

The Taming of Matter

Jalmari Finne and the Typewriter¹

Veijo Pulkkinen

ABSTRACT

This article examines the role of the typewriter in the genetic process of the novel *Vuosi-satain vaatimus* (1918) by the Finnish novelist Jalmari Finne (1874–1939). Finne is a rare example of an early twentieth-century author who mastered touch typing and composed directly on a typewriter. He claimed that he used the typewriter because it enabled him to keep up with his thinking, a claim that challenges Friedrich Kittler's (1990, 1993) thesis that the most remarkable feature of the typewriter is not its speed but its "spatially and discrete signs". A genetic examination of Finne's typescripts suggests that he had developed generative typing into a kind of "blind revision" in that he did not read and correct previous drafts but rather inserted a blank paper in the machine and typed an altogether new version of the text without copying the previous version.

THE FINNISH NOVELIST, THEATRE DIRECTOR, TRANSLATOR AND settlement historian Jalmari Finne (1874–1939) is an early example of an author who composed directly on the typewriter. As Hannah Sullivan demonstrated in her 2013 *Work of Revision*, generative typing did not become common until after World War II. Earlier typewriters were mainly used for typing up a manuscript, whereas drafting and composing were done by hand (SULLIVAN 2013, 39–40). This seems to hold true in Finnish literature as well, where even fair copies were seldom typed in the first half of the twentieth century.²

In general, the use of typewriters was rare among Finnish authors. The first to reportedly use one for literary purposes was Juhani Aho (1861–1921), who obtained his Smith Premier in about 1902–1903 (HARLIO, NAPOLI

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2. The estimation is based on my thorough examination of the first half of the twentieth-century literary material deposited in the Archive of the Finnish Literature Society.

and SANTONEN 2000, 27). Finne began typing his works in 1909. For him, it was a practical decision. In the manuscript of his autobiography *Ihmeellinen seikkailu* (*An Amazing Adventure*), posthumously edited by Yrjö Kivimies and published in 1939, Finne noted that his creativity lasted for only a few hours a day, but with the help of the typewriter he could better gather all his thoughts on paper: “Ajatus oli vapaa” [“The thinking was free”].³ “Aine siis ei ollut enää tiellä” [“Matter was thus no longer in the way”] (*Ihmeellinen seikkailu*, 30–1, Jalmari Finne Archive [= JFA], Box 3, Archive of the Finnish Literature Society [= SKS KIA], Helsinki). In a word, what Finne appreciated most about typing was its speed.

In this respect, Finne’s attitude stands in striking contrast to Friedrich Kittler’s view that the most remarkable feature of the typewriter was not its speed but its “spatially designated and discrete signs” (1990, 193). Kittler suggests that the typewriter broke the “media-technological basis of classical authorship” (1999, 203), which rested on the conscious cooperation between the eye and the writing hand. The link in handwriting between the body and the text was replaced by a machine that could produce uniform and discrete letters and enabled one to type without having to look at the text while writing it. Moreover, Kittler associates this “blindness” of mechanical writing with the unconscious automatic writing embraced, for instance, by André Breton and other Surrealists (KITTLER 1990, 195; 1999, 202–04; see also SCHILLEMANN 2013, 16–17).

Kittler’s theory leans heavily on Friedrich Nietzsche’s famous remark in 1882 that the writing tools we use influence our thinking (NIETZSCHE 1981, 1: 202). At the time, Nietzsche’s deteriorating eyesight prevented him from writing by hand and he tried out the first commercially produced typewriter, the so-called *skrivekugle* [writing ball] designed by Rasmus Malling-Hansen. The machine, however, was defective and Nietzsche never got accustomed to typing. During the approximately six weeks that Nietzsche used the machine, he produced sixteen letters (twenty-two pages), one postcard, and a plethora of verses — all in all, close to fifty-seven typescripts (EBERWEIN 2005, 51). According to Kittler, the typewriter profoundly changed Nietzsche’s style “from arguments to aphorisms, from thoughts to puns, from rhetoric to telegram style. That is precisely what is meant by the sentence that our writing tools are also working on our thoughts” (KITTLER 1999, 203).

3. All translations from Finnish into English are by Veijo Pulkkinen.

Obviously, all sorts of tools make their presence felt when they are new, broken, or when we do not know how to use them, which may partly explain a number of references to the typewriter in Nietzsche's typescripts. For example, the Finnish poet Aaro Hellaakoski's (1893–1952) first typed postcard to his wife was actually a meta-composition on his struggles with the typewriter, and, of course, full of many kinds of typos (Aaro Hellaakoski Archive, SKS 954:8:106, SKS KIA; PULKKINEN 2019b, 27–9). A typescript leaf currently in the Finnish novelist Eeva Joenpelto's (1921–2004) archive was probably used to test whether her typewriter was working. Instead of just randomly striking the keys, she had typed meta-writing, for example: "Apua. Missä on ohjekirja? Ajattelin kokeilla toimiikoa tämä lone enää. Toimmii" ["Help. Where is the manual? I thought I'll try if this nachine still worksa.It workss"] (Eeva Joenpelto Archive, Box 8, SKS KIA). Typos and other sorts of whims of the typewriter inspired the novelist and translator Juha Mannerkorpi (1915–1980) to incorporate them into his fiction. In the novel *Sudenkorento: erään pakaraisen esittävät seikkailut* (*The Dragonfly: The Representative Adventures of A Certain Buttocks*), for instance, there is almost a whole chapter depicting the laborious installation of a typewriter ribbon (PULKKINEN 2020, 13).

Finne's case, however, opens up an altogether different view of typing, where the typewriter is not an obstacle to writing but rather a means to more effective writing. The typewriter enables him to write in a way that would not be possible with pen and paper. By overcoming the material constraints of handwriting, the typewriter seems to have brought Finne closer to his writing instead of creating a barrier between the author and his text.

In what follows, I will examine Finne's use of the typewriter from a genetic criticism perspective. I begin by looking into his own descriptions of his writing process and the role of the typewriter in it. These sources consist mainly of Finne's autobiographical writings and writings on creativity, many of which appear in unpublished manuscripts. The rest of the article investigates Finne's actual use of the typewriter by tracing the genetic process of the 1918 historical novel *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (*The Claim of the Centuries*). I focus on the beginning of the novel where Finne tried three different inceptions across several versions. All of these documents are typescripts, indicating that Finne was not transcribing but composing on a typewriter. Moreover, it appears that Finne's characterization of the typewriter's ability to tame the material constraints of writing is connected with his improvisational composing of the story simultaneously as he typed. Interestingly, there are very few non-immediate corrections or

revisions on the typescripts, leading us to propose Finne's drafting on the typewriter as a form of "blind revision" in the sense that it conceals traces of the genetic process, thus adding a new dimension to Kittler's metaphor of blindness.

In quoting from Finne's manuscripts, I use the following transcription symbols: Finne's typewritten text appears here in roman; his handwritten text appears in italics; instances of his typed cancellations are represented here with double strikethroughs; and his cancellations by hand are represented here as single strikethroughs. Additions are represented in bold type.

Exaltation

Finne was a man of many facets — prolific writer, theatre director, and translator as well as family and settlement historian. In 1907, after serving twelve years as the director of the Finnish National Theatre (1896–1903) and the Vyborg Theatre (1903–1904), among others, Finne left the theatre world to become a professional writer. He was very pragmatic about his occupation, and he often ridiculed artists who mystified and glorified their work and themselves ("Miten ja miksi", 1, Box 11a, JFA, SKS KIA). While many artists were compelled to fund their art with side-jobs, Finne claimed to have chosen his profession in order to make a living, and he later continued writing to finance his historical research (VARPIO 1974, 99). Finne was able to live by his pen because he was a very fast and productive writer who mastered several genres. His oeuvre includes historical plays, folk plays, comedies, satires, opera librettos, pamphlets, causeries, crime novels, historical novels, comedic novels, children's books and fairy tales. Finne also translated about 200 plays.

Although Finne was one of the most prolific authors of his time, literary histories barely mention his name (SARAJAS 1965, 136–37; TARKIAINEN 1934; KALLIO 1929, 275–77; LAITINEN 1981, 347; ROJOLA 1999a, 119–21, 1999b, 179–80; HAPULI 1999, 280). Finne himself reckoned that the diversity of his writings was not appreciated ("Miten ja miksi", 2–3, Box 11a, JFA, SKS KIA). One reason might be the experimental nature of many of his works that make them seem like curiosities (SARAJAS 1965, 136–37; VARPIO 1974, 100). Already in theatre, Finne was keen to experiment with lighting and set design, and in Finnish literature he was a pioneer in satire, crime fiction, and even comics. According to Yrjö Varpio (1974, 108, 136–43), Finne's historical novels have stood the test of time better than his contemporary societal works, some of which convey Social Darwinist, anti-

democratic, and even totalitarian views not uncommon in the early 1900s. Today Finne is best known for his children's book series *Kiljusen herrasväki* (The Family Kiljunen; 1914–1925), and researchers have recently shown interest in his satirical work (KIVISTÖ 2012).

