CONDUCTING GESTURES
Institutional and Educational Construction of Conductorship
in Finland, 1973–1993

by
Anu Konttinen

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
To be presented with the assent of the Faculty of Arts,
University of Helsinki for public examination in Auditorium XII,
University Main Building
On January 26th, 2008 at 10 a.m.

Helsinki 2008
© Anu Konttinen

ISBN 978-952-10-4417-5 (PDF)

Cover design: Liisa Holm
Cover photograph: Marja Kantola-Panula

Cityoffset
Tampere 2007
Contents

Acknowledgements…5

INTRODUCTION

1. ‘Great conductors’: subject matter and starting point…8
   1.1 Terminology and conductor studies as a field of study…16
   1.2 Materials and structure of the study…21
   1.3 Research problems…25 The structure of the study

I THEORY AND APPLICATIONS

1. On the sociology of conducting…28
   1.1 Art world theories and the study of conducting…31 Danto and Dickie considered – Becker and Art World – Gross and Marginality
   1.2 Core activity – core skill…44
   1.3 Identities…48
   1.4 Conclusion: marginal or fringe?…53

2. Gestures and conducting…59
   2.1 Conventions…62
   2.2 On a theory of musical gestures…68 Conducting gestures
      2.2.1 Defining musical gestures…72
      2.2.2 Gestural types…76 Musical gesture – Technical gesture – Expressive gesture – Classifying gestures
   2.3 Two semiotic modes of gestural communication…85 Score-conductor-orchestra – Conductor-orchestra-audience
   2.4 Conducting gestures meet sociology: Modes of being…91 The View from the podium – A sociological point of view
   2.5 Social gestures of being and working…100

II ON PRACTICE OF CONDUCTING

1. Introduction: Educating Finnish conductors…103
   1.1 Education of conductors before Panula…106
   1.2 Panula’s class…110
   1.3 Speaking hands – a philosophy of teaching…116
   1.4 Orchestra and video…119 First impressions
   1.5 Educating with gestures…129 Conducting course
   1.6 From conducting class to professional life…133 Invited guests – The musically versatile generation of Korvat auki, Avanti!, and Toimii! – Memorandum
   1.7 “Then and now”…149

2. Educational continuum…159
   2.1 Passing on the culture in practice…163
III ANALYSIS

1. From theory to practice…183
   1.1 Evolution of conducting gestures…186  
      *Baton or no baton? – Towards batonless conducting*
   1.2 The physique of conducting gestures…196
   1.3 Communicating with the body and dealing with physical limitations…197  
      *Physical limitations*

2. Conducting gestures: Analysis…203  
   *Interpretation/realisation*
   2.1 Theoretical tools: conductor analysis and decoding of gestures…207  
      *Decoding gestures*
   2.2 Case study: John Storgårds at work with the Helsinki Philharmonic…213  
      *Uuno Klami: Kalevala Suite Op. 23*
   2.3 Musical gestures: Transitions from score to sound…217
   2.4 From technical to expressive gestures…222  
      *Baton and technical/expressive gestures – Size and shape in technical and expressive gestures*
   2.5 Repertoire of gestures and hierarchies of conducting…228  
      *Hierarchies*
   2.6 Educational and working gestures in analysis…232

CONCLUSIONS

1. Starting point, theory and results…234
   1.1 Gestural types reconsidered…237  
      *Hierarchical repertoire*
   1.2 Social gestures in practice…242

2. Educational continuity and the sociological effects of Panula’s class…243
   2.1 Emerging tradition…244  
      *Effects of types considered*
   2.2 From conducting class to work communities…248

APPENDIX 1…251
APPENDIX 2…254
APPENDIX 3…256

References and Bibliography…257
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go first to all conductors, both those who are not present on the pages of this thesis, and even more, to those who have been part of it. Especially warm thanks to those conductors whom I have been privileged to interview and observe during the last ten years.

Without Professor Jorma Panula I would not have had such a magnificent subject matter for my thesis. He has kindly answered all my questions and shared his great wisdom about music and life. I also want to thank Marja Kantola-Panula, who has helped me with Professor Panula’s schedules and provided photographs from the family archive as well as taking some of them herself.

