position among the immigrant songwriters. Salomaa (1891-1957), originally Hiskias Möttö, immigrated in 1909 and earned his living as a tailor in Michigan and Minnesota before he moved to New York in 1929. Salomaa recorded 18 tunes in 1927-1931 and *Lännen Lokari, Iitin Tiltu* and *Tiskarin polkka* became well-known even in Finland. (Westerholm 1991, 21.) Arthur Kylander (1892-1968), a mandolin player and singer, migrated to the United States at the age of 22, and he worked as a lumberjack. His popularity is based on two wide tours in 1927-29 and 1952-53 where he performed together with his pianist-accordionist wife Julia, and on a total of 20 recorded songs. Also, two songbooks with 23 humorous songs were published. The spirit of IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) can be heard in Kylander's lyrics. He composed, and used sometimes melodies made by Swedish American accordionists. As a curiosity it can be mentioned that the use of the dialect of Turku area marks heavily Kylander's pronunciation. (Westerholm 1994, 22-24.)

The purpose of the immigrant song was to entertain and lighten people, and to detach them from the difficulties of everyday life. In their songs, immigrant songwriters dealt with experiences of the newly arrived immigrant. They commented on immigrant life in a way that was at the same time both humorous and sarcastic. The lyrics dealt with leaving the old country and experiences in the

New World. The singers had a working class background, and their topics could include for example the American customs and the surrounding society, gradual Americanization of Finns, envy, maliciousness, or political conditions. They could document a current phenomenon or new innovations, maintain moral attitudes and values or work as a political tool. The songs were realistic with real characters. On the second place in the topics came longing, hopes and dreams. Finland was remembered either with nostalgia or bitterness, depending on the artist. There is no doubt that these expressions of collective experiences helped the immigrants to cope with the challenges of life in a new environment. The songs were a part of everyday life and leisure activities. The new society set strong demands and pressures for change, and because traditional Finnish folk songs could not serve as a buffer, a couplet song was introduced that could settle to the new conditions. (Niemelä 1991, 188-205.)

3.3 Dance music

The immigrants lived active physical lives in their communities, and dancing was one of the many activities that they shared. The dance served as a backdrop for socializing after a day's work. It was a "community dance", and to perform the same familiar dances week after week was a joy. Finnish Americans were especially keen on polka, waltz and schottische. They all originate from Central Europe: waltz from Vienna, polka from Bohemia and schottische from Germany, and they came to Finland in the 19th century. Polka had become a craze in Paris and London during the spring 1844, and it diffused rapidly to the rest of the world becoming ”roots” music, a people's music. It was international, urban and working class music from the beginning, whereas waltz had expressed the spirit of the bourgeois revolutions 60 years earlier. (Keil 1992, 9-11, 13.) Rooted in peasant life and valued by upper classes, these dances were perfect for taking along to new surroundings. There were many bands and individuals who earned their livelihood by providing dance music for Finnish immigrants and the dance culture enjoyed an enormous popularity during the time before radio.

The most famous Finnish American dance musician of all time is Viola Turpeinen (1909-1958). The legendary accordionist's career spanned four decades, during which she performed throughout the Finnish America for enthusiastic audiences as a professional artist. She made a large number of recordings on three labels (Victor, Columbia and Standard). According to the prevailing tendency, her repertoire was mainly Finnish dance music, but she played also Italian accordion music and arrangements of classical music, and she also sang. Viola Turpeinen was a second-generation Finnish American and a miner's daughter. She was born in 1909 in Champion, Michigan, from where the family soon moved to Iron River, Michigan. Turpeinen was taught by Italian masters of accordion, and she started to play first at the local Finn Halls. After meeting violinist John Rosendahl, Turpeinen decided to form a duo that started to tour the country. Turpeinen played the accordion while Rosendahl played violin, banjo and mandolin, as well as sang, acted and told funny stories. Their first recording was made for Columbia in January 1928.

Another daughter of a Finnish miner, accordionist Sylvia Polso (b. 1912 in Ironwood, Michigan) joined the duo in 1929, and the new trio performed actively throughout the Great Lakes. Rosendahl´s death in 1933 broke up the trio, and Turpeinen continued touring with her husband William Syrjälä (b. 1898 in Finland). Syrjälä played violin, viola, guitar and trumpet. (Leary 1990, 6-10.) Turpeinen played for dancing in Finn Halls in the major Finnish American mining, lumber, and farm communities of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. She had a broader appeal than other Finnish American musicians did; a beautiful woman with light brown hair and blue eyes playing the accordion was an attracting combination also outside the Finnish circles. Turpeinen played her polkas, waltzes and schottisches to non-Finns as well; in 1930s and 1940s she played actively in New York City. She was a crossover musician who encouraged her American audience in their enthusiasm for the international dance music. Some Finnish Americans remember Turpeinen for providing them with an American ethnic

identity; she was also Americanizing them less self-consciously by popularizing international ethnic dance. Environmental and historical factors, her family and colleagues as well as her talent all helped make her legendary reputation. (Greene 1992, 186.) The Folk Music Institute in Kaustinen, Finland, is in a process of publishing Turpeinen's entire production as a CD collection. Two first items of this collection have already been published in 2002.

3.4 Ethnic recordings

At the beginning of the 20th century, the major recording companies discovered a new niche market in the numerous Americans who could not speak English and who held to the musical traditions of their homelands. The immigrants yearned to hear the tunes from the Old World that reminded them of their traditions and roots. The rise of ethnic music stores and ethnic record makers was a signal that there was buying potential in the immigrant communities, and so the commercial recordings in foreign languages started to appear (Greene 1992, 72). By 1950, the American companies had released at least 30 000 recordings in over thirty languages in their special categories of "foreign-language recordings". About 800 of those were Finnish. The leading manufacturers Victor and Columbia alone issued about 700 Finnish recordings, of which 500 were recorded in the United States and the rest were pressed from European masters (Gronow 1982, 19).

As immigrant cultures flourished in forms of organizations and press, the business-oriented recording companies saw supplying music for the ethnic minorities yearning for familiar music as a way to make profits. There was an obvious need among the ethnic communities to have recordings of their own music to reinforce their cultural ties. Commercial recordings of familiar traditional music helped the newcomers make the transition. They were much-needed emotional comfort and helped to build a more homogeneous ethnic community.

The recordings were also relatively inexpensive and thus affordable for working-class immigrants. Because the promotion and distribution was handled through immigrant-owned record stores and immigrant newspapers, even quite weak record sales could be enough to cover the relatively low administrative and promotional costs. This is why the recording companies were willing to take even the smallest minority groups into consideration. For example, the Icelanders were being recorded: 6 recordings (12 titles) were released for Icelandic Americans although the 1930 census reported only 2 764 Americans born in Iceland (Gronow 1982, 19). Another reason for recording so many different ethnic groups was that the record companies manufactured also phonographs. A person was more likely to buy a phonograph if familiar music accompanied the purchase. Even if an individual recording was made at a loss, it might still have eased the process of selling a sound-producing device. And people who owned a phonograph formed a market for purchasing more recordings in the future. The recordings were also exported to the home countries where there was still another market for the recordings. (Gronow 1982, 3: 1996, 20.)

An interesting fact is that while the recording companies were making profits, they also had an important, although unconscious, role in helping to preserve and even promote minority cultures' musical heritages. This was in contradiction to the general assimilative and even discriminative political and social atmosphere of the era. On the contrary to today's visions of cultural pluralism, the 1920s was an era of the "melting-pot ideology" when the aim was to Americanize all ethnic groups by assimilating them into the dominant society. According to this policy, the multicultural and multiethnic characters of American society would "melt" together forming one coherent culture of the United States. The melting pot ideology was doomed to fail; in reality people of diverse ethnic backgrounds mixed together and coexisted. In some cases the external pressure for assimilation worked in an opposite way and increased the nostalgic feelings and longing for old-time music. The recording companies did not care about conserving musical traditions, their only motivation was to make financial profit, and they simply recorded what they

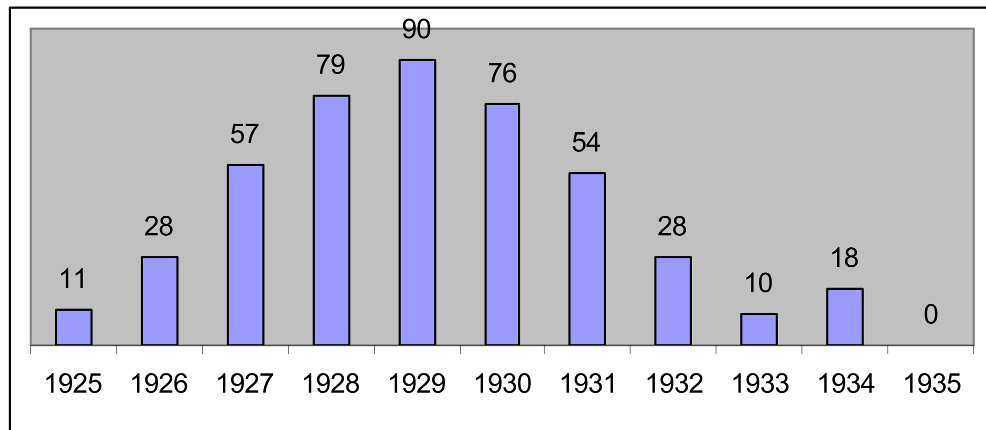
thought would sell well. (Greene 1992, 77; 88.) In the case of Finnish American recordings, Pekka Jalkanen has said that they actually helped to preserve Finnish *pelimanni* music that had not been recorded commercially before (Jalkanen 1989, 324). On the Finnish American recordings there are songs that might have been forgotten otherwise. Also, they reveal early 20th century styles of singing and playing being among the oldest documents of Finnish folk fiddling and accordion playing (Westerholm 1992, 34).