Finne alludes to his creative process in two unpublished manuscripts. The first is untitled and the other bears the name “*Miksi ja miten*” (“Why and How”, Box 11a, JFA, SKS KIA). In the Archive of the Finnish Literature Society, the untitled manuscript has been assigned the name “*Oma henkinen tuotantoni*” (“My Intellectual Work”, Box 5a, JFA, SKS KIA), after its main topic. From these manuscripts we can sort out at least three genetic stages: the discovery of a subject, the development of the subject, and the composition of the work. The first two stages belong to what Pierre-Marc de Biasi has termed the precompositional phase, a preparatory process involving “orienting, exploring, decision-making, conceiving, and pre-planning” (1995, 42).

Finding topics was the easiest part of the process for Finne, perhaps because he did not avoid writing about unpleasant subjects such as infanticide (FINNE 1915) or drug addiction (FINNE 1911). Finne himself stated that he came up with at least one subject per day, easily resulting in 200 feasible subjects a year, from which he managed to complete about twenty works (“*Miksi ja miten*”, 2, Box 11a, JFA, SKS KIA). Topics usually came to Finne like a bolt from the blue. Some trivial thing, such as a passing person, a word or sentence heard or read from the newspaper, could rouse Finne's imagination (“*Oma henkinen tuotantoni*”, 5, Box 5a, JFA, JFA, SKS KIA). Finne also noted that other literary works as well as works from other artistic realms, especially music, could prompt the emergence of subjects. Hence a writer may notice a familiar feeling or situation in an artistic work that inspires him to create something similar. In Finne's case, such an example is the 1910 work *Olematonta taidetta* (*Non-Existent Art*), a collection of poems based on scenes from the Bible and *The Kalevala*.

Once a subject was determined, Finne began to develop it by gathering the thoughts it aroused. He points out that the initial idea was often effaced, or at least changed, during the process: a tragic subject, for example, can turn into a comical one (but never the other way around). The main thing is to set the process in motion. When the subject was solid enough, it would lead to its conclusion almost by itself, or in Finne's words, “*kaikki muu on silloin vain oksia vahvaan runkoon*” [“the rest is then like grafting branches on a firm trunk”] (“*Oma henkinen tuotantoni*”, 5, Box 5a, JFA, SKS KIA).

Sometimes the idea developed easily and Finne was able to finish the work quickly. The 1915 novel *Terve mies* (*The Healthy Man*), which was a

result of a psychological experiment, could probably be counted as an unofficial Finnish record. Finne had discussed with his friend, the psychiatrist and member of parliament Akseli Nikula (1884–1956), the possibility of outdoing oneself with the help of autosuggestion. This inspired Finne to try writing a novel in just four days.

Oli perjantai-ilta puhellessamme tästä asiasta. Lauantaina aloin etsiä aihetta, sunnuntaina ryhdyin työhön. Keskiviikkona kello kuuden aikaan oli romaani “Terve mies” valmiina. Tietysti en kustantajalle uskaltanut hiiskuakaan, miten lyhyessä ajassa työn olin suorittanut, sillä silloin kirja olisi epäilemättä hylätty. Se on kai ainoa teokseni, joka kautta maan sanomalehdistön on saanut jakamattoman kiitoksen.

(1939, 189–90)

(It was Friday night when we discussed the matter. On Saturday, I began to search for a subject, on Sunday I started to work. On Wednesday at six the novel *Terve mies* was ready. Of course, I did not dare to breathe a word about how quickly I had done the work, which, surely, would have resulted in the rejection of the book. It is probably my only work that was undividedly praised by the press.)

However, some subjects resisted easy development. Finne’s historical novels in particular demanded more research and structuring, as did his psychological fiction. His 1913 *Nuijasota: historiallinen kuvaus vuosien 1596 ja 1597 kapinan alkuvaiheista* (*The Cudgel War: A Historical Portrayal of the Beginning of the Revolt of 1596 and 1597*) was only completed after a couple of years of daily researching contemporary sources and scientific works, and Finne recounts how he often searched relentlessly for weeks for a particular name in the State Archive before finding it. For his 1915 novel *Äidit. Romaani kansannaisista* (*The Mothers: A Novel About Folk Women*), Finne studied a large body of reports on infanticides and their psychology, trying to understand what goes on in the mind of a mother who takes her child’s life (“Miksi ja miten”, 5–7, Box 11a, JFA, SKS KIA).

Finne found it useful to discuss his subjects with his friends before commencing the writing process. According to Finne, one should, however, be careful when choosing one’s interlocutor, since some people tend to ruin the subject completely. A good listener supports the writer’s ideas and gives positive feedback. The worst listener is an aesthician who has the habit of organizing and classifying everything he deals with: he will surely kill the budding story by giving advice about choosing and developing subjects

and how to write about them (“Oma henkinen tuotantoni”, 5–7, Box 5a, JFA, SKS KIA).

Notwithstanding his rather unromantic or cynical conception of authorship, Finne emphasizes the psychological phenomenon usually called “inspiration”. Instead of the term “inspiration”, Finne describes the state as “haltioituminen” [“exaltation”] or “kiihottuminen” [“excitement”], which he sees as necessary for the successful development of a subject as well as for the very act of writing itself. Finne compares exaltation with the state of mind of an actor who lives the life of his character while still maintaining a critical awareness that turns it into art. Similarly, a writer can live the lives of his characters in full whether they be men or women, feeling their sorrows and joys as if they were his own. According to Finne, exaltation is a state of mind that we can achieve by imagining. But other people can also be of assistance in this. Finne observes the ways in which some persons have an almost hypnotic influence on us: “Mielikuvituksen on heidän seurassaan ehdottomasti elävä ja voimakas ja he voivat paljaalla seurallaan pitää sitä meissä yllä. Tällaisen seuran valikoiminen on jokaiselle tuottavalle taiteilijalle elinehto” (IBID, 7–8). [“In their company, our imagination is absolutely alive and strong and they can sustain it in us by their sheer company. Choosing such company is a vital necessity for every productive artist”].

The writing process was very intensive for Finne. He arranged his surroundings so that nothing disturbed him while he was working, and he tried to acquire any means that could assist him. He did not, however, use stimulants, except for tobacco (“Miksi ja miten”, 5, Box 11a, JFA, SKS KIA). He had a strict daily timetable and even tried to take into account the time of year in order to schedule important works according to the best phase of the moon. Finne claims to have written his best works at the time of year when he was born, which according to the Italian criminologist and physician Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) is the most productive period for a creative person (“Oma henkinen tuotantoni”, 1–2, Box 5a, JFA, SKS KIA). Finne wrote fiction only in the daytime, and just for a few hours because he knew that he was productive only for a limited time each day. In the evening he wrote letters or worked with translations (*Ihmeellinen seikkailu*, Box 3, 31, JFA, SKS KIA).

The typewriter was a central part of Finne’s arrangements for optimal writing conditions. One reason for using a typewriter might have been that most of Finne’s right thumb was missing (FINNE 1939, 20). It is difficult to write by hand without a thumb, whereas one doesn’t necessarily need thumbs when typing. Finne was a practiced pianist and could play

sheet music, which helped him become a very fast typist. He claimed that he typed almost as quickly as the text appeared in his mind. The machine thus enabled him to overcome the material constraints of writing, and to keep up with the flow of ideas during states of exaltation. It is almost as if he had become one with the machine (“Miksi ja miten”, Box 11a, 4; *Ihmeellinen seikkailu*, Box 3, 30–1, JFA, SKS KIA).

Kun olen paljon soittanut pianoa, olen kirjoituskoneen käyttämisessä saavuttanut huimaavan nopeuden, Minun ei tarvitse koskaan ajatella näppäimiä, vaan tapahtuu niiden koskettaminen aivan koneellisesti, ja aivot saavat vapaasti toimia. Nopeus voi kiihtyä tässä niin suureksi, että se parhaimpina aikoina voi saavuttaa 10,000 lyöntiä tunnissa, joka vastaa kymmentä painettua sivua. Olen tällä tavoin koettanut vapautua siitä kiusallisesta seikasta mikä aina on materia ja sen taltuttaminen.

(“Miksi ja miten”, Box 11a, 4, JFA, SKS KIA)

(Because I have played the piano a lot, I have reached a dizzying speed on the typewriter, I never have to think about the keys; instead, touching them happens quite mechanically, and the brain can work freely. The speed can accelerate to such a degree that at the best of times it can reach over 10,000 strikes in one hour, which equals ten printed pages. This way I have tried to free myself from the annoying fact which matter and its taming always is.)