I wish to thank the Finnish Cultural Foundation, the Ella and Georg Ehrnrooth Foundation, and the VEST doctoral program (the Doctoral Study Program of the Performing Arts) for making this project possible financially. The Institute for Art Research, to which my own department of Musicology belongs, has provided working space and the opportunity to attend not one but two doctoral seminars. Professor Eero Tarasti and Docent Alfonso Padilla have guided me through years of intensive study and work. I want to thank Professors Pirkko Koski, Yrjö Juhani Renwall, Hanna Suutela, Erkki Huovinen, and Robert Hatten for reading my texts and giving me valuable advice. Professor Harri Veivo has helped me enormously with the theory of this thesis. I also thank all the professors and colleagues at VEST.

My opponent, Professor Matti Huttunen, has also been a very thorough and wise examiner of my work. I also thank Professor Jean-Marie Jacono for giving his opinion on my work, and kindly suggesting corrections for the text. Professor Hannu K. Riikonen kindly agreed to act as a representative of the faculty.
I would also very much like to thank Liisa Holm, who wanted to take part in this ‘family project’ by designing the wonderful cover of this book.

There are a number of people in my daily life, without whom it would not have been possible to finish this thesis. Jaakko Tuohiniemi has not only helped me to find and obtain the latest research books and articles and given all the help one could ever need in the library, but also has been the best of friends and provided the best laughs ever. As my colleague, friend, and a sister in the academy, Liisamaija Hautsalo knows exactly what I have been through during these years. She has stood by me and been a great help in many ways. Kai Lassfolk has been my next-door neighbour at Vironkatu for many years, rescued me from more than one computer-related crisis, and shared with me the challenges of daily research work. Esa Lilja has been the third member of our ‘studio team’ and given helpful advice on numerous occasions. Both Kai and Esa have also taken part in my work projects and I thank them for all their patience and knowledge. I also wish to thank Susanna Välimäki, Juha Torvinen, Petri Tuovinen, Mikko Ojanen, and Paul Forsell for their support and friendship, as well as Irma Vierimaa, Erja Hannula, Markus Mantere, Rita Honti, and Markus Lång for their kind advice. Warm thanks to Kirsti Nymark, Susanna Aaltonen, Renja Suominen-Kokkonen, and Riitta Nikula, as well as Juha-Heikki Tihinen and Harri Kalha for inspiring discussions. Petja Hovinheimo has been a great help during the research process.

I also warmly thank everyone working in or with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Hannele Markkula in Avanti!, and everyone at the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra have been very kind and helped me greatly. I would also like to thank my immediate superiors at the Finnish Broadcasting Company, YLE, for their encouragement, and everyone at work for their support – those who are my colleagues at the music programmes on TV and radio, as well as those who otherwise have a special role in my life.
I realise that my family and friends have had a lot to put up with while I have been writing this doctoral thesis. Even so, they have never failed to encourage me in everything I do. My friends Ilkka, Sini, Miikka, Juha, and Paola have been involved on the sidelines from the very beginning. Little Elias keeps ‘Auntie Anu’ inspired and smiling with his lovely enthusiasm for everything new and exiting. Thank you, Heikki and Liisa, for the amazing weekends watching films and discussing everything from art to more earthly matters, and Olli for taking part in making this thesis a real book.

Finally, I would like to express my greatest and most sincere gratitude to my parents, Riitta and Timo. They have supported and helped me in every way and given me a realistic, yet inspiring idea of academic and artistic work from the very beginning, as well as sheltered and fed me during the most intensive phases of thesis writing. This has been our project, and in turn I hope I can make you proud.

*Lauttasaari, October 2007*

*Anu Konttinen*
INTRODUCTION

1. ‘Great conductors’: subject matter and starting point

This study concentrates on those Finnish conductors who have participated in Professor Jorma Panula’s conducting class at the Sibelius Academy during the years 1973–1993. The main focus is on praxis: the current educational and working practices that are the result of the system introduced by Professor Panula during his professorship and carried on by his former students.

On a more general level, conducting is studied as a practical and sociological activity. On a specific level, the focus is on gestures of a conductor as communication. The relationship between a conductor and an orchestra in rehearsals and concerts is examined as well as the communicational space when an audience is present.

The rapidly increasing study of the performing arts could be seen as the general context to which this work belongs. The present endeavour has been to find different theoretical aspects for defining and discussing the concept of a conducting gesture of which there has been no previous study. The most meaningful aspects have seen to be the sociology of art, semiotic approaches to conducting, and the study of musical performance. This is not, however, a sociological or a semiotic study as such, but an attempt to map those theoretical approaches that seem to be the most suitable for studying conducting as a skill and a profession. The sociology of music has turned out to be the context in which most aspects of this study easily fit.

