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***The song festivals of the Finnish labour movement as musical and ideological mediators in the 1910s***

Song festivals formed the biggest manifestation of the national movement in Finland at the turn of the 20th century. At the beginning, the main objectives of the organisers were 1) to increase the national spirit, 2) to educate festival audiences musically and 3) to increase the musical activities of common people by encouraging them to set up amateur music groups, such as choirs and brass bands. In general, music was used as a tool for infusing the minds of the working class with several educational and social goals. Influence on both festivals and music repertoire came from German-speaking areas and were transferred into Finnish context. Until the early 20th century, festivals were organized by Finnish bourgeoisie. However, after the Russian revolution of 1905, the activities of the labour movement started to increase not only in politics, but in cultural life as well. This was also evident in the context of song festivals. This paper discusses, how the musical repertoire of the festivals was structured and how it was exploited to meet the purposes of the festival organizers in Finland from the first festivals in the 1880s until the 1910s, when the labour movement separated into its own group and began to organize their own festivals. Utilizing new institutionalism as a theoretical frame, the paper will explore, how the European song festival institution was "domesticated" to local context and conditions by local actors in Finland, and how it was adapted to the use of the Finnish labour movement.

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