Finne’s statement that typewriting had freed him from material constraints suggests a remarkable change in the “media-technological basis” of writing, to use Kittler’s terminology (1999, 203). However, his conclusions about this change are rather different than Kittler’s. Above all, this concerns the relationship between consciousness and writing. In Kittler’s view, classical authorship is defined by the conscious co-operation between the eye and the writing hand. The typewriter breaks this bond and opens up writing to the unconscious by enabling one to write without looking at the hand (KITTLER 1990, 195; 1999, 202–04). Kittler even goes so far as to claim that the typewriter operates the human instead of the other way around:

Writing in Nietzsche is no longer a natural extension of humans who bring forth their voice, soul, individuality through their handwriting. On the contrary: just as in the stanza on the delicate Malling Hansen, humans change their position — they turn from the agency of writing to become an inscription surface.

(1999, 210)

For Finne, on the other hand, it was handwriting that constituted a material obstacle to writing because it was too slow. Switching from pen to typewriter did not constitute a break between him and his text or make his writing less conscious. Quite the contrary, typing brought Finne closer to his text by accelerating writing so that it could keep up with his thinking. Taking into account Finne's observations on creativity and his writing process, we might say that the typewriter helped him to sustain the exaltation involved in the flow of writing. The typewriter thus allowed for a writing process that was perhaps not entirely impossible, but at least much harder to achieve with a pen or pencil.

Blind Revision

Turning to Finne's typescripts, I will now examine how the taming of matter is manifested in the actual use of the typewriter. Or, perhaps, the verb "manifest" is inaccurate because here taming is more akin to a sort of effacing or concealing of the visual traces of the writing process. Finne's use of the typewriter thus adds a new sense to the metaphor of blindness that Kittler draws from the mechanical properties of the typewriter. Kittler remarks that the act of writing ceased to be an act of reading along as one typed. The mechanics of the earlier typewriters prevented the writer from seeing the text that was being typed, and still in later models the ribbon and the typebar, typewheel, or typeball concealed the character when it was typed (KITTLER 1999, 203–04).

Firstly, the visual appearance of Finne's typescripts — drafts included — is very clean and tidy. The paper is typically cut to the size of a book page (about 22 x 18 cm) — a feature that was quite common in the first half of the twentieth century among Finnish authors who used typewriters, such as Arvi Järventaus (1883–1939), Simo Korpela (1863–1936), Martti Larni (1909–1993), Irja Salla (1912–1966) and Unto Seppänen (1904–1955) (PULKKINEN 2019a, 26–9). A probable reason for this was to help estimate how many pages the typescript would be in print. Most of the typescripts, whether incomplete or completed, also begin with a title page with a heading typed in uppercase and a possible underlined subtitle, genre title, and name of the author — all neatly centred. The pages have proper margins and there is an extra amount of empty space above the chapter headings. The neatness of the paratexts of Finne's typescripts suggests that he attempted to type a finished-looking text already from the first drafts.

Secondly, and more importantly, the use of the typewriter seems to have "blinded" us from seeing a significant number of the visual traces

of Finne's writing process. Drafts, working manuscripts, and even finished manuscripts often feature an abundance of handwritten and typed try-outs, deletions, corrections, and other revisions. But in Finne's case, even the first drafts are written fluently as continuous wholes, which adds to the neat appearance of the typescripts. In Finne's typewriting composition, the act of writing ceased to be an act of reading in the sense that the typescript drafts contain mainly impromptu writing variants (*variantes d'écriture*), such as immediate corrections, deletions, and substitutions — and almost always these changes are done on the machine. Reading variants (*variantes de lecture*), which are made after writing, appear almost always only at the moment the complete manuscript is finished.⁴ In contrast, there is substantial external variation between the draft versions.

This textual condition was caused by the role of the typewriter in Finne's drafting process, which transferred the internal variation — common to holographic manuscripts — into external variation between different typescript drafts. According to Matthew Kirschenbaum (2016, 4, 47), typing differs considerably from handwriting and word processing in this respect. When working on the typewriter, composing and editing are two distinct activities, while with longhand or a word processor these textual operations blend together. It is not easy to correct and revise a typescript on the run with a typewriter, even more so once the paper has been removed from the machine. Instead of reading and correcting a draft by hand and typing a clean copy of it, Finne performed a sort of “blind revision”; that is, he inserted a blank sheet of paper in the machine and rewrote the text without copying the earlier version. It is, of course, also possible to perform a “blind revision” in holograph manuscript. For example, D. H. Lawrence is known to have produced new drafts instead of revising, and of rewriting complete manuscript versions independently of one another, such as in the case of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (MEHL AND JANSON 2001, xxvii–xxviii; SQUIRES 2002, xxi). However, in Finne's case the phenomenon is connected with the speed of writing that the typewriter enables.

Amidst this intensive writing process, it was presumably easier and faster for Finne not to revise the text at the sentence level but rather rewrite it completely anew. Nevertheless, the structure and content often remained the same between the versions. In this sense, the taming of matter “blinds” us to the traces of the genetic process, since the variance is not visible in holographic working manuscripts but instead emerges only when the different typescript sheets are compared. This does not necessarily mean that Finne did not read his drafts after he wrote them. He might have read every draft immediately after typing it, and the previous draft surely fueled the

4. For writing and reading variants, see, for example, LEBRAVE 1983, 16.

next typed iteration, but not in the sense that he would directly copy textual passages from it word by word. At this stage, Finne was more focused on generating the story than honing the text. It looks like Finne only had a rough idea of the story line at the start of the compositional process and was imagining and re-imagining it simultaneously as he composed. That is why he was in such a hurry with his writing: he had to catch up with his imagination.

In the following analysis of Finne's typewriting composition I will concentrate on a particular trait common to almost all his manuscripts: namely, that they have more than one version of the beginning of the work. This holds true for the manuscripts of Finne's published works as well as for his numerous unfinished (and unpublished) works.

In some respects, the phenomenon resembles a "false start" [*faux départ*], which in genetic criticism refers to one or more unsuccessful attempts to compose a written work. De Biasi remarks that false starts may also extend to the phase of textualization, which is clearly the case in Finne's various beginnings of works (BIASI 1996, 36; 2007). What distinguishes Finne's beginnings from false starts, however, is the temporal distance between a false start and a proper start. It seems a false start is an attempt to write a work that has been rejected and then picked up again at a much later point of time, whereas Finne's various beginnings were probably composed during the same writing campaign.

As an example, I have chosen an historical novel published in 1918 entitled *Vuosisatain vaatimus*. The novel describes the arrival of the Black Death in Turku in 1350 while Hemming of Turku (1290–1366) served as bishop. The old seer, Marketta, flees her home in Turku for Kangasala, taking along her great-grandson Rotger and his mother and seeking refuge in a remote fisherman's shelter. Marketta initiates Rotger into Finnish paganism, feeling that he will one day become a spiritual leader who will restore the rule of the people. Following the wishes of his Christian mother, Rotger becomes a monk. During his studies, his travels in Europe, and his work as a priest, Rotger becomes aware of the signs of the coming of a "New Christ", or "Anti-Christ", who will unite Christianity with paganism and return political power to the people. Eventually, Bishop Hemming ordains Rotger as priest of the congregation at Kangasala, where the people will have their own governing assembly and tax collection. On his deathbed, Hemming asks Rotger to deliver a message to Bridget of Sweden (1303–1373) in Rome concerning the coming of the new messiah. The novel ends somewhat abruptly with Rotger boarding a ship bound for Rome.⁵

5. *Vuosisatain vaatimus* was supposed to be the first part of a five-volume novel series depicting the history of Finland in what Finne saw as its most crucial

I have traced three different beginnings for the novel and named them according to their content: 1) Midsummer, 2) The Escape, and 3) The Plague. Altogether these beginnings exist in ten different drafts or versions scattered across the Jalmari Finne archive. On the list below, I have named the versions according to the first words in the text.

1 Midsummer

1 A) “Oli vuosi 1365. Kangasalla” [“It was the year 1365. In Kangasala”] (*Ihmisen pojat*, Box 5, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 1).

1 B) “Oli vuosi 1365. Suvi sykki kaikkialla” [“It was the year 1365. Summer pulsed everywhere”] (*Ihmisen pojat*, Box 5, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 2).

1 C) “- Jo pisaroi!” [“It’s dripping already!”] (*Uusi jumala*, Box 14, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 3).

2 The Escape

2 A) “Älä mene!” [“Don’t go!”] (*Katkelmia ja luonnoksia*, Box 5, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 4).

2 B) “Kangasalla” [“In Kangasala”] (*Ihmisen pojat*, Box 5, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 5).

3 The Plague

3 A) “Vuosi 1350 oli tuonut” [“The year 1350 had brought”] (*Uusi jumala*, Box 14, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 6).

3 B) “Vuosi 1350 ,kauhunvuosi” [“The year 1350 ,the horror year”] (*Uusi jumala*, Box 14, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 7).