Sociology of music has also, even if somewhat subjectively, turned out to be one of the main points of interest during the process of writing. For this reason, sociological theories
have an important role here, and will at times be given slightly more emphasis than other theoretical aspects. Since one of the very first ideas was to examine how far from the core the boundaries of the concept of the sociology of music could be stretched, it seemed fitting to allow this kind of emphasis.

More specifically, the theoretical goal of this study has been to find out what kind of social construction\(^1\) *conductorship* is – as a historical, sociological and practical phenomenon, and mainly as stated above, by concentrating on the Finnish conductors, while also considering the subject matter in a wider context. In practical terms, this means taking the historical and social concept of a ‘great conductor’ apart, so to speak, to look for the practical core – here understood as the reverse side of the myth – of the profession. There being no established word to describe being a professional conductor, the above-mentioned term *conductorship* has been used in an attempt to encompass these aspects.

Even more specifically, what is studied here is whether one can theorise and analyse the core of conductorship, and if so, the most important theoretical tool is the concept of *gesture*, which will be defined in due course. The idea is to sketch a theoretical model based on gestural communication between a conductor and an orchestra, and to give one example of the – naturally numerous – possible ways of studying a conductor’s gestures. Here a new idea – *social gestures* – will also be introduced and further explained.

My hypothesis is that the gestures that make up the process of conducting can be separated from each other by their functions. In other words, there are different types of gestures that make up the process of conducting – musical, technical, and expressive. The situation that serves as a starting point for the kind of division I am about to make is not very encouraging. There are many people who may say that it is impossible to detect how and of

---

\(^1\) The word *construct* is used intentionally, since it is assumed here that the concept of conductorship is both an unconsciously and a consciously constructed matter, the focus here being on the latter. The choice of title for the whole study is therefore intentional, too. The term is used purely as described, with no other theoretical connotations, and no reference, for example, to constructivism.
what components the basic gestural communication is comprised. There is always the fact that the technical and the expressive/interpretative are very difficult to separate from one another in the first place. For one person, technique is the way to express what there is to say; for another, any waving of the hands passes for conducting. However, when so many conductors themselves often refer to this dilemma, it is interesting to try to analyse and specify what constitutes the process of conducting.

The study is placed in the context of different sociological theories, especially from the notion of “art world”. As mentioned above, this is not meant to be a sociological study, but rather an interdisciplinary one using sociological theories to build a general framework for the more specific questions about gestures.

With the sociological theories as a background, it is perhaps justifiable to begin by using such a controversial concept as myth. The ideas of ‘great conductors’ and The Maestro Myth, as Norman Lebrecht has titled his book (1991), have been my starting points. It has not been my purpose to comment on the book itself, but rather to explore the idea that Lebrecht expresses about conducting as a profession – being on the brink of extinction. Freely re-phrased, his question is whether there will be any great maestros in the future. My follow-up question is, what is the principle or principles by which the continuity of the profession is measured?

In some ways Lebrecht’s book has been a culminating point: instead of mystification, a quest for a ‘modern conductor’ has begun. What is looked for here is not an authoritative representantive of the much-discussed nineteenth-century virtuosity and power, but a modern musical leader, defined by a practically and socially understood concept of a performer, such
as most conductors today want to be. The Maestro Myth has brought with it a need to look for more analytical ways of approaching conductors and conducting. In the context of musicological study this new criticism could be understood as a need for evaluating and defining theoretical terms such as conductorship and tradition.

When studying conductorship, however, the mythical maestro is a concept that cannot be completely overlooked. It seems necessary to acknowledge it on both historical and sociological grounds, even if it is not treated here as the main subject of study. The concept of myth is, however, useful as a ‘tool’: it is something that can be used to outline the main subject, which is not directly focused on the myth itself. As mentioned above, the myth has been seen here as the reverse side of the focus of this study: gestures as the core of the conductor’s professionalism.

Sociologically, the question of mythification is important, having to do with such concepts as roles, marginality, and social identity, and such phenomena as publicity, media, and agents. Therefore, myths should not, and in my view cannot, be completely excluded. This theme will be discussed briefly in Part I. Again, the basic intention has been to keep the focus mainly on the concrete practical work of a conductor, the invisible, everyday work, and on all those other things that the idea of myth seems purposefully to leave untouched.

---

2 This general assumption is based on the opinions of the conductors interviewed for this study as well as on the published interviews and discussions with contemporary conductors.