3.4.1 Finnish American recordings

The most popular Finnish American artists made their ways into Victor and Columbia's recording studios. Victor cut the first Finnish recordings as early as in 1907 (Gronow 1977, 5). The recordings were advertised in Finnish American newspapers and distributed through Finnish American stores and newspapers. The recordings also sold well: in the late 1920s Finnish Americans bought more recordings than the 3.5 million Finns in Finland (Greene 1992, 109).

The following chart shows the amount of Finnish recordings issued in the United States in 1925-1935. As we can see, the most active years were 1928, 1929 and 1930 with 79, 90 and 76 recordings respectively. Later on the amounts decreased so that in 1935 no Finnish recordings were issued in the United States. The main reason for the decline was the stock market crash in October 1929, which was the start for an economic depression that caused also many Finns to lose their jobs. At that time, also the advertisements for recordings disappeared from the newspapers. New forms of entertainment: the jukebox, radio and sound film emerged around this time reducing also the eagerness to buy recordings. It is interesting to note how the possibilities of radio in promoting record sales were systematically ignored. Instead, radio was seen as a rival to record industry. The slump in recording industry lasted long; only after 1936 did the record sales start to recover again. (Gronow 1996, 48.)

Table 1. Victor and Columbia Finnish releases 1925-1935



Source: Gronow 1982, 22

The first Finnish recordings made in the United States were folk and patriotic songs sung by professional classical singers. Semi-professional actors, comedians, couplet-singers and accordionists soon followed them, and later on the dance bands came along. The artists were usually well-known within the Finnish America; their names appeared regularly on Finnish American press playing at dances and giving concerts. The recording companies relied on these artists because of their experience and because the names were already known. In addition, it was known that people were willing to pay for these artists' music (Gronow 1996, 20; 1982, 17). On the recordings the range of genres is wide: from folk instrumentals and singing to religious music, classical music, political songs and instrumental dance music. First the attempt was to release songs that were popular in Finland at that time. However, gradually a separate genre of Finnish American music started to appear. Not all genres, however, made their way into the recording studios. Choirs and brass bands, so common in the Finnish communities, are almost totally absent on the recordings as well as are the amateur music-makers. Gronow says, "There was no need to record the music that anyone could sing for himself at home" (Gronow 1982, 17). Thus the commercial recordings do not give us an accurate picture of what the musical environment in Finnish communities was like in reality in the early 20th century. Immigrant music making at grassroots level is preserved

on ethnographic field recordings. Those can be found for example in the collections of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.[2] The tapes originate in the field trips made by Alan Lomax and Sidney Robertson Cowell in the late 1930s. The artists are amateurs performing Finnish patriotic and folk songs that can be found on any Finnish song book of that time.

Alan Lomax did a field trip through Wisconsin and Michigan in 1938. Between August 10 and November 1, 1938, he recorded a total of 78 songs and 33 instrumentals from Finnish Americans in Michigan's Finnish areas. The artists recorded were Kalle Kallio, Emil Mäki, Andrew Jackson, Frank Mäki, Vernon Rautanen, Frank Viita, Mrs. Marttila, John Fredrickson, Aina Pohjala, Lillian Aho, Kusti Similä, Amanda Heikkinen, Ilona Hallinen, Vilma Salmi, Lillian Forester, Wäinö Hirvelä, Aapo Juhani, Henry Mahoski, Charles Ketvertis, Hjelmar Forster, Peter Aho, and one additional kantele and mandolin player. An ethnographer and folk music collector Sidney Robertson Cowell collected traditional music widely for various New Deal arts organizations. In 1937, she recorded Finnish, Swedish, Lithuanian and Norwegian music in Minnesota. The collection includes two songs by Marjorie Edgar and 21 songs and five kantele and violin instrumentals by Matt, Olga and Sue Simi; Maija, Mary and Otto Särkipato; Mrs. Herman Heino; Cecilia Kuitunen and Anna Leino in Virginia, Minnesota. She also recorded seven songs and two kantele instrumentals by Matti and Elsa Perälä; Marie Moilanen and Ulrika Vainionpää in Mountain Iron, Minnesota. In addition, Robertson Cowell directed a New Deal folk music project in northern California for the Works Projects Administration (WPA) in 1938-40. The goal was to explore California's heterogeneous folk music traditions and to collect samples from different groups. Also Finns are represented in a collection titled *California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the Thirties*[3]. There are 16 folk songs sung by John Soininen, C.A Koljonen, Celia Koljonen, Fina Petersen and Mary Salonen. This collection includes also photographs.

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[2] A list of the collections is available online at http://www.loc.gov/folklife/guides/Finnish.html.

[3] The collection is located online at http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afccchtml/cowhome.html.

4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 Ethnicity and identity

Ethnicity and identity are two key words appearing frequently in immigrant studies. Because the meanings are not always so clear, it is appropriate here to give short definitions on those concepts. *Ethnicity* can be seen as more than just a country of origin. It includes an awareness of a common ancestry and cultural uniqueness within a group. It becomes relevant in contact with other ethnic groups when one's own group can be contrasted to others. (Siivonen 1998, 122.) Ethnicity remains in the level of identities, not as visible cultural traits, geographic concentration or concrete interaction. It is a collective system of meanings that constitutes the position of a community in its own surroundings. (Sintonen 1999, 40; 93.)

The definition for *identity* (lat. *idem, same*) is the level of sameness/equivalence that also the outsiders will notice. It is a part of a collective tradition that represents the group in cultural communication. Mikko Heiniö defines identity to mean relatively stable traits that are typical for one group and tie the group together as an entity keeping it separate from other entities. With the aid of identity a group can be identified and seen as one. Personal identity, again, is individual's perception of what makes him or her unique, different from others. (Heiniö 1994, 8; 12.) Identity symbols can be material or abstract. Language, location, music, dance, dresses, architecture, history, values, norms, traditions and rituals are all identity symbols. As such they do not unite an identity group, but the meanings and emotions affiliated to them create a sense of cohesion and unity (Honko 1988, 11).

Music is often used to help define one in relation to others. According to Frith, music is a key to identity because it offers a sense of both self and others, of the subjective in the collective. Music articulates both group relations and individuality

forming a basis for understanding ethical codes and social ideologies. He says that music “stands for, symbolizes and offers the immediate experience of collective identity” (Frith 1996, 110-111; 120.) Music can be used on purpose to create identities and transmit them. Music is also a way to transmit a cultural identity to following generations and demonstrate it to outsiders. (Heiniö 1994, 6.)

Because the contact to the homeland has been cut off, there have to be other ways for an immigrant to maintain contact to one’s roots. In the case of Finnish Americans, the geographical and social differences in the homeland had produced differences to their background. They came both from rural and urban areas with notable regional differences. As a result, in a new homeland the customs and institutions that were being created were different from those in the Old Country. Finnish Americans adopted a new ethnic identity in the New World, that of a Finnish American. Common language, religion, and music helped to overcome Old World regional differences. (Rahkonen 2001, 820.) The Finnish American minority identity is constructed and institutional in nature. Language, own schools, organizations, flag, national dress, kantele, folk songs, writers, athletes, artists, politicians, handicrafts and other artifacts took added importance in the New World, becoming symbols of ethnic identity. They have a function-oriented instrumental value inside the group and also in the eyes of outsiders. (Suojanen & Suojanen 2000, 68.)

4.2 Functions of music

> “Thus from the point of view of its social function, the primary effect of music is to give the listener a feeling of security, for it symbolizes the place he was born, his earliest childhood satisfactions, his religious experience, his pleasure in community doings, his courtship and his work – any or all of these personality-shaping experiences” (Lomax 1959: 929).

Music is related to other behaviors, such as religion, drama, dance, social organization, economics and political structure. In order to understand the role of music in society, it is essential to understand the distinction between the use and

function of music in relation to other aspects of the culture it is a part of. The uses of music are situations and ways in which music is employed in human action either as a thing itself or in conjunction with other activities. Function, on the other hand, is what music does for human beings, as evaluated by an outside observer. Functions refer to the broader purpose of music and reasons for using it. (Merriam 1964, 47; 210.) According to Blacking, the chief function of music is to involve people in shared experiences within the framework of their cultural experience. He says that "the function of music is to reinforce, or relate people more closely to certain experiences which have come to have meaning in their social life ". (Blacking 1976, 48; 99.)