3 C) “Vuosi 1350,Suomelle” [“The year 1350,for Finland”] (*Uusi jumala*, Box 14, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 8).

3 D) “Pääskysellä **Sorsalla** oli varhain” [“~~The swallow~~ **The duck** had early”] (*Uusi jumala*, Box 14, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 9).

3 E) “Sorsilla oli oivallinen” [“The ducks had a splendid”] (*Vuosisatain vaatimus*, Box 15, JFA, SKS KIA) (see Fig. 10).

Midsummer

Three typescripts document Finne’s attempts to write the first beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus*. The first two (1 A and 1 B) are short two- and three-

times (VARPIO 1974, 134). Finne published no follow-ups to the novel, but there is an unpublished manuscript of a novel entitled *Pyhä Birgitta* (Saint Bridget, Box 10, JFA, SKS KIA) showing that he intended to continue the story of Rotger.

page drafts (see Figs. 1 and 2). The drafts have the chapter title "Ihmisen pojat" (Sons of Man, Katkelmia ja luonnoksia, Box 5, JFA, SKS KIA), which is quite unusual in Finne's typescripts since he generally only numbers the chapters. Presumably, Finne initially planned to use this heading as the title of the work. The third version (1 C) of the first beginning is a complete chapter of 25 pages (see Fig. 3).

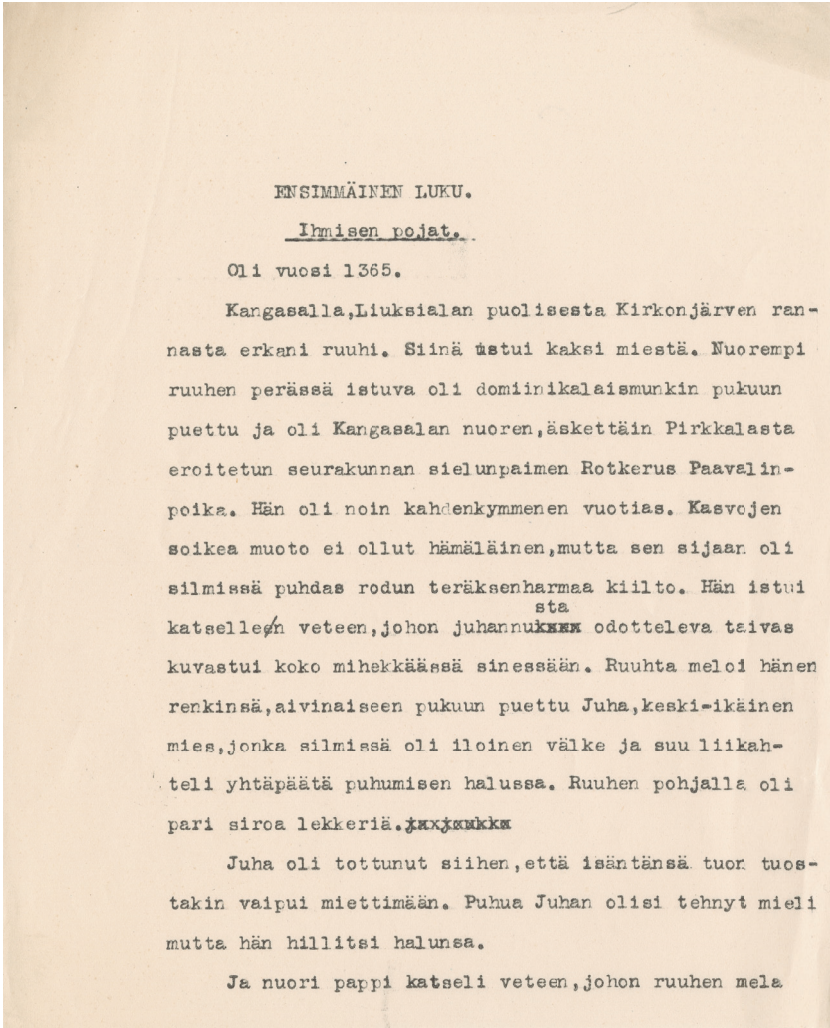


Figure 1. Jalmari Finne, First draft of the first beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

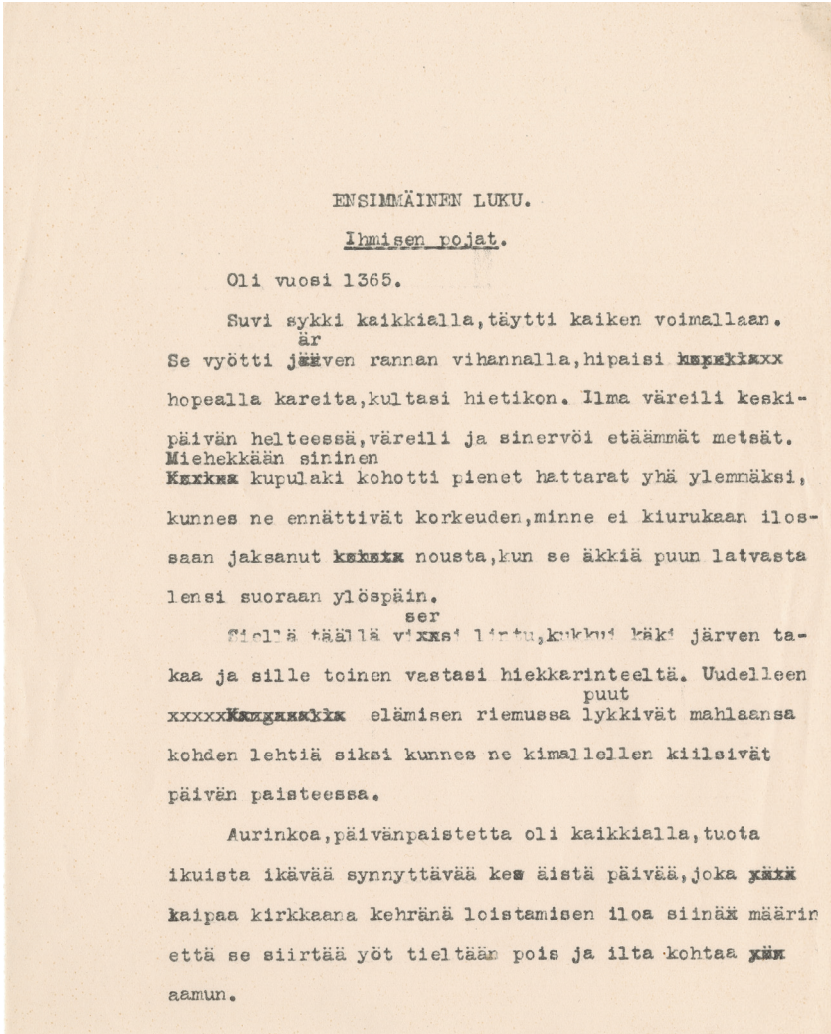


Figure 2. Jalmari Finne, Second draft of the first beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

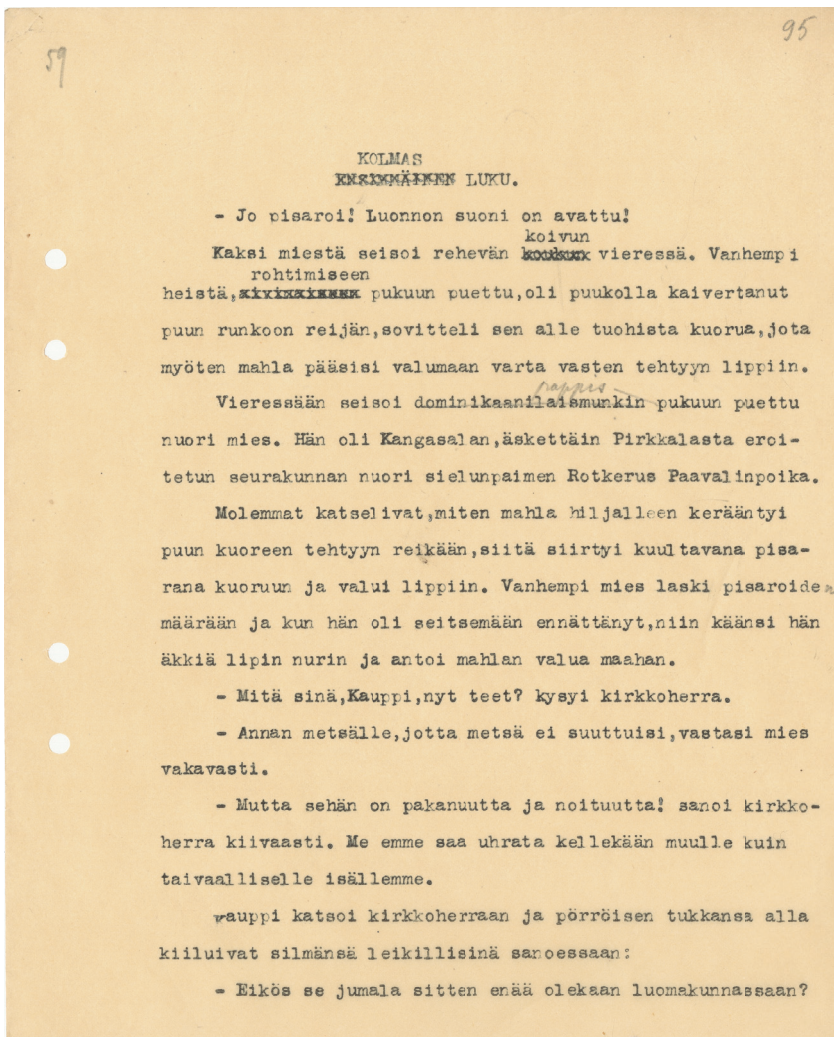


Figure 3. Jalmari Finne, Completed version of the first beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