3 The concept of tradition and how it is seen in this study is explained in Chapter 1.3, Terminology and the structure of the study.

4 The aim here is not to take part in the discussion about myth as such, but to see the concept through theoretical ideas about artistic genius of which the myth is a part. This theme has been studied, for example, by Ernst Kretschmer (as early as 1929) in Geniale Menschen, and more recently by Harold Bloom (2002) in Genius: A Mosaic of One Hundred Exemplary Creative Minds, and by Finnish researcher Hanna Järvinen (2003) in The Myth of Genius in Movement. Historical Reconstruction of the Nijinsky Legend. The collection of articles Kirjoituksia neroudesta. Myytii, kultit ja persoonat (Writings on Genius: Myths, Cults, and Persons, 2006), edited by Taava Koskinen, represents the latest research on this subject in Finland. In the recent study of music the theme has been studied in Musikalische Virtuosität (2004), edited by Heinz von Loesch, Ulrich Mahlert, and Peter Rummenhöller. See also Tarasti 2001 [1979] and 1992.
As well as discussing the social aspects of the conducting profession within the field of music and musical life as an *art world*, the sociological art world theories chosen for the theory of this study seem to cover the above-mentioned areas that are ‘left outside’. These include art as work, the historical and institutional development of individual artistic activity, the education of artists, and the cooperative social patterns within work communities. For dealing with subjects concerning individual artists as a part of differently constructed networks of joint artistic activity – such as conductors working with and in symphony orchestras, and conductors and orchestras inside other musical institutions – these theories seem quite applicable.

Most importantly, the art world theories seem give perspective to all the main research problems of this study, including the theory of gestures, within the same theoretical framework. The theories also provide a definition for the term *conductorship*, which has been chosen as the general concept inside which all the aspects seem to fit. As implied above, the word conductorship is a neologism that has developed as a concept along with this study. It is not a new word invented for this study, but it has a specific meaning here: it is a sociologically understood term describing a professional conductor working in a community, confronting the demands of balancing private and social aspects of identity and work.

Some people have asked whether this kind of study requires personal experience of conducting. Or rather, they have seemed to ask whether someone who has not studied conducting technique or acquired any experience conducting is competent to write about conducting. I am convinced that conducting is a topic that can be approached not only musically but also musicologically, without the need of practical skills. Therefore, this is a

---

5 The art world concept was first used by Arthur Danto. I am referring here to the definition by Howard S. Becker (1982) in his book *Art Worlds*. These subjects will be discussed more thoroughly in Part I, Theory.  
6 On private and social aspects of artistic identity, see Lepistö 1991; further discussion of the subject will be found in Chapter 1.4 of this study.
theoretically-biased study of conductorship and gestural communication, not an attempt to master the actual skill of an orchestral conductor. What is interesting here is the social and personal construction and the sociological structures of conductorship as well as the gestural communicativeness, observed and analysed.

As both a personal and a general comment, most musicologists study and have practical training in some instrument or other as a background. Every musician trained for orchestral playing knows the basic beat patterns. Most if not all have an ability to read the score quite fluently, and have a thorough grasp of the music they are rehearsing and performing. Instrumental training, score reading, the ability to hear and listen, as well as the sensitivity needed for ensemble musicianship – the ability to react to separate impulses while playing or observing a more complex musical situation as a whole – are basic skills for anyone working professionally in music.

For this reason, it has seemed even more important to acknowledge my own position is as a writer, not only in the context of this field of study, but also in relation to the audience for whom the study has, at least hypothetically, been written. Since it is likely that the majority of audience members do not have personal contact with the practical skill themselves, I have felt comfortable being on the same side as they, so to speak, observing the work of a conductor from the outside. Being on the inside is, in fact, no guarantee that the “insider” will be able to describe analytically and theoretically what is happening during the conducting, much less be able to write about it. Describing what one sees or experiences is not enough; one should be able to tell why certain things happen. Even conductors themselves find it difficult to verbalise what is it that they do and what exactly happens while they are conducting.

Practicality as a point of view has an important role in this study. The most important material consists of interviews and case studies arranged with contemporary Finnish conductors. If the goal is to study conductors’ work, then observing the actual, concrete
working situations – rehearsals as well as concerts – in practice is imperative. Rehearsals seem to reveal something profound about the relationship between a conductor and an orchestra. In addition, a rehearsal often offers the best opportunity to observe a conductor and an orchestra at work.