In discussing the role of music in human culture Merriam has created a list of ten major and over-all functions of music in society (Merriam 1964, 219-227). The ten functions are summarized in the following:

1. *Emotional expression*. Song texts provide a vehicle for the expression of ideas and emotions. They evoke moods of tranquility, nostalgia, sentiment, group rapport, religious feeling, party solidarity, patriotism, social protest, and emotional release, and are an opportunity for a variety of emotional expressions.

2. *Aesthetic enjoyment.*

3. *Entertainment.*

4. *Communication*. Song texts can communicate direct information, and music communicates a certain limited understanding simply by its existence. This is the best known and understood of the functions.

5. *Symbolic representation of other things, ideas and behaviors*.

6. *Physical response*. Music elicits, excites, channels crowd behavior, and encourages physical response of the dance.

7. *Enforcing conformity of social norms*. This can happen through songs of social control, through direct warning to erring members of the society, or through indirect establishment of what is considered to be proper behavior. For example songs of protest.

8. *Validation of social institutions and religious rituals.*

9. *Contribution to the continuity and stability of culture*. If music allows emotional expression, gives aesthetic pleasure, entertains, communicates, elicits physical response, enforces conformity to social norms and validates social institutions and religious rituals, it is clear that it contributes to the continuity and stability of culture.

10. C*ontribution to the integration of society*. Music provides a solidarity point around which the members of society congregate and thus it functions to integrate the society. It provides a rallying point around which the members of society gather to engage in activities, which require the cooperation and coordination of the group. Occasions signaled by music draw its members together and remind them of their unity.

Despite the diversity of categories in Merriam's classification, the list is not all-encompassing. For example, Merriam ignores here totally cultural, social and ethnic identities.

4.3 Functions of dance

The members of Finnish communities in North America maintained intimate ties to Finland also through dancing. Dance was an integral part of many social

gatherings. The dances were mainly social pair dances, such as waltzes, polkas and schottisches. This cultural tradition was taken from Finland, and its primary function was to provide a framework for social interaction. It served as a mechanism to cope with the transition to a new homeland, and dance functioned also providing a familiar environment and a sense of security. Suutari equals dance to a language that is being learned as a child, through which it is more pleasant to express oneself than in a language that has been learned as an adult. (Suutari 2000, 129.)

According to Judith Lynne Hanna, dances may provide stability by presenting symbols of identity and vehicles for integration. She says that migrants who perform “traditional” dances in urban and suburban areas during nonworking hours may experience a sense of belonging and relief from the tensions of an alien, heterogeneous, sometimes hostile, urban environment. Lynne calls dance a "nostalgic counterforce to the new environment", and it can be less a reactionary than an anchoring, stabilizing phenomenon. (Hanna 1987, 215.)

Suutari has studied dance music among Finns in Sweden, and his study reveals that people who come to dance places are looking for social enjoyment more than nostalgia. They seek out Finnish dance music and dancing styles, social relations, people, and feelings. Although the music may sound old-fashioned, everybody likes it. For these people, dance traditions are not a burden from the past but a phenomenal and liked action that requires a personal effort from both the audience and the performers. (Suutari 2000, 128; 133; 257.) Hanna says that conservatism in dance is not just a characteristic of low status groups. On the contrary, upper class privileged groups may "cling to their dance as a symbol of cultural identity in a milieu that becomes heterogeneous and changing". (Hanna 1987, 221.)

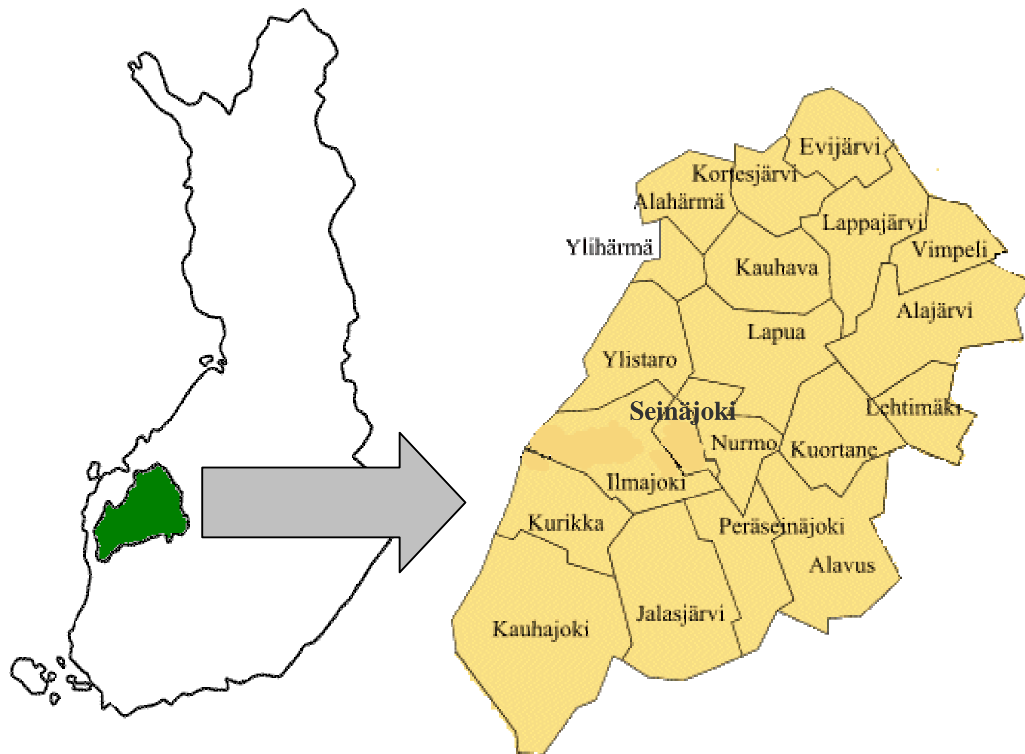
5 MÄKI TRIO

Picture 1. Mäki Trio: Signe, Sulo and Arvo Mäki.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

Mäki Trio, also known as the *Mäki Orchestra*, was a family band from Caspian, Michigan. This second-generation Finnish American band consisted of two brothers and their sister: Arvo, Sulo and Signe Mäki. Their parents had emigrated from southern Ostrobothnia: father Herman Juhonpoika Wähämäki (1879-1961) came from Jalasjärvi in 1905, and mother Emilia Autio (1880-1969) was born in Peräseinäjoki. The family settled in Ironwood, Michigan, where Herman (Wähä) Mäki started to work in an iron mine. (Tamminen 1993, 1.)

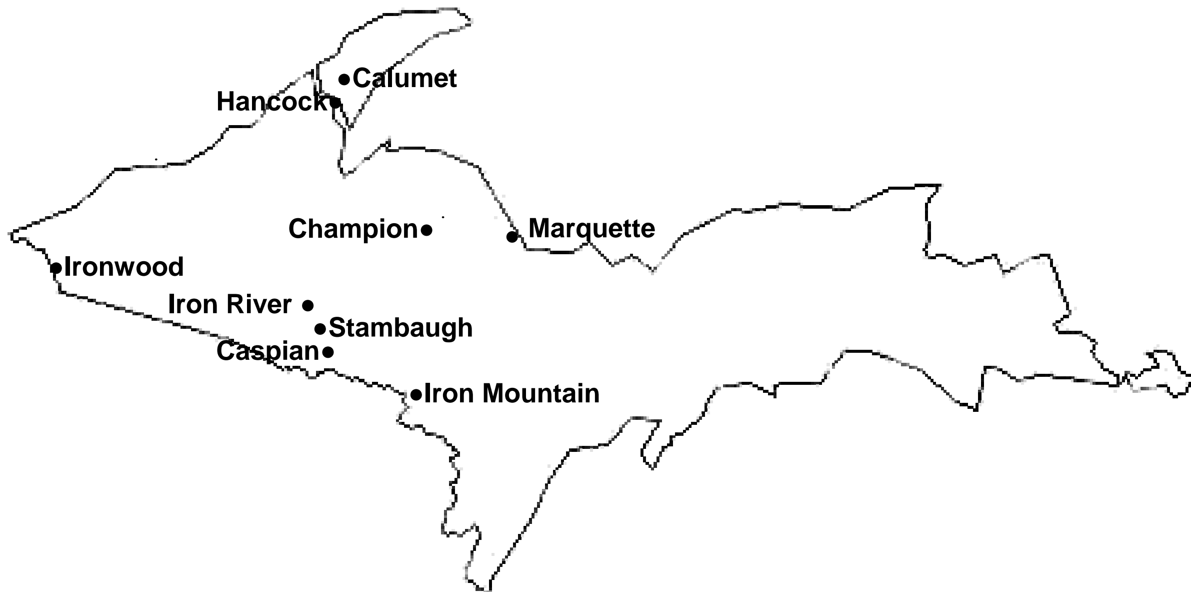
There were many Finns working in the iron mines in Ironwood, and a significant amount of them had come from southern Ostrobothnia, especially from Jalasjärvi, Ilmajoki, Kortesjärvi, Lehtimäki and Kauhajoki.