The earliest beginning of *Vuosisadan vaatimus* is easily determined by the names of the characters, which differ from the names found in the later beginnings. However, because Finne's typewriter composition "blinds" us from seeing the visual traces of the genetic process, it is surprisingly hard to determine which of the two drafts of the initial beginning was composed first. A textual collation of the internal variations, such as corrections and replacements, or of the external variations, does not reveal any real causal relation between the drafts. Finne did not write the second draft on the basis of augmenting and improving the first, but instead started an altogether new text, producing a rewritten version rather than a truly variant version of the text. However, an analysis of the narrative features of the texts suggests a chronology for the drafts.

Finne begins the narration of the story in the year 1360, when Rotger was ordained as the priest of Kangasala. Finne depicts Rotger and his farmhand on a warm and bright midsummer's day in a rowboat gliding from Kangasala towards a ridge across the lake, where they plan to tap birch trees for sap.

The three-page version (1 A) opens with a third-person omniscient narrator presenting Rotkerus, here written with a "k", and his farmhand named Juha in a rowboat, and it continues with a third-person limited omniscient narration focalized through Juha, who observes the pensiveness of his master. Next, the narration is focalized through Rotkerus, who marvels at the beauty of the natural world surrounding them and begins to contemplate the relation between nature, religion, and heresy. The text ends with another exposition focalized again through Rotkerus, telling us how he has been thinking all day about his great-grandmother Annika, a pagan witch condemned by the church but considered by Rotkerus as a gift from god.

For such a short text, the narrative of the three-page draft is quite complex: there are three different narrative points of view and three different narrative times. The text is also overburdened at the content level, bringing up several different aspects of the novel's theme. As such, the draft resembles a synopsis more than the premeditated beginning of a novel.

In contrast, the two-page draft (A 2) focuses on a description of nature; it is more allusive and open for further thematic development in the novel. Only one narrative point of view (a third-person omniscient narrator) depicts the sunny summer day at the lake alive with the singing and flights of birds, creating an association between sunshine and a sense of religious longing for eternity. The text fragment ends with the introduction of Rot-

kerus and his farmhand, now bearing the name Kauppi. In all, this shorter draft seems a little more like the beginning of a novel, which suggests that it might be a later version.

Unlike the two earlier drafts, the third version (A 3) is a completed chapter that contains Finne's pencilled corrections, likely made after he had finished composing the text and was re-reading it. These holograph revisions include changes such as the correction of typos as well as the deletion, addition, and replacement of words, sentences, and paragraphs. On page 95, for example, Finne has changed the word "dominkaanilismunkin" (Dominican monk) to "pappismunkin" (monastic priest) (see Fig. 3). The explanation for these non-immediate revisions is that this version is a part of a completed 197-page manuscript entitled *Uusi Jumala* (*The New God*, Box 14, JFA, SKS KIA), an early version of *Vuosisatain vaatimus*. These holograph revisions pertain more to the finishing of the text than to the initial compositional phase where Finne primarily uses the typewriter. This textual condition is further indicated by the fact that the typescripts of his false starts, often including several different beginnings, rarely include holograph corrections or revisions (see, for instance, the typescript drafts titled "Rakkaus ja veripäivät", which contain numerous other false starts), while completed manuscripts — whether published or not — usually have been thoroughly corrected and revised by hand (Mf. 1971: 3, JFA, SKS KIA). There are, of course, exceptions, such as the novel *Akseli Terä* (1912), published under the pseudonym Eino Talma, which is composed in a more common way where every revision stage involves handwriting and where each stage is clearly based on the previous stages of the text (*Akseli Terä*, Mf. 1971: 1, JFA, SKS KIA).

In the third version of the first beginning, the cancellation and addition in the chapter title show that the scene with Rotkerus and his farmhand was initially meant to open the novel but that Finne imagined a new beginning with two new chapters (see Fig. 3). As a result, all of the original chapter numbers had to be changed accordingly.

In this third version of the first beginning, Finne skips the rowboat scene and starts with the introduction of Kauppi and Rotkerus Paavalinpoika [Son of Paul], the priest of the new church of Kangasala, tapping sap from birch trees. Kauppi spills some of the sap as an offering to the forest, which leads to a discussion of the relation between paganism and Christianity. Rotkerus climbs to the top of the ridge and marvels at the beauty of the landscape. As in the previous versions, nature turns Rotkerus' thoughts towards his life's purpose and whether he should serve this land and its

people or heaven and the church. Later in the chapter Rotkerus is called back to the village to perform the last rites for his dying grandmother, Marketta. On her deathbed, Marketta gives Rotkerus a charm with a mysterious inscription, makes him her heir, and foretells the coming of a new god. The chapter ends with Rotkerus stumbling on the body of Tyynis the tax collector as he makes his way to the church. Tyynis has been stabbed with a knife that bears the same inscription as the charm.

From the perspective of the next beginning of the work, it is interesting to note the presence of a narrative flashback in the deathbed scene. In the flashback, Marketta explains that although Rotkerus is a man of the Church, he is also a fit heir because of a critical childhood experience he underwent when he, his mother Helena, and Marketta fled from the village to the forest to avoid the plague. It was then that Helena promised god that if they survived she would give Rotkerus to the monastery (*Uusi jumala*, box 14, 111–112, JFA, SKS KIA). This story was apparently too pivotal to be dealt with in a short flashback, as Finne turned it into a new beginning for the novel.

The Escape

In the second inception, the novel opens with a scene in which Marketta forbids Helena to attend a church service with Rotkerus' father Paavali and other villagers. Marketta has seen the marks of the plague on Paavali and takes advantage of the villagers' church visit to escape the village with Rotkerus and Helena. The year is now 1350 and Rotkerus is about ten years old.

There are two drafts of this second beginning. Both are almost complete chapters: the first (2 A) is fourteen pages, and the second (2 B) is twenty-five pages. It seems that the longer version derives from the shorter one, since the narrative structures of both versions are very similar. However, as in the first beginning, Finne does not copy the text of the earlier version but also rewrites it, substantially changing the phrasing and adding new text that provides background information to the story. The extant textual evidence supports the hypothesis that it was easier and faster for Finne to rewrite an altogether new version of the text than to read and revise the previous one. For example, the first draft of the second beginning commences straight from the action, whereas the second version begins by giving the year and place of the event (see Figs. 4 and 5).

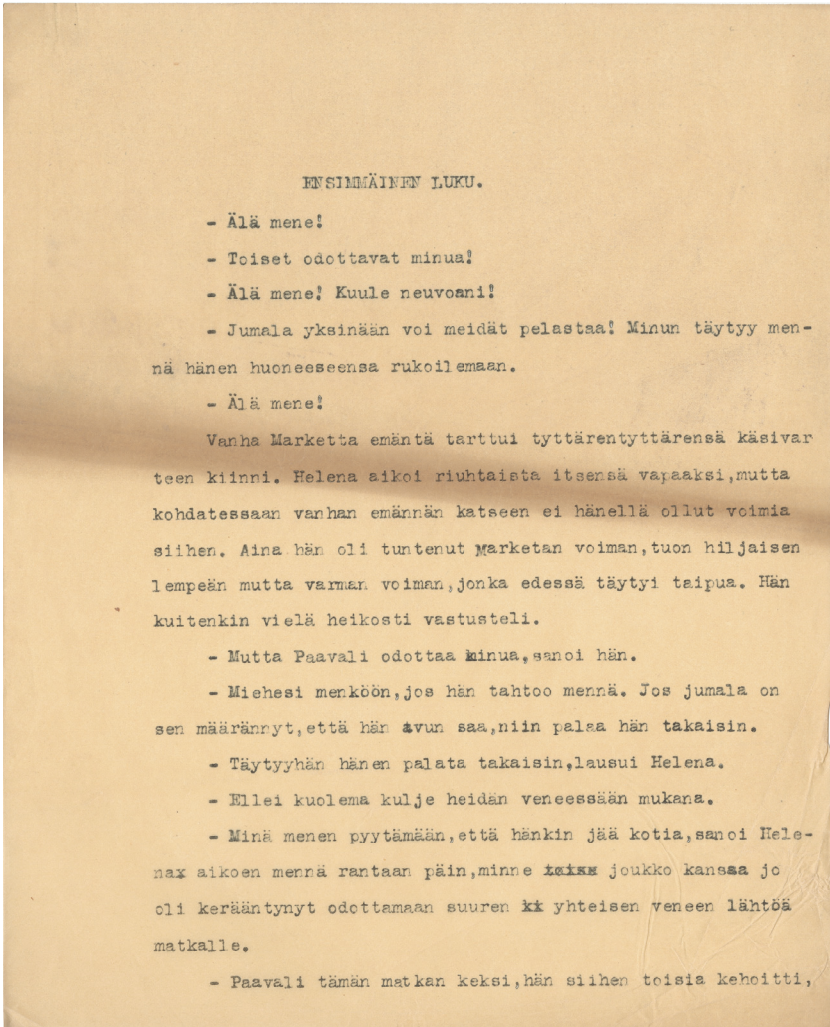


Figure 4. Jalmari Finne, First draft of the second beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