Marjaana Virtanen has studied these issues in her doctoral thesis, *Musical Works in the Making* (2007). Despite the very similar approach to the subject of musical gestures, and the use of some of the same theories, her study concentrates on the construction of musical works in rehearsals and performances, and the communication among composer, soloist, orchestra and conductor in these situations. Virtanen says:

…I am interested in the detailed analysis of the interrelations of composed music and the actions of the performers, rather than in the social and psychological aspects of performance as such.\(^7\)

My study, in turn, focuses specifically on the gestural communication between a conductor and an orchestra from the point of view of the conductor. The musical work itself has been outlined and only touched upon as a part of the conductor’s gestural communication. What is central to this study is the social aspect closely attached to the process of rehearsing and performing, from the point of view of the conductor. Some of Marjaana Virtanen’s conclusions and mine are very similar when it comes to discussing the process of conducting. Because our starting points have been so different, I see that as a positive thing.

Observing a living musical situation, focusing both on the work of a conductor and the orchestra, reading a score with perhaps a very complex structure, listening to a constantly changing musical situation, and to the inner reflectiveness between the different sections of the orchestra – all this needs training. There are endless opportunities for the unexpected to

---

\(^7\) Virtanen 2007, 28.
happen, and no two ‘takes’ or rehearsals are ever exactly the same. Even a very enthusiastic and focused conductor may sometimes quite surprisingly lose something of the intensity of the rehearsals in a concert. On the other hand, rehearsals that progress only moderately well may lead to an intense and inspiring concert. Several conductors interviewed for this study actually preferred not to ‘close’ the work after the rehearsal, in order to leave open the possibility of doing something quite different in the performance. This “difference” seemed to involve not only the interpretation, but the concrete gestures as well.

The final musical outcome is always a combination of both practical and emotional factors, but, I argue, that it is never an entirely inexplicable thing, as has sometimes been implied. There are famous stories about conductors who can change both the atmosphere of the concert hall and the way the orchestra plays simply by walking in and making his presence known.⁸ There is admittedly something in the process of conducting that cannot be described or defined, probably having to do with the special relationship that just is or that develops between certain conductors and orchestras, or the charisma of the conductor. Theoretically and analytically, the most challenging questions, however, are related to the concrete practices and everyday aspects of work: what are the sociological, musical, psychological and physical factors that affect the process that begins with analysing the score and culminates in a performance?

Sociologically, rehearsals represent the more private part of the work, since usually the part the concert-goers are allowed to see and hear is the final outcome: the public concert. Even if the performance is the point of all the work and is in a way an entity in itself with its own rules and the potential for unexpected changes, it is also the only contact the majority of people ever have with the work of a conductor. Most of the “real” work of conducting is done elsewhere.

---

As for the question of whether only those trained as conductors are able or should be allowed to study and write about conducting seems to be based on deep-rooted conceptions about musicianship and conductors. The concepts of *mythical maestros* and *great conductors* that were invented and developed further during the twentieth century, can still be detected beneath the new, more critical surface of the writing about and discussion of conductors. In a way conducting and conductors have been almost sacred subjects, not even to be touched on a very profound level. The great conductors are part of the canon of Western art music, from which it is not easy to step away.

Similarly, the ‘Finnish miracle’, which includes a great number of Finnish professional conductors having internationally recognised careers, is still firmly maintained in the media. People are less interested in bringing to the surface the practical reasons for the phenomenon – education, social changes in both society and musical life, and the development of professional musicianship. This has led to a tendency to keep up, either subconsciously or consciously, the deeply rooted ideas of the myth of conducting, and contributed to creating a cult, or to launching the idea of some kind of nationally well-kept and secure secret.

Conductors themselves are daily confronted by a living instrument of as many as one hundred individuals and the necessity of being in the actual musical situation to be able to hear, react, and act according to the response of the orchestra. These are skills that are not acquired overnight, but are built with time and experience.

1.1 Terminology and conductor studies as a field of study

The terminology used in this study requires explanation. Most terms can be defined from the very beginning, but others, new or otherwise unfamiliar in this context, have developed and
gathered substance during the process of writing. There is a danger of being inconsistent, which I have tried to keep in mind.