Map 1. Southern Ostrobothnia



Ironwood in Gogebic County on the western border of Upper Peninsula in Michigan was one of the major mining centers with permanent Finnish settlement since 1885. As many other Finnish clusters, also Ironwood had a number of Finnish institutions. There were Finnish churches, a temperance society, workers' societies, presses and newspapers, as well as a Finnish pharmacy, a photographer's studio, clothing store, tailor, general store, butcher's store and a shoemaker. (Holmio 1967, 200.)

Map 2. Michigan's Upper Peninsula



5.1 Biographies

In the following, I will shortly introduce the members of *Mäki Trio*. The band consisted of Arvo, Sulo and Signe Mäki, but their father, Herman Mäki, influenced on the background by giving advice and composing material for the band. Thus it is valid to start by introducing Herman.

5.1.1 Herman (1879-1961)

Based on the fact that the mines could not support everybody, many Finnish Americans turned eventually into farmers. Herman Mäki worked in an iron mine until he got injured in an explosion in 1909. In 1912, the family bought a farm in Caspian, Michigan. It was situated in Iron County to the west of Marquette in an area that was heavily populated by Finns. Herman soon acquired a nickname "Maito Hemppa" (Milk Herman) because of his involvement in dairy business. He also earned some extra income as a taxi driver owning one of the first cars in town. (Tamminen 1993, 1.)

Picture 2. Herman Mäki's farm in Caspian, Michigan.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

Herman was an accomplished one- and two-row accordion player, and he was well-known in Jalasjärvi before he emigrated in 1905, at the age of 25. Aapeli Hautanen tells an anecdote: "Vähämmäjen Hermanni kirkonristillä sanoo, jotta antakaa poijat viis penniä päästä, niimmä soitan" (Herman Mäki said by the church that "boys give me five pennies so I will play") (Hosioja 1982, 62-63). Jalasjärvi is famous for its instrumental folk music and numerous skilful folk musicians Emanuel Manberg, Jaakko Noukka, Jaakko Rautanen (Frigård) and Aapeli Hautanen being the most famous names. The musicians were most commonly heard in relation to dances, weddings and harvesting parties. Erkki Ala-Könni has edited a notebook from Jalasjärvi, and the book lists 83 local folk musicians born before 1917. Eight of them migrated to North America, of whom five resided there permanently. In the notebook there are 231 melodies collected from accordion, fiddle and harmonica

players, and singers: 78 polskas, 14 marches, 50 waltzes, 10 mazurkas, 13 schottisches, 55 polkas and 11 other tunes. (Ala-Könni 1974.)

Accordion had replaced fiddle as a dance instrument because of its louder voice and the ability to accompany melody. In *Jalasjärven nuottikirja* (Notebook from Jalasjärvi) there are 30 polkas collected from accordion players. *Jalasjärven polkka* (The Polka from Jalasjärvi) has been played with different titles and versions by many artists. Also Viola Turpeinen has played it on a recording, and that way the polka has spread also around North America. In the Notebook from Jalasjärvi, there are six different versions of that particular polka. *Jalasjärven polkka* is known as Herman's composition. He has also composed *Vähämäen Hermannin polkka* (Herman Vähämäki's Polka); *Waasan Polkka* (Polka from Waasa) and *Caspian Polkka* (Polka from Caspian). It can be said Herman Mäki brought the traditional Ostrobothnian accordion style and techniques to Michigan. And by being the only musician in the area, playing ensured him livelihood through the hard years after his accident. He was a regular sight playing at dances, often in the Baltic pavilion between the towns of Caspian and Caastra. Herman passed on the musical tradition to his children. Since he played his accordion at home every night, the children were exposed to the music and it was natural that they started to follow their father's path. (Tamminen 1993, 1.)

5.1.2 Arvo (1907-1966)

Michigan has produced several famous Finnish American accordionists: for example Antti Kosola and Sylvia Polso from Ironwood, Viola Turpeinen from Iron River, and Arvo Mäki from Caspian.

Picture 3. Mäki Trio visiting Sylvia Polso's home in 1928 in Ironwood.[4]
From left: Arvo Mäki, Signe Mäki, Sylvia Polso.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

Arvo Mäki, the eldest son of Herman and Emilia, played the piano accordion, and he played his first dance at the age of nine. Merriam says that formal training is required if the youngster is to become a real musician in the society (Merriam 1964, 146), and one explanation for Arvo becoming one of the best Finnish American accordionists was that he had received lessons from a famous Italian professor Favairio. The professor refused to teach Arvo foxtrot - a highly popular dance at that time - so that he had to learn to play it by ear. (Tamminen 1993, 1.)

> ...Arvo Mäki is the only Finnish accordion player taught by a professor in northern Midwest. He has taught his sister and brother to play. They are related to accordion players in Jalasjärvi – so a natural talent and an instruction by a good teacher has made them players that play juicy, rhythmic and loud music...
>
> (Raivaaja Oct. 27, 1928)

5.1.3 Sulo (1908-1970)

The younger brother Sulo started to play with Arvo at the age of twelve. The boys formed a two-man orchestra called *Mäki Bros Jazzbo*, where Sulo played drums and later also banjo. This duo played in Iron County area, for example in Shepich

[4] Although Mäki Trio came to visit Sylvia Polso once, they never performed together.

Hall. In the summertime the loft of the shed in the Mäki farm served as a dancing venue. (Tamminen 1993, 1.)

Picture 4. Mäki Bros Jazzbo –orchestra: Sulo and Arvo Mäki
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

5.1.4 Signe (1910-1992)

Mäki Trio was complete when Signe Mäki joined the boys in 1920 at the age of fifteen. Signe is perhaps the most interesting character in the band. Although she was in the company of two brothers, her character is still quite rebellious. In 1920s, saxophone was thought as a "barbaric" instrument (see Allen 1931, 90), and a woman playing it was quite exceptional. Because of the rarity of a young woman playing a saxophone, it was the family's decision that Signe would play it. It was thought to be appealing to the audience. (Tamminen 1993, 1; 4.) There have been prohibitions what comes to suitable instruments for women. For a long time, only singing and playing the piano were appropriate ways for women to take part in popular music. Women who played the saxophone, drums, upright bass, or other

"masculine" instruments faced difficulties in pursuing professional careers except in all-women ensembles. (Cook & McCartney 2001, 95.)

Picture 5. Signe Mäki (later Hemmingson) in 1926.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

The trio performed actively in the Finnish American communities until the Second World War. Sulo joined then the air forces, and after the war he started to work at Larson air base in Moses Lake, Washington. He spent the rest of his life in Aberdeen, WA, where he died in 1970. Arvo moved to Chicago, where he continued playing with his wife Olivia. He died in 1966. Signe married an accordion player and moved to Winlock, Washington. They played in dances and radio shows until her husband’s death. In 1948 Signe got married with William Hemmingson and later she started to play drums in *Finn Power Trio*, a female band with Dorothy Wilen in accordion and Sirkka Wilson in piano, performing in Seattle area and in Oregon and Washington. Signe Hemmingson died on January 9, 1992, in Seattle, at the age of 81. (Tamminen 1993, 4-5.)

5.2 Presentation and image

Picture 6. Mäki Trio: Signe, Sulo and Arvo Mäki in 1928.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

The photographs show us that the outward appearance mattered to *Mäki Trio*. To look like a professional musician was of equal importance to playing the right way. We can see from the pictures that the members of *Mäki Trio* took their musicianship seriously. To emphasize the serious image, in the studio picture above, taken in 1928, Signe, Sulo and Arvo are all dressed in black. In a picture from the following year, the dresses have been changed to more colourful ones, and smiling faces give an impression of a more cheerful and carefree attitude. Note also the change in the hair styles; *Mäki Trio* was certainly aware of the trends of the late 1920s and also followed them.

Picture 7. Mäki Trio in 1929.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

What is not shown in either of these pictures is the length of Signe's dress, but one can assume it to reach her knee as it does in pictures on pages 38 and 43 and in some additional pictures not printed here. The 1920s had marked a change in American women's dress and appearance, and in the whole feminine ideal. The dresses got shorter, short hair was introduced, and the use of cosmetics, especially lipstick, gained popularity. Also smoking became common among women. Allen tells an interesting detail about women's fashion. He says that in 1919 the height of the skirt was about six or seven inches (15-17 cm) above the ground and in 1920 it rose from 10 to 20 per cent. Then it dipped a little, and from 1924 on the distance of the hem from the ground grew steadily, until by 1927 it had reached the knee. (Allen 1931, 103-104.) The freedom of short hair came at the same time with the shortening of the dresses. Signe Mäki with her short hair and knee-high dresses thus follows the latest fashion.

There is no doubt that photographs like these were good sales promotion. Pleasant looks combined to skilful playing were a combination that eased *Mäki Trio* to gain popularity.