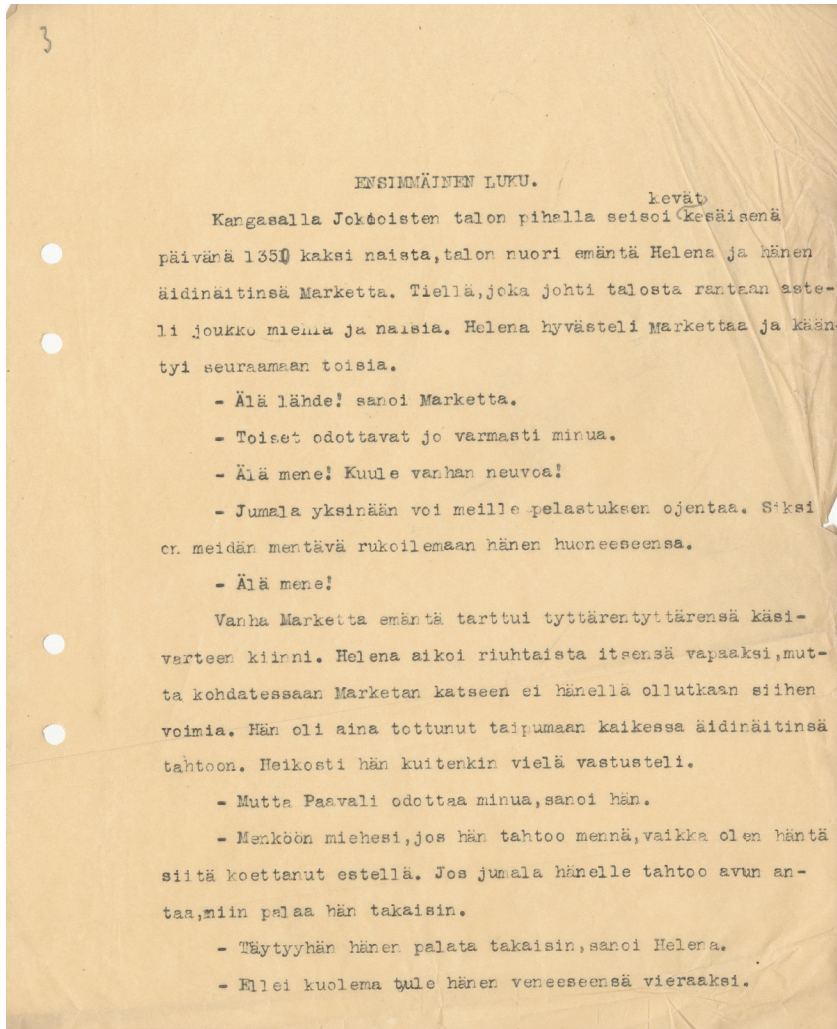


Figure 5. Jalmari Finne, Second draft of the second beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

(2 A)

- Älä mene!
- Toiset odottavat minua!
- Älä mene! Kuule neuvoani!
- Jumala yksinään voi meidät pelastaa! Minun täytyy mennä hänen huoneeseensa rukoilemaan.
- Älä mene!

(Katkelmia ja luonnoksia, Box 5, JFA, SKS KIA)

- (- Don't go!
- The others are waiting for me!
- Don't go! Listen to my advice!
- Only god alone can save us! I have to go into his house to pray.
- Don't go!)

(2 B)

Kangasalla Joköisten talon pihalla seiso **kevätkesäisenä** päivänä 13540 kaksi naista, talon nuori emäntä Helena ja hänen äidinäitinsä Marketta. Tiellä, joka johti talosta rantaan asteli joukko miehiä ja naisia. Helena hyvästeli Markettaa ja kääntyi seuraamaan toisia.

- Älä lähde! sanoi Marketta.
- Toiset odottavat jo varmasti minua.
- Älä mene! Kuule vanhan neuvoa!
- Jumala yksinään voi meille pelastuksen ojentaa. Siksi on meidän mentävä rukoilemaan hänen huoneeseensa.
- Älä mene!

(*Ihmisen pojat*, Box 5, Jalmari Finne Archive, SKS KIA).

(In Kangasala at the yard of the house of Joköioinen in a **spring**-summer day in 13540 stood two women, Helena, the young mistress of the house, and her grandmother Marketta. On the way from the house to the shore were a group of men and women. Helena was saying goodbye to Marketta and turned to follow the others.

- Don't go! said Marketta.
- The others are surely waiting for me already.
- Don't go! Listen to your old mother's advice.
- God alone can save us. That is why we have to go into his house to pray.
- Don't go!)

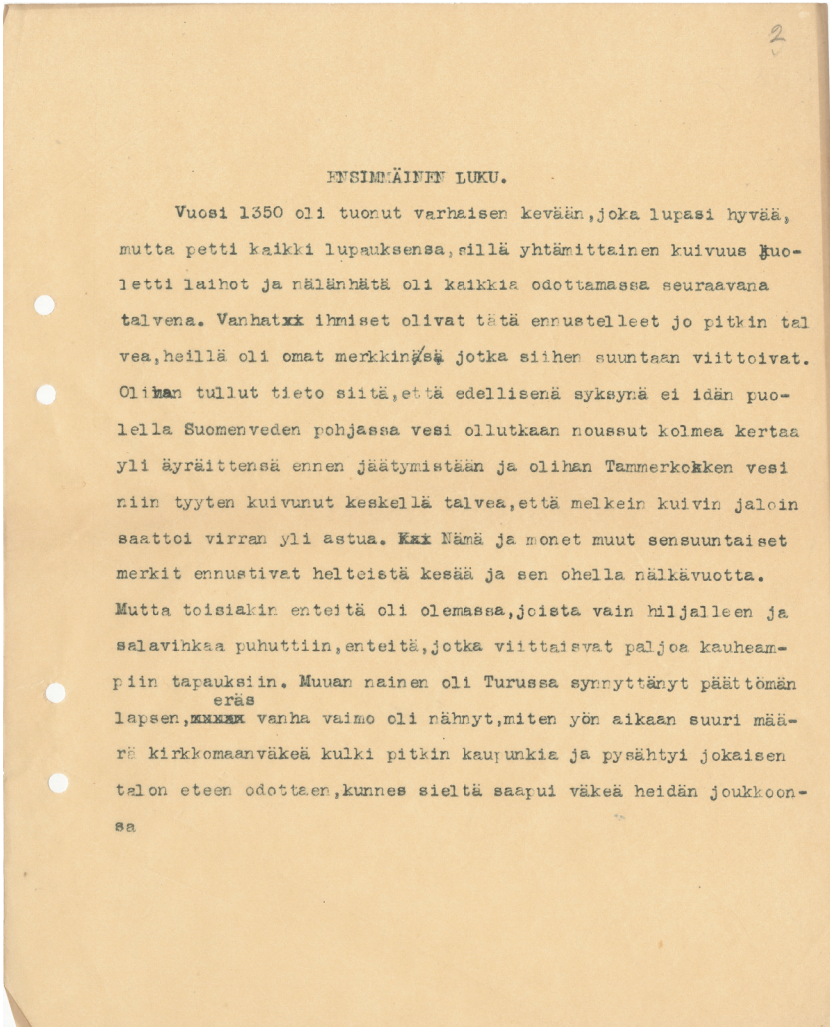
The two versions show how Finne's theatre background might have influenced his writing process. The first is basically composed as a dialogue, and it is the rephrasing and additions of the second version that put flesh on the bones by adding textual elements that are necessary for prose.

