Heikkinen Olli

***Domestication of symphony orchestra institution – Case Finland, neoinstitutional perspective***

Actors in the modern world (individuals, organizations, nation-states) emphasize their autonomy in decision-making and action. However, according to one branch of new institutionalism, “world society theory”, problems are solved, innovations appropriated and policy-decisions made in strikingly similar ways across the world. It seems that the behaviour of local actors is strongly constrained by global institutions, at least in the province of instrumental culture (e.g. health care, education). However, studying the spread of music institutions will show that human action is, and has been, confined by global institutions not only in instrumental culture, but also in expressive culture. It will also show, that global institutions are “domesticated” by local actors to suit local resources and actors’ own personal interests. In my paper, I will present a case study: the municipalization of Helsinki City Orchestra in 1914. In accordance with "discursive institutionalism", I will analyse the discourses and negotiations surrounding the municipalization in face-to-face discussions in the meetings of the city council, as well as in the music committee and the board of directors of the orchestra. Further, I focus on expressions of opinion in editorials and columns of local newspapers and periodicals. After this I will discuss the benefits of neoinstitutional paradigm in music historiography from a theoretical point of view.

Olli Heikkinen is a post-doctoral researcher in Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki. He has published on sound recording aesthetics, folk song collecting, Suomi-schlager, Jean Sibelius and the founding of the Helsinki City Orchestra. Currently he works in a project "Translocal Cultural Fields", led by professor Vesa Kurkela, funded by the Academy of Finland.