5.3 Travel and reception

Picture 8. Sulo and Arvo Mäki with the band's car in 1934.
(Photograph courtesy of the Institute of Migration, Turku, Finland)

The advertisements and stories in two Finnish American newspapers, *Päivälehti* and *Raivaaja,* have been used to find out where and when *Mäki Trio* performed[5]. *Päivälehti* (Daily Paper) is a right-wing paper published in Duluth, Minnesota. It concentrates mostly on activities related to churches and temperance movement. During the period of this research, midsummer festivals, *Juhannusjuhlat,* and Kalevala day celebrations on February 28 were given much attention. Generally speaking, it can be said that the events that were advertised in *Päivälehti*, tended to have a quite serious and dignified program. The program could contain speeches, often by somebody from the church, classical music and poetry. Mere dance advertisements appeared only occasionally. *Raivaaja* (Pioneer) is a socialist daily newspaper printed in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. Its advertisements were focused on the activities organized by the social clubs. Compared to the events

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[5] All translations are made by the writer.

advertised in *Päivälehti*, these activities were lighter in content. And almost always the program ended with dancing. During the period of this study, there were daily dance advertisements.

The traditional Finnish festival calendar somewhat changed in the American context because urban America offered a different setting than that of rural Finland. The most important "old country" celebrations were Christmas and Midsummer, followed by *Laskiainen* (Shrovetide), *Kalevala Day* on February 28, Easter, *Vappu* (May Day), and Finland's Independence Day on December 6th. *Vappu* on May 1st had a status of being a workers' festival, and it was advertised in *Raivaaja* but not in *Päivälehti.* In addition, nearly every organization had its own Finnish summer festival, *Kesäjuhlat*. These festivals were very popular attracting people from all age groups from large areas. The summer festivals lasted normally one weekend and contained speeches, music, theatre, sports, games and dancing. Although the organizations had often an ideological background, the aim of the summer festivals was normally simply to offer an arena for socializing and meeting people.

Some Finns participated also in the American celebrations, especially on 4th of July and Thanksgiving Day. Those festivities were often even used as excuses to get together. It was not rare to combine the 4th of July and a Finnish summer festival; and with bonfires these celebrations were often more Finnish than American in character. (Kostiainen 1996, 31-33.) In 1928, *Mäki Trio* played on Thanksgiving Eve in Maynard, Massachusetts. A big dance was held at Taisto Hall, lasting from 9 pm to 1 am. The next day the band played a Thanksgiving dance at the Maja Finn Hall in Ashby, Massachusetts. The dance was advertised to be "as fun as the audience is willing to make it". People were invited to come and "digest the turkey and other roasts and give thanks to the gods of dance and joy" (Raivaaja, November 27, 1928.)

By looking at the advertisements, I was able to construct a list of *Mäki Trio's* tours. Naturally there were performances that were advertised elsewhere in other papers,

and some performances may not have been advertised in a newspaper at all. Taking into account that the list contains only a part of *Mäki Trio*'s performances, it still gives a picture of what were the places where the band performed, and what was the frequency of the performances. In the beginning the trio performed near their home in Upper Michigan, Northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. For example, there is a record of a performance in WEBC radio station in Duluth. Later on, the radio appearance was often mentioned in the advertisements, and the band was even referred to as a "radio orchestra". As the following table shows, *Mäki Trio* started a concert tour in the eastern states in the end of 1928. The band performed in Ohio, Massachusetts and New Jersey. According to Tamminen, *Mäki Trio* toured later on also in Washington, Oregon and California (Tamminen 1993, 4). Those performances are, however, not included in this study because they were not advertised in *Raivaaja* or *Päivälehti*. It needs to be kept in mind that in this study only a part of *Mäki Trio*'s performances have been investigated. But they are enough to show us what kinds of performance venues were typical for *Mäki Trio*.

Table 2. Mäki Trio's selected performing schedule 1928-1932

	Day	Town, state	Venue
1928			
OCTOBER			
Tue	30	Cleveland, Ohio	
Wed	31	Painesville, Ohio	Keyes Hall
NOVEMBER			
Thu	1	Warren, Ohio	Labor Hall, Austin Avenue
Fri	2	Ashtabula, Ohio	Torppa
Sat	3	Conneaut, Ohio	
Tue	6	Gardner, Mass.	Casino Hall
Wed	7	Fitchburg, Mass.	
Thu	8	Worcester, Mass.	Belmont Hall
Fri	9	Quincy, Mass.	
Sat	10	Quincy, Mass.	
Mon	12	Fitchburg, Mass.	Saima Hall
Wed	14	Maynard, Mass.	Taiston talo
Thu	15	Gardner, Mass.	Työväentalo, Ash Street 21
Sat	17	Ashby, Mass.	Ashby Maja Finn Hall
Tue	20	Fitchburg, Mass	Saima Hall
Thu	22	" "	" "
Sat	24	Worcester, Mass.	Lincoln Square Hall
Wed	28	Maynard, Mass.	Taisto Finn Hall
Thu	29	Ashby, Mass.	Ashby Maja Finn Hall
DECEMBER			
Sun	2	Fitchburg, Mass.	Saima Hall, women's evening (Signe only)
Wed	5	Lanesville, Gloucester, Mass.	Väinölän talo
Thu	6	Gardner, Mass.	Työväentalo
Fri	7	Maynard, Mass.	Taiston talo
Tue	11	Townsend Harbor, Mass.	Toivola Cooper Hall
Wed	12	Fitchburg, Mass.	Saima Hall
Thu	13	Gardner, Mass.	Työväentalo
Sat	15	Worcester, Mass.	Lincoln Square Hall
Wed	19	Fitchburg, Mass.	Saima Hall
Thu	20	Gardner, Mass.	Työvaentalo
Sat	22	Worcester, Mass.	Lincoln Square Hall

Tue	25	Fitchburg, Mass. Peabody, Mass.	Saima Hall (1.30–4.30 pm.) Taimen talo
Thu	27	Gardner, Mass.	Työväentalo
1929			
JANUARY			
Thu	3	Maynard, Mass.	
Wed	9	Fitchburg, Mass.	Saima Hall
Thu	10	Gardner, Mass.	Työväentalo
Fri	11	Royalton, Mass.	
Sat	12	Maynard, Mass.	
Wed	16	Fitchburg, Mass.	Saima Hall
Sat	19	Jersey City, New Jersey	Työväentalo, 131 Winfield Ave.
Wed	23	*New York*	*Recording session*
Sat	26	Jersey City, New Jersey	
Tue	29	*Chicago*	*Recording session*
FEBRUARY			
Sat	23	Westminster, Mass.	Farmer's Coop.
MARCH			
Fri	1	Fitchburg, Mass.	A.K.Hall, Grove Street
Sat	9	Westminster, Mass.	Farmer's Coop.
JUNE Sat	8	Duluth, Minnesota	Worker's Opera, 314 Sixth Avenue East. Summer festival.
NOVEMBER			
Sat	16	*Chicago*	*Recording session*
1930			
APRIL			
Sat	5	Hancock, Michigan	Labor Hall
Sun	6	Hancock, Michigan	South Range Labor Hall
MAY			
Tue	6	Biwabik, Minnesota	Biwabik Pavillion
Wed	7	Angora, Minnesota	Alanko Hall
Thu	8	Zim, Minnesota	Farmer's Club Hall
Fri	9	Markham, Minnesota	Worker's Hall
Sat	10	Kebwat, state unknown	Finnish Hall
Sun	11	Calumet, Michigan	Keljula Hall
1932 **JUNE**	4	Brule, Wisconsin	Osuuspuisto Hall. Coop summer festival.

The listing above shows that in this geographical area *Mäki Trio* performed mostly at the Finn Halls. Reino Hannula has studied extensively the Finn Halls, and in his book *An Album of Finnish Halls* he describes several of them. From this source I was able to find information on some of the places where *Mäki Trio* played. As was expected, most of these halls belong to workers' associations or socialist clubs. The explanation is very simple: these associations were eager to organize dances. And the bands played wherever there was a possibility to do so. While the churches and temperance societies had more serious program in their gatherings, the socialist clubs were the ones who organized dances in the 1920s and 1930s, although dancing itself was non-political.

In some cases, the name of the hall reveals its affiliation. For example, it is obvious that Työväentalo (workers' house) in Gardner, Massachusetts, belongs to a workers' association as well as Workers Opera in Duluth and Workers' Hall in Markham. Based on the names of the halls as well as Hannula's work, I was able to find affiliation to some of the halls. A workers' association owned Taisto in Maynard. Saima Hall in Fitchburg as well as halls in Warren and Hancock. Ashby Maja Finn Hall and Biwabik Pavillion belonged to the Finnish Socialist Federation. Osuuspuisto Hall in Brule, Toivola in Townsend Harbor, Westminster and Farmer's Club Hall in Zim all belonged to cooperatives.

Mäki Trio played regularly in the Saima Hall in Fitchburg, Massachusetts**.** Fitchburg was the capital of the eastern Finns, and also the home of *Raivaaja*. The "Finntown" of Fitchburg was heavily influenced by the Finnish Socialist Federation. Saima Hall, built in 1906, belonged to the Saima Labor Society. It was the Finnish community center for the city and its surroundings. It had a small theatre that staged a play almost every Saturday. According to Hannula, Saima may have been the largest first-generation organization in the 1920s and 1930s with its membership peaking at almost 600. (Hannula 106-107.)