The whole second version has been enhanced in a similar fashion. However, a substantial difference occurs at the end of the chapter where the narration suddenly moves to Turku. In this eight-page scene, the narrator first gives background information on the diocese of Turku and the arrival of the plague, and then turns to Bishop Hemming's discussions with two gravediggers, the dean, and the lady of a manor who wishes to entomb her son within the church structure. The narration then returns for one page to Rotkerus, Helena, and Marketta in their retreat and ends abruptly in the middle of a sentence.

Of course, the chapter's scene change might have entered the typescript by some mistake, although the handwritten page numbers are continuous. It is still interesting that the scene happens to describe the events in Turku, because this is where Finne will begin his next inception of the novel. Perhaps Finne noticed that the arrival of the Black Death in Turku might be a better way to start the novel. Finne, however, does not discard the escape scene altogether but instead inserts it into the second chapter of the *Uusi Jumala* manuscript. It also found its way into the published version of the novel.

The Plague

All in all, there are four different versions of the third beginning. The shortest draft (3 A), which is about a half-page long, is probably the earliest and is enhanced in the other slightly longer version (3 B) (see Figs. 6 and 7). While the first version cursorily describes the old people foretelling a crop failure for the present year 1350, the second draft offers a more detailed account of the foretelling, giving us examples of bad omens like the drying up of the river Tammerkoski, the birth of a headless child, and the vision of the dead wandering through the city, knocking on people's doors.



ENSIMMÄINEN LUKU.

Vuosi 1350 oli tuonut varhaisen kevään, joka lupasi hyvää, mutta petti kaikki lupauksensa, sillä yhtämittäinen kuivuus juo-
 letti laihot ja nälänhätä oli kaikkia odottamassa seuraavana
 talvena. Vanhat~~xx~~ ihmiset olivat tätä ennustelleet jo pitkin tal-
 vea, heillä oli omat merkkinsä~~ä~~ jotka siihen suuntaan viittoivat.
 Olihan tullut tieto siitä, että edellisenä syksynä ei idän puo-
 lella Suomenveden pohjassa vesi ollutkaan noussut kolmea kertaa
 yli äyräittensä ennen jäätymistään ja olihan Tammerkokken vesi
 niin tyyten kuivunut keskellä talvea, että melkein kuivin jaloin
 saattoi virran yli astua. ~~Kax~~ Nämä ja monet muut sensuuntaiset
 merkit ennustivat helteistä kesää ja sen ohella nälkävuotta.
 Mutta toisiakin enteitä oli olemassa, joista vain hiljalleen ja
 salavinkea puhuttiin, enteitä, jotka viittaisvat paljoo kauheam-
 piin tapauksiin. Muuan nainen oli Turussa synnyttänyt päättömän
 eräs
 lapsen, ~~xxxxx~~ vanha vaimo oli nähnyt, miten yön aikaan suuri mää-
 rä kirkkomaanväkeä kulki pitkin kaupunkia ja pysähtyi jokaisen
 talon eteen odottaen, kunnes sieltä saapui väkeä heidän joukkoon-
 sa

Figure 6. Jalmari Finne, First draft of the third beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

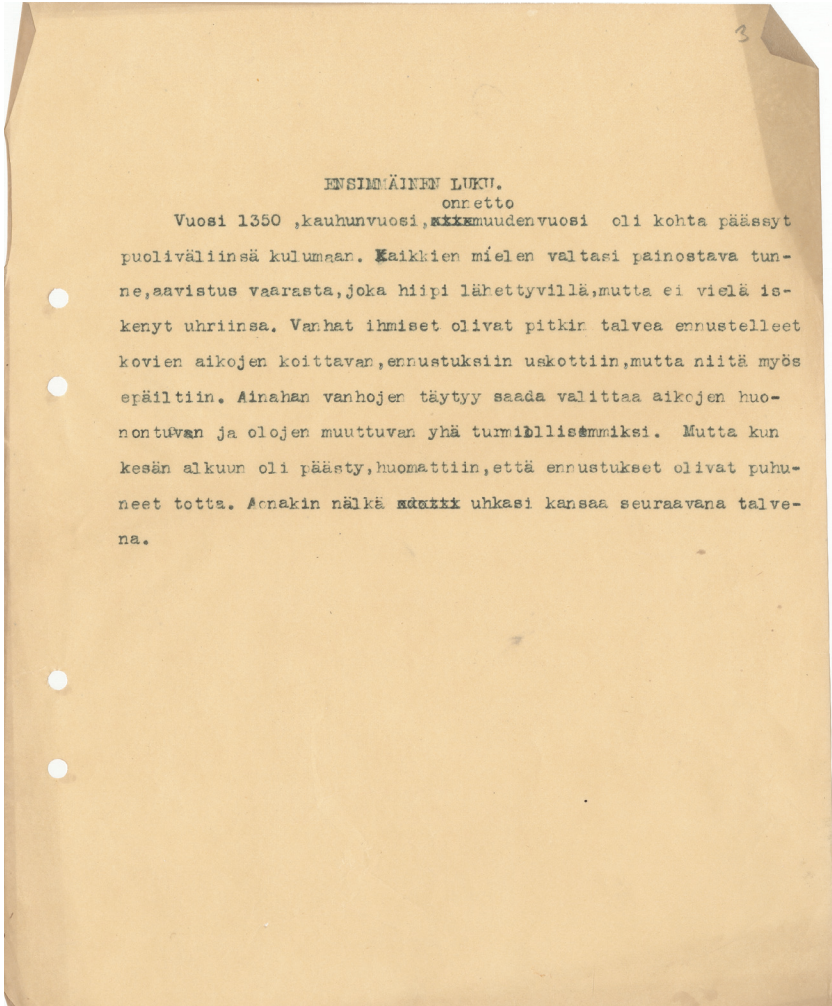


Figure 7. Jalmari Finne, Second draft of the third beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

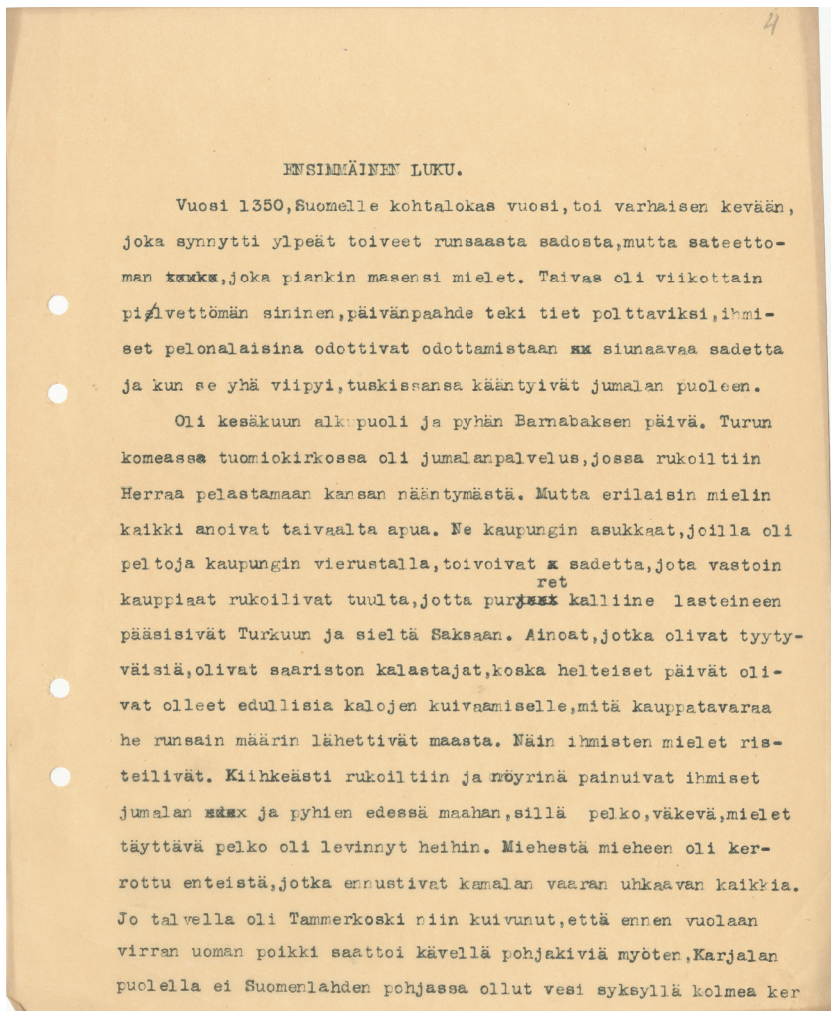


Figure 8. Jalmari Finne, Third draft of the third beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

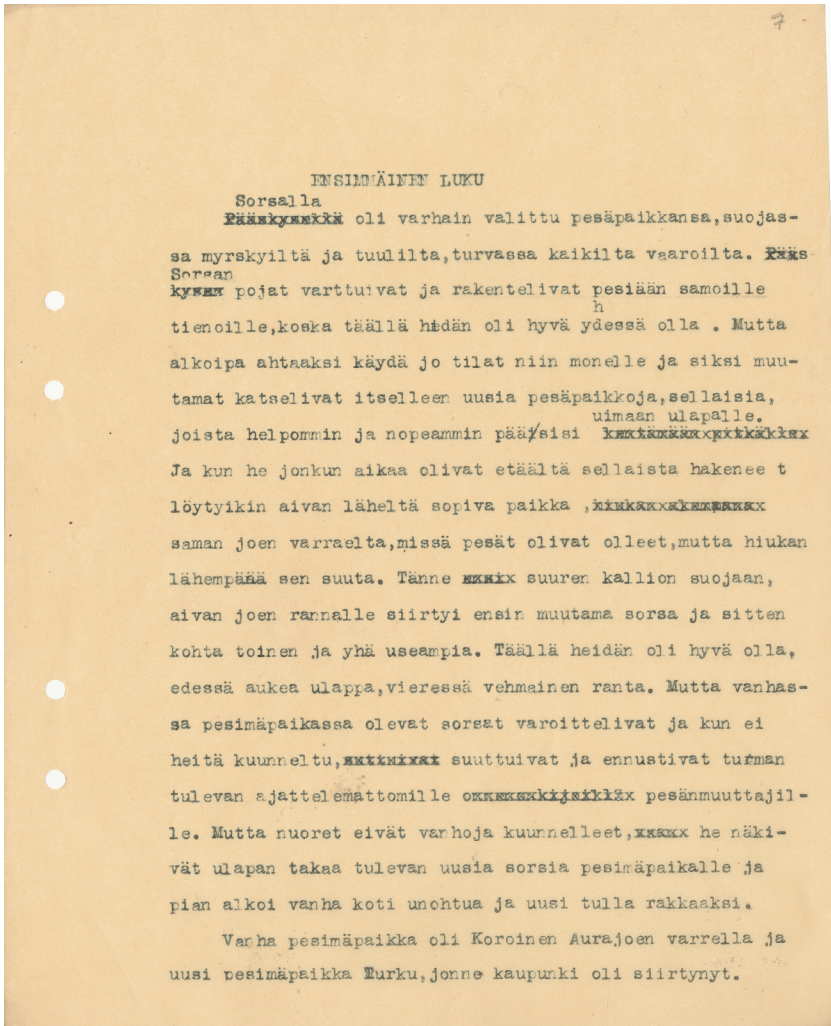


Figure 9. Jalmari Finne, First completed version of the third beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

ENSIMMÄINEN LUKU.

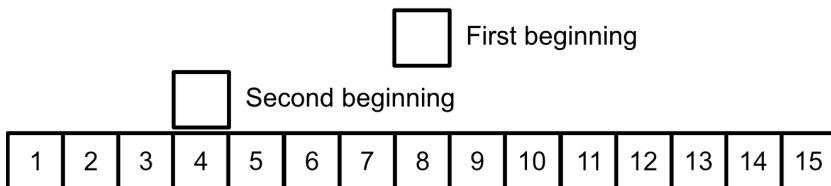
Sorsilla oli oivallinen pesimispaikka niemekkeessä kahden joen yhtymäpaikassa. Täällä ei tarvinnut pelätä vaaroja, vaan sai turvassa elellä. Jos ulappaa etsi, niin laski vain jokea myöten ja saavutti meren, josta tiet auke-
 nivat kaikkialle, minne vain mieli paloi. Mutta ajan kulu-
 essa alkoivat tilat käydä ahtaiksi monille ^{sorsille} ~~pesille~~, ja sik-
 si muutamat ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{ny} ~~tyhtyivät~~ etsimään itselleen toisia
 pesimispaikkoja. Tuossapa sellainen olikin, aivan lähetty-
 villä, joen varrella ~~sivon~~ siinä, missä virta pääsi mereen
 lepäämään. ^{Sig} ~~Täällä~~ oli suuria kallioita ja mäkiä maan puo-
 lella suojaamassa pesiä vaaroilta, ^{SKS} ~~täällä~~ oli ranta suotui-
 sa, ^{Finne} ~~tänne~~ jäi ensin muutamia, joihin pian liittyi uusia ula-
 pan takaa tulleita sorsia. Kateina katselivat entiseen
 pesimispaikan asukkaat ~~käitäk~~ heitä, varoittivat vaaroista
 ja turmiosta, joka saattoi uhata paikalla, minne ulapalta
 helposti saattoi tulla, varoittivat, mutta turhaan. Ja vaa-
 ra tuli, turmio ennätti uusissa pesissä olevat, mutta pian
 olivat he ~~kaikk~~ ^{pesät} saaneet ~~xxxxxxx~~ ⁱ uudelleen koottuksi ja
 sutelivat ulapalle. Mutta vanhassa ~~aps~~ pesimispaikassa
 asuvat eivät koskaan voineet antaa anteeksi sitä, että nuo

Figure 10. Jalmari Finne, Final version of the third beginning of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918). Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, SKS (scan SKS).

In the third draft, which is about three pages long (3 C), the grim prophecies are condensed into one short paragraph of two sentences (see Fig. 8). As with the earlier beginnings of the novel, these three drafts commence by giving the year of the event. The location is not mentioned until the third version, which specifies that the action is taking place in Turku on the day of Saint Barnabas. The townsfolk have gathered in the church to pray for wind and rain. There is talk about the year's bad crops and the other troubling omens. Then the narrator turns to describe the mistrust between the tradesmen of Koroinen and the German merchants who have occupied the best harbours in Turku. Koroinen, which is situated a few kilometres up the River Aura from Turku, used to be the centre of trade, and the bishopric was also situated there before Turku Cathedral was finished in approximately 1300.

The fourth version (3 D) is a complete chapter (see Fig. 9). This time, Finne begins the novel with a bird allegory. He starts with swallows but quickly changes them to ducks that move their nest down to the mouth of the river. The elder ducks warn the relocating ducks and predict misfortune for them. Following the allegory, the narration turns to Turku, the church service, and the tradesmen. Later in the chapter the plague arrives in the town by means of a drifting ship and we meet the bishop Hemming.

The structure and the content of the fourth version correspond closely to the version of the fair copy of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (3 E) (see Fig.10). Finne, though, has again “blind revised” the whole text without copying the earlier version but instead rewriting the text, adding background information and changing the phrasing. Just as he had done with the earlier completed manuscript version of the novel *Uusi Jumala*, so Finne has also made non-immediate corrections to the fair copy of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* by hand.



Chapters of *Vuosisatain vaatimus*

Table 1. The location of the beginnings of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* (1918) in the chronological sequence of the events of the story.

Looking back at the three different inceptions of the text (see Table 1), we can find a certain logic in the transitions from one beginning to the next. Firstly, there is a connection between the succeeding beginnings on the content level: the Escape beginning (2) is presented in the earlier Midsummer beginning (1) as a flashback, and at the end of the Escape beginning there is a transition to Turku where the Plague beginning (3) takes place. Secondly, the transition from one beginning to the next always moves backward in time. It seems as if Finne noticed that he needed to provide more background to the story and therefore had to start earlier in the narrative's time. These transitions suggest that Finne did not have a clear plan of the novel's structure from the outset; instead, he seems to have jumped into the textualization stage in a more improvisatory manner, developing the story as he typed, demonstrating thus quite concretely the difference between a story and its narration.

Conclusion

In determining how the typewriter might have influenced writing and thinking, it is useful, besides theorizing about the mechanical properties of the machine, to look into the different ways it has actually been used. Genetic criticism can be richly rewarding in this endeavor by revealing singular uses of the typewriter. Typewriters that have basically the same mechanical properties can be utilized in many ways, serving different functions in the various stages of the genetic process. On one hand, it is interesting to observe how authors have overcome the restrictions posed by the typewriter on writing, and, on the other, how they have utilized the advantages of typing.

The typewriter might have reduced Nietzsche's writing to telegraphic aphorisms, but Finne's case demonstrates that in the hands of an able typist it could also be a powerful tool that spawned new ways of writing. Finne noted that the typewriter enabled him to type almost as fast as he was thinking and thus freed him from the material constraints related to handwriting. The different beginnings of *Vuosisatain vaatimus* that gradually move backwards in narrative time indicate that this thinking was concerned with inventing the story simultaneously as he typed it. The improvisational composition of the story involved a psychological state of exaltation, and the use of the typewriter was a central part of providing the optimal writing conditions for the intensive writing process. The fact

that Finne did not copy and polish the text at the sentence level from one draft to another — the phenomenon that I described as “blind revision” — suggests that the textualization stage was all about developing the story in the content level. It explains why Finne did not read, amend, copy and add, but rather rewrote completely new versions. This process would have been extremely laborious without a typewriter, and it would have surely disturbed Finne’s state of exaltation and slowed down the composing of the story. However, as a fast typist it was no problem for Finne to insert a blank paper in the typewriter and rewrite even whole chapters anew.

University of Helsinki

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