Taisto Hall in Maynard, Massachusetts, belonged to the Maynard Finnish Workers Association Taisto (struggle) that was organized in 1903 and affiliated with the Finnish Socialist Federation. Taisto Hall had a little theatre, a sports group *Tarmo athletic club*, a brass band *Imatra Band*, and a male choir. In 1905, its membership was 120, and in 1915 there were 350 members. Taisto Hall was dedicated in 1909. The Maja Finn Hall in Ashby, Massachusetts, belonged to a chapter of the Finnish Federation, the Voima (strength), which was organized in 1912. Työväentalo in Gardner belonged to a workers association that joined later the Finnish Socialist Federation. Its hall, the Ash Street Hall, was dedicated in 1911 when the membership was 350. The hall hosted a little theatre and an athletic club. In Westminster, the town hall was a place for dances sponsored by the farmers association. The Co-op Farmers Hall was being used for business meetings. (Hannula 1991, 1; 81; 123; 132.) The Finn Hall in Zim, Minnesota, has had more owners than any other Finn Hall. It was built by members of the Temperance Society, and soon it was the home of the Zim chapter of the Finnish Socialist Federation as well as the labor group, which supported the IWW. And later on, a Zim Co-Operative Club owned the hall. The hall itself had all the typical Finn Hall activities, including a little theatre. (Hannula 1991, 45.)

The last performance that was taken to this study was held on June 4, 1932, in Osuuspuisto Hall in Brule, Wisconsin. The dance was organized by the Finnish Co-op, and it was advertised by saying that “Well approved Mäki Orchestra is playing!” The hall was made for 1000 people and it was said to have the biggest and newest dance floor in northern Wisconsin.

Based on the comments given in newspaper articles, it is obvious that the audience liked *Mäki Trio*. Also the fact that the band kept coming back to the same places shows that there was a clear demand for that type of music. On November 11, 1928 there appeared a story titled “Mäki Orchestra lives up to its reputation”. In the story it is said that:

"...Mäki Orchestra lived up well to the reputation it has achieved. During the dancing one could notice the proficiency already from the fact that the moment the playing started, the audience filled the dance floor."

(Raivaaja Nov. 11, 1928)

6 MUSIC

In 1929, *Mäki Trio* recorded a total of 14 songs on 7 records. All the recordings have survived, and they form a good source for a researcher. In this chapter, I will discuss *Mäki Trio*'s recorded material and compare it to the concert repertoire. How did the concert repertoire differ from the recordings? What kind of music did the band play? Who had composed the songs that were performed? These are the questions this chapter tries to answer.

6.1 Recordings[6]

On January 23, 1929, *Mäki Trio* entered the Victor studios in New York. As a result of this session, a total of four songs came out. They were two polkas: *Caspian polka* and *Polkkia Pohjoos maalta* (Polkas from a Northern Country), one waltz: *Sorretun elämä* (Life of the Oppressed), and one schottische: *Minun kultani* (My sweetheart). The schottische was famous in Finland and Sweden – also with the name *Min tös* – at the beginning of the 20th century, and it was recorded six times in Scandinavia in 1906-1913. The polka *Polkkia Pohjoos maalta* is Herman Mäki's composition and is related to *Jalasjärven polkka* that is said to be Herman's composition (see chapter 5.1.1 on page 42). In this session, additional two accordion solos by Arvo Mäki were recorded but they were never released (Tamminen 1993, 4). An interesting fact is that *Mäki Trio* did not appear only in the Finnish series but the same recordings appeared also in Polish and Lithuanian categories. *Caspian Polka* and *Minun kultani* were released in a Polish series as *Nad Wisla* and *Moja Luba* (V160555), and *Mäki Trio* was called *Makinsla Trojka*. *Caspian polka* was also released in a Lithuanian series (V14018), and the band was called *Maki Trejetas*. (Gronow 1977, 53.)

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[6] Information on the origin of the songs in this chapter is based on the comments from Antti Hosioja, Ritva Talvitie and Simo Westerholm.

Six days later, on January 29, *Mäki Trio* recorded four more songs, this time in Chicago. They were two *waltzes*, *Espanjatar* (La Spagnola) and *Mennyt ilo* (Bygone Joy), one polka, *Waasan polkka* (Polka of Waasa), and one schottische, *Maatyttöjen sotiisi* (Schottische of the Country Girls). *Espanjatar* was a very popular waltz in Finland in the 1920s, and it was recorded in the United States by a Finn, Hannes Saari, in 1927. Herman Mäki has composed *Waasan polkka.* Its second part is known in Finland as *Seikun polkka* (Polka of Seikku) named after a sawmill that had a famous brass band in Pori, Finland. Part B in *Maatyttöjen sotiisi* is known in Finland, especially among the Swedish-speaking musicians, as *Mosesas-Fedis* schottische.

In November, *Mäki Trio* went back to Victor's Chicago studios, and on the 16th, three polkas were cut: *Se hulivili polkka* (The Rascal Polka), *Intolan polkka* (Polka of Intola), and *Liina polkka;* plus two schottisches: *Juhannus sotiisi* (Midsummer Schottische) and *Haitari sotiisi* (Accordion Schottische); and one waltz, *Särkyneet unelmat* (Broken Dreams). This time Arvo Mäki had also a role of a composer: *Se hulivili polkka*, *Intolan polkka* and *Juhannus sotiisi* are his compositions. It is normal that melodies and fragments of songs travel across wide distances. Also Arvo's compositions contain familiar elements: the third part of *Juhannus sotiisi* is known in Finland as *Ketun Reinon polkka*, and the fourth part of *Se hulivili polkka* is known as *Aution Matin polkka.* We do not know where the tunes originate, but it is likely that Arvo has not hesitated to use melodies he has heard somewhere else as ingredients in his own compositions.

Gronow has found sales statistics for Victor's Finnish American recordings up to June 1931 (Gronow 1977, 6). He is not sure whether the figures show the final sales of the records or just for a certain period, but in any case they can be used as an indicator of the relative popularity of different artists. Of *Mäki Trio's* seven recordings, five are on this list. The very first recording and the second last one are missing.

Table 3. Sold recordings 1929-1931

	song titles	Copies sold
1.	Caspian polkka / Minun kultani	
2.	Sorretun elämä / Waasan polkka	1182
3.	Espanjatar / Mennyt ilo	839
4.	Polkkia Pohjoos maalta / Maatyttöjen sotiisi	662
5.	Se hulivili polkka / Juhannus sotiisi	584
6.	Intolan polkka / Särkyneet unelmat	
7.	Liina polkka / Haitari sotiisi	289

Source: Gronow 1977, 6

Although it is possible that these figures are not the total sales of these recordings, but from a certain period, the statistics show that Finnish American music was minority music and the sales are not comparable to mainstream artists whose recordings were sold in millions. Number one in the 1920s was Vernon Dalhart with *Prisoner's Song* from 1924 (over seven million sold copies)[7]. Gronow's list shows that commercially the most successful Finnish American artists were for example comedian Tatu Pekkarinen whose recording *Muistoja Suomesta / Iita ja minä* (Memories from Finland / Iita and me) from May 1928 sold 1979 copies, baritone Kosti Tamminen's *Viimeinen valssi / Aatami paratiisissa* (The last waltz / Adam in the paradise) from August 1928 with 2300 copies, Viola Turpeinen´s *Violan masurkka / Ihanne valssi* (Viola's mazurka / Ideal waltz) from November 1928 with 1600 copies, comic Antti Syrjäniemi's *Viola Turpeinen tanssit Kiipillä / Päivän tapahtumia* (Viola Turpeinen's dance on Cape Ann / Today's happenings) from April 1929 with 1478 copies, and comedian Arthur Kylander's *Kuinka Heikki munitti kanoja / Merimiehen elämää* (How Heikki had the hens lay eggs / Life of a sailor)

[7] Information on a leaflet on CD "Chart-Toppers of the Twenties".

from February 1929 with 1462 sold copies. In light of these numbers, *Mäki Trio's* success was quite satisfying, and may well have fulfilled the expectations Victor had. It has to be remembered that *Mäki Trio* performed instrumental music. All the artists mentioned above, except Viola Turpeinen, were singers, and usually songs with lyrics sell more than instrumentals. However, it can be thought that *Mäki Trio* was a band that people wanted to hear live rather than listen to at home. And the Great Depression combined with the emergence of radio certainly had an impact on the record sales. Starting from tenor Kurt Londen's recording from May 1930 with 178 sold copies, the sales of all Victor's Finnish American recordings remained below 200 copies. (Gronow 1977, 6.)

6.2 Dance music scene in Finland

By the time of *Mäki Trio*'s heyday, jazz music had acquired a strong foothold in the world of entertainment. Jazz was invented in New Orleans, and it spread rapidly to Chicago and New York. By the late 1920s, jazz was a part of New York culture, and in the late 1930s integrated jazz bands and swing bands had become common. (Crunden 1990, 191.) Afro-American music came to Finland in forms of notebooks, visiting artists, recordings and radio. In the 1920s, a new dance music style called "jazz" was introduced in Finland. However, it was not the same music that was known as jazz in the United States. In fact, those days all new dance music was called "jazz" in Finland. The "real" jazz is said to have arrived in Finland in 1926 when an American cruise liner s/s Andania came to Helsinki with 600 Finnish Americans on board. Three members of the ship's orchestra decided then to stay in Finland, a Finnish American saxophonist Wilfred "Tommy" Tuomikoski being one of them. Tuomikoski is seen as the founding father of Finnish jazz culture. He was an active teacher, and introduced Finns to improvisation – an unfamiliar skill to Finns those days. (Pietilä 2002, 20.)

Finland's response to jazz music was a national style, "accordion jazz". It is a merge of Afro-American influences to national ingredients; a conscious culture

fusion selecting traits that could be fitted into Finnish ground and rejecting those that could not. Accordion jazz was formed amongst the working class youth as a reaction to hot jazz favored by the Swedish speaking students. *Dallapé* orchestra is regarded as the founder of this new and unique style. *Dallapé* played schottisches, polkas and waltzes as well as foxtrots and self-made ragtimes. Fiddle and accordion represented the old tradition, whereas banjo, jazz drums, xylophone, saxophone and tuba were new. (Jalkanen 1981, 228-229.) The band's music was modernized city folk music, agrarian music refined in the urban settings. Here the acculturation was a cultural loan, an imitation of a foreign style. (Jalkanen 1989, 138; 330.)

Inspired by *Dallapé*, about 50 new accordion jazz orchestras came into being and replaced the brass bands as the main form of amateur music. The new fashion could be seen in the events organized by the workers' movement, and soon this new style broke all class distinctions becoming the cornerstone of Finnish dance music. (Jalkanen 1981, 230.) The old tradition was seen longest in the way music was performed. Although the material and instruments had changed, the performing style remained the same because it was so attached to the cultural context. (Jalkanen 1989, 330.) There were, however, no notable influences from *Dallapé* in the Finnish American dances which at that time were quite old-fashioned consisting normally only of the polkas, waltzes, mazurkas and schottisches.

6.3 Instrumentation and style

Mäki Trio's instrumentation: an accordion, a saxophone, a banjo and a drum kit, is an interesting combination. In the 1920s, ragtime and jazz introduced new fashionable instruments: banjo, saxophone and drums. *Mäki Trio* was aware of the latest fashion, and adapted these instruments to the band. The leading role in the band, however, was taken by the accordion. Accordion had become a folk instrument in Finland in the 1880s, first with one- and two-row accordions. It

became a dance instrument rapidly because of the loudness of its sound and the built-in tonal chord structure. From the 1920s onwards, it became the most important dance music instrument among the working class. Working class dances in urban settings were places where rural music could be heard in the cities. The accordion was not well received in Finland. It provoked controversy as representing immoral anti-music and a modern, industrializing world. As a foreign instrument traditionalists opposed it as an enemy to “genuine” folk music and the ideal instruments that were fiddle and kantele. Accordion was seen as an instrument of the lower classes, and its sound was far from the taste of the upper classes. Also the organizations protested first against the accordion. (Kurkela 1989, 23; 237.)

The reputation of *Mäki Trio* was heavily centered on the skills of Arvo Mäki. He was the leading character in the band, and his skilful playing was generally respected:

> Many accordion players who were there admired especially the fingering technique of Arvo Mäki, considering it the best among the Finns.
>
> (Raivaaja Nov. 13, 1928).

Sulo's role as a simultaneous drummer and a banjo player has to be admired, and Signe as a female saxophone player has also been a subject of curiosity in its time. However, the accordion played by Arvo had the main role in the band, and it was played in a very traditional Finnish way. Arvo had adapted his father’s playing style that originated in Jalasjärvi in Finland. Arvo’s playing is energetic, and it becomes clear that this music is meant for dancing. All in all, the music on *Mäki Trio’*s recordings sounds very traditional. Not only are the melodies typically Finnish, also the harmonization and playing style originate in southern Ostrobothnia. The American influences are thus limited to the instrumentation and outward appearance.

6.4 Repertoires and programs

Mäki Trio's recordings represent the soundscape that prevailed in Finland, especially in the southern Ostrobothnia region, in the early 20th century. *Mäki Trio* provided its audience with familiar tunes from the Old Country. For *Mäki Trio,* music making was a profession, a way to gain financial profit, and that is why it is natural that music that had a potential to sell well was being recorded. In the concerts the repertoire could then be more varied and include more genres. How much then did the dance repertoire differ from the music on the recordings?

Mäki Trio certainly had the necessary knowledge and skills to play contemporary dance music and even jazz. Still the main emphasis in their playing was on polkas, waltzes and schottisches although also more modern tunes were played. The dance advertisements reveal that *Mäki Trio* was well liked, and the fact that the band played music from the old country was highly appreciated. *Mäki Trio* designed the dances according to the audience base. Sometimes only music from the Old Country was being played, and at other times there were dances where both traditional and modern tunes (a term for those was *sekulitanssit*) were being played.

> Tomorrow night there will be a dance at the Saima Hall where music from both countries – the old and the new – will be played. Again we can hear that *Mäki Orchestra* play. Another dance, consisting only of music from the Old Country, will be held on Thursday night...
>
> ...Tomorrow night at Saima Hall, Mäki Orchestra will play so old polkas that they awake 30 years old memories. This dance on Thursday is organized for old people. Please come early!
>
> (Raivaaja, Nov. 19, 1928)
>
> The first snow always brings along joy. When there will also be an Old Country's dance, only then will our hearts get excited.
>
> (Raivaaja, Nov. 22, 1928)

> …everyone who was there the last time *Mäki Orchestra* played can agree that it is good to dance to their music. Special attention has to be paid to the fact that the same statement is given by the old and the young.
> (Raivaaja Dec. 12, 1928)

> It looks like the dance will be a big event. This assumption is based on two facts. Firstly, everyone will take advantage of when *Mäki Orchestra* is playing and secondly, all women want to have the cedar wood box and men the ashtray that are prizes in the dance competition.
> (Raivaaja Dec. 12, 1928)

It was usual that *Mäki Trio* played a 30-minute concert followed by dancing. On November 12, 1928, the band played in *Aserauhatanssit*, a dance organized in order to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the ending of the World War I. The event was held in Saima Hall in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The concert program was published in *Raivaaja* on the same day. Here is the song list:

Song	Performer
1. *Kansainvälinen [Internationale]*	
2. *Ciribiribin (waltz)*	Arvo
3. *Return March (march)*	Arvo
4. *Caprice de Concert*	Signe and Sulo
5. *Lina Mazurka (mazurka)*	Arvo
6. *Accordion Club March (march)*	
7. *Under the Double Eagle (march)*	
8. *Vanhanmaan polkka (polka)*	Arvo
9. *Tesoro Mio (waltz)*	Arvo and Signe
10. *Weidofts Saxophobia*	Signe
11. *San Fransisco Souvenier*	Arvo
12. *Piersantin marssi (march)*	

None of the songs above can be found on *Mäki Trio*'s recordings. The opening number was *Internationale*, which was used as the theme song for the Finnish American workers' movement. It is possible that every performance in Saima Hall that was hosted by Saima Labor Society had to start with this tune. Another

interesting fact is that the entire band plays only four of the twelve numbers. There are five accordion solos, one saxophone solo, one duet by Signe and Sulo, and one by Arvo and Signe. While the dancing part was dominated by pair dances, the concert part had to include different music. Here at least four tunes, that is one third of the program, are marches. By looking at the titles we can say for certain that *Vanhanmaan polkka* (Polka from the Old Country) is of Finnish origin. *Ciribiribin* and *Tesoro Mio* are Italian waltzes and *Under the Double Eagle* is an American march.

Mäki Trio was aware of the current trends in dance music, and fulfilled its audience’s requests. On January 16, 1929, the dance began with *Ramona* waltz and ended with *Home sweet home*. *Ramona* was very popular at that time; Gene Austin’s version of the song had been recorded on August 20, 1928, and it sold more than one million copies. The song was 17 weeks in the charts, of which eight weeks as number one. In Finland *Ramona* was recorded as early as in 1929. *Home sweet home* had a status of a folk song although it was originally composed by English Sir Henry Bishop as a part of his opera “Clari, or the Maid of Milan”. (Suuri toivelaulukirja 2, 158; 226.) Between these two foreign waltzes there were polkas, waltzes and schottisches. (Raivaaja Jan. 15, 1929.)

> Tonight we will dance. Dancing Fitchburg cannot stay away from the Saima Hall when the famous *Mäki Orchestra* is playing Ramona and other waltzes! Dancers say that this Midwestern orchestra makes dancing a real pleasure.
> (Raivaaja, Nov. 20, 1928)

6.5 Functions

Returning back to Merriam's categorization of the functions of music (chapter 4.2), it is now possible to locate *Mäki Trio*'s place in the Finnish American music scene using the same categories. Here I have placed *Mäki Trio* to relevant categories in Merriam's categorization.

The first function is emotional expression. Because *Mäki Trio* performed instrumental music, there are no lyrics to express emotions. This is not to say that the music of *Mäki Trio* would not be sentimental. Instrumental music can evoke emotions as well, and certainly *Mäki Trio*'s music evoked many memories from Finland among the listeners. Longing for the old homeland and relatives there got an expression in form of music. The second and third functions, those of aesthetic enjoyment and entertainment, are clear. People would not buy *Mäki Trio*'s recordings unless they enjoyed the beauty of the music, and they would not go to dances and concerts unless they thought it was entertaining. *Mäki Trio*'s main mission was, after all, to entertain people, and the reason the band toured across the country was that there was a need for the kind of entertainment *Mäki Trio* was providing. Finnish Americans loved dancing and there clearly existed a market for dance bands.

The fourth function on Merriam's list is communication. Although *Mäki Trio* did not intend to spread any ideology through music nor deliver information, there was interaction with the audience to a certain degree. The program was designed according to every audience that was sometimes older and sometimes younger. The repertoire varied accordingly: more contemporary music for youngsters and traditional music for old people. Also requests were taken into account, such as *Ramona* waltz and *Home sweet home*. The fifth category is called *symbolic representation of other things, ideas and behaviors.* For some, *Mäki Trio* was a symbol for Finland. The music brought back memories especially to older people. For young people *Mäki Trio* represented a new Finnish American identity. The band was an example of how to combine elements from both Finnish culture and the mainstream American culture. *Mäki Trio* certainly succeeded in so doing because the performances were attended by both young and old. The sixth function, of physical response, is clearly related to dancing. For Finnish Americans, dancing was a way to express emotions as well as to relax. Dancing was also a custom taken from Finland, and it created a sense of the familiar in an alien environment.

The seventh function, *enforcing conformity of social norms,* cannot be directly associated with *Mäki Trio*. This music was entertainment, not a protest. Nor did the band try to cause a revolution of any kind. The players served as role models being elegantly dressed and behaving properly. And for the audience, dancing together shaped identity in both articulating cultural values and enacting collective commitment to them. The eighth function is *validation of social institutions and religious rituals.* As we saw from the list of *Mäki Trio*'s concert halls, quite many of the performances took place in worker's halls. We also know that "church people" did not dance pair dances and that for "hall people" dancing was an important leisure activity. Based on these facts and knowing that *Mäki Trio* played also in other places, there is not enough evidence to say that there would have been an ideological orientation in *Mäki Trio*'s performances.

Category number nine is the function of *contribution to the continuity and stability of culture*. Merriam says that "if music allows emotional expression, gives aesthetic pleasure, entertains, communicates, elicits physical response, enforces conformity to social norms and validates social institutions and religious rituals, it is clear that it contributes to the continuity and stability of culture". It has been widely proven that music and dance were a way to keep Finnish Americans together. This links us directly to the last category that is the function of *contribution to the integration of society*. As we think about the role of music in national festivals, organizational activities and life cycle celebrations, it is difficult to imagine any kind of an event without music. The Finnish American cultural identity has been actively created with the aid of music and dance. It has created a feeling of community, and provided comfort in an endless number of situations.

7 CONCLUSIONS

> Music making is not a way of expressing ideas; it is a way of living them (Frith 1996, 111).

We can talk about a transplanted culture when a culture moves from one country to another without changing. This did not happen in the case of Finnish Americans and their music. At least Finnish American dance music developed regardless of the changes taking place in Finland. Or rather, it remained the same while the dance music scene changed in Finland.

The geographical distance to the home country - as well as strange people and a strange language - caused a culture shock and a crisis of identity to many Finnish immigrants. Organizational activity and cultural activities were the Finnish response to the immigrant experiences in the United States. Taking part in associative activities was clearly a strategy to survive in the new circumstances. Organizations served to integrate and unify Finns, while on the other hand they segregated them from the larger society at the same time. The Finnish network made everyday life a bit easier, but in the meanwhile contacts to fellow Finns prevented people from forming contacts to members of other ethnic groups. In the Finnish colonies Finns did not necessarily have to interact much with other nationalities. And those first-generation Finnish Americans who spent all their time only with fellow Finns never assimilated properly into the mainstream American society.

Most Finnish immigrants had left Finland because of economical reasons. Their original intent was to spend a couple of years in America and then return back to Finland. Thus there was no real need to adjust. The second generation immigrants, on the other hand, could communicate in English and were considerably more Americanized than their parents. And by the time the third

generation had grown up, the immigrant culture had become ethnic culture. Then it was not anymore necessary to get all the services in Finnish, and the Finnish communities started to vanish gradually. However, of all the cultural forms, music culture survived among Finnish Americans even after there were no more first generation immigrants. Through music it was also possible to get the second generation involved; knowing Finnish was not as crucial in music making as it was in, say, literary strivings.

The purpose of this study was to show, using one dance band as an example, how the Finnish immigrants in the United States preserved and maintained their musical heritage in the late 1920s. Through *Mäki Trio* we are also able to look at the Finnish American music scene more generally. We have seen that the function of immigrant music is not purely aesthetic enjoyment; music can also be used for ideological purposes as well as for creating a feeling of unity. Group musical activities comfort immigrants who struggle with language difficulties and an alien environment.

It is difficult to create a picture of a band whose members are not here with us anymore. This study is based solely on archival material: photographs, articles, newspaper advertisements and recordings. This explains the fact that the characterizations of the band members remain at a somewhat superficial level. However, certain factors became apparent along this study. *Mäki Trio* was successful in combining Finnish traditions to modern elements. Although the band members might have been well integrated into the mainstream of American culture as individuals, in their music they were able to distinguish features from different cultures. *Mäki Trio* was a tradition bearer developing a culture of its own within the American setting. The band’s willingness to include contemporary American music to their repertoire shows a desire to take into account also the young. The functions of *Mäki Trio*'s music are listed in chapter 6.5, and they cover a wide range of different functions. Although on the surface level it may seem that *Mäki Trio* was just entertaining people, underneath there are functions ranging from

offering emotions and nostalgia to putting people together. *Mäki Trio* provided the Finnish American audience with a means of uniting Finns, and thus strengthened their ethnic and group identities.

In this study a list of *Mäki Trio*'s performance venues was created based on newspaper advertisements and articles. The list reveals that *Mäki Trio* used very much Finn Halls as performance places and the immigrant newspapers to inform people about the performances. The band's repertoire was targeted to Finnish audience and there was no need to start expanding the audience base. Although the income from dance playing and recordings must have been quite small, it may well have been enough to support three people during *Mäki Trio*'s active period. The trio performed actively up until the Second World War when other commitments caused the band to break up. *Mäki Trio* remains in the history of Finnish American music as one of the most popular dance music bands of its time. Its role in relieving home sickness and providing joyful moments and escape from daily problems for hard-working immigrants was important. It is regrettable that so little is known of a band that was once so loved. Now when Viola Turpeinen's production is being re-issued and some other archival treasures have experienced a come-back, we can hope that also *Mäki Trio*'s recordings could see the daylight again. Restoring at least some of the tapes with the aid of new technology might well be worthwhile.

The music of the immigrant generation was regional grassroots culture. Although the function of immigrant music is today again very different from what it was in the early 20th century, the old heritage is still alive as a marginal survival. Päivikki and Matti Suojanen noticed while doing fieldwork in Florida that the cultural life of Finnish Americans there still respects the spirit of the 1920s and 1930s. Especially the evening soirées follow the old pattern of *iltama* culture (Suojanen & Suojanen 2000, 134). And new releases by contemporary Finnish American musicians such as Al Reko and Oren Tikkanen use the familiar tunes once again. Contemporary Finnish American music is expanding to new areas, and with again different

functions it provides a fruitful object for future research. What has remained the same throughout the years, however, is that the tradition is deeply rooted in the Finnish soil. And the desire to preserve something valuable, that is, a heritage that people feel as their own, remains the same.

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APPENDIX 1

Mäki Trio's recordings (1929)

January 23, 1929

1. Caspian polkka
   Victor V-4014 (BVE 49678-2)

2. Minun kultani
   by Otto Hultner
   Victor V-4014 (BVE 49676-2)

3. Sorretun elämä
   by H. Reinikainen
   Victor V-4020 (BVE 49677-2)

January 29. 1929

4. Waasan polkka
   by Herman Mäki
   Victor V-4020 (BVE 48318-2)

5. Espanjatar olen sorja
   by Vicenzo di Chiarra
   Victor V-4036 (BVE 48320-2)

6. Mennyt ilo valssi
   Victor V-4036 (BVE 48319-2)

January 23, 1929

7. Polkkia Pohjoos maalta
   by Herman Mäki
   Victor V-4050 (BVE 49679-2)

8. Maatyttöjen sotiisi
   Victor V-4050 (BVE 48317-1)

November 16, 1929

9. Se hulivili polkka
by Arvo Mäki
Victor V-4065 (BVE 57416-2)

10. Juhannus sotiisi
by Arvo Mäki
Victor V-4065 (BVE 57415-1)

11. Intolan polkka
by Arvo Mäki
Victor V-4071 (BVE 57418-1)

12. Särkyneet unelmat valssi
Victor V-4071 (BVE 57417-2)

13. Liina polkka
Victor V-4093 (BVE 57420-2)

14. Haitari sotiisi
Victor V-4093 (BVE 57419-2)