There is no established field of conductor study as such, nor is there a distinct theoretical tradition in the context of which the terms would be explained. Therefore, it was necessary to borrow terms from other fields of study and sometimes to invent new ones to fill the terminological gaps. The sociological terms central to this study, such as core activity, identity, role, continuum, and margin/fringe, will be explained in Part I, Chapter 1, On the sociology of conducting. The most important term and theoretical tool, gesture, will be discussed in Chapter 2, Conducting gestures. This part of the theory has the most complex terminology, and it will therefore be dealt with separately.

The focus here is on contemporary professional conductors who have received a formal education in conducting and have studied with Professor Jorma Panula. They are all working or will be working as professional conductors. The term profession is used here in the meaning illuminated by specific research on the subject in Finland – Esa Konttinen and Renja Suominen-Kokkonen have studied the questions, problems, and social constructions related to “profession” as a sociological concept, to mention some examples.9

However, there is a major terminological problem here: there are several synonyms in the English language for profession, including occupation and business, but they do not exactly match the idea attached here to the term profession. On the other hand in the Finnish language the word ammatti means something more than “occupation” – it is close to “profession” while the word professio is used in sociological research. To avoid confusion, the term profession will refer in this study only to something that someone does for living with a specific vocation – in this case, conducting – and making a living from it.

---

9 Esa Konttinen (1991) has studied this theme in Perinteisesti moderniin. Professioiden yhteiskunnallinen synty Suomessa (Traditionally towards the modern: The social development of professions in Finland), and Renja Suominen-Kokkonen (1992) in The Fringe of a Profession: Women as Architects in Finland from the 1880s to the 1950s.
Studying conducting as a sociological professio would be an interesting subject, but even if there is undoubtedly a need for such a study, it seems to take the subject matter too far from the original point of view and widen the perspective towards very distinctive sociological questions; therefore it has not been included.

Another larger issue is the use of the term tradition. Basically, the historical tradition of conducting began with different forms of ensemble-musicianship in the early seventeenth century (here called “conductor-musicianship”), leading to the rise of so-called Western conductorship during the twentieth century – the “modern” conductor. Most material published on the subject is focused on the idea and the rise of the so-called modern conductorship, whose historical development of it began roughly around 1850, and became conventionalised around the turn of the twentieth century. In the context of analytical musicological study the question of tradition is obviously far more complex than these points alone suggest.

Because there has been a tendency towards versatility in Finland, with conductors usually working professionally in more than one area, it seems important to view the tradition called “conductor-musicianship”, for lack of a better term, as divided into two traditions, or lines of development: the Western conductorship and the “conductor-musicianship”. This division is essential, not only for establishing historical background for the tradition of Finnish conductors, but also because it brings to the surface the basic phrasing of a question and the theoretical problems central to the whole study. This division is also used to analyse and explain how roles, musical identities, and ideas about conductorship are constructed and passed on.

The dualism of defining the tradition becomes apparent when representing it more generally as a line of historical events or a sociologically understood process, as well as when

---

10 This dating by Elliott W. Galkin (1988), is discussed more thoroughly below.
discussing it in purely theoretical terms. As a term, tradition seems almost controversial, especially in relation to Finnish conductors. Tradition implies that there is a certain method-bound system, or a kind of school. There is a historical and a practical tradition – ways of educating and working, and passing on the conceptions and ideas of conductorship – that developed during the last twenty or thirty years, but no technical tradition in the same way as exists, for example, in many large musical centers in Central Europe.

To avoid confusion, the terms “Western tradition” and “conductor-musicianship” have been used in this study. The latter means both the historical and the contemporary tradition of performing musicians who conduct, and who define their own identities as conductors according to this job description. The former refers to twentieth-century development from the first “podium-conductors” to the so-called maestro myth as a culmination point, despite the generalising nature of the concept. I have, however, taken the liberty of using these terms loosely here, since the question of tradition is not the main subject of this study.

Musical versatility is a term – or rather a concept – that will be frequently referred to in this study. I am also intentionally implying that while it is a phenomenon that has historical roots it is strongly tied to contemporary ideas of musicianship and conductorship. There has always been a practical tradition of “everybody-doing-everything” in the Finnish musicianship, and there have always been those who have composed, performed, and conducted. However, I find that this has been more or less dictated by the conditions and context: conductors such as Robert Kajanus had to do a bit of everything, since everything had to be created from the beginning during his time – the turn of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. There were no symphony orchestras or Finnish orchestral music repertoire to conduct until the end of the nineteenth century.

Later generations of conductors had a different basis for their musicianship than their predecessors. On the one hand, their education was different from what they might have had a
few decades later. In addition to conducting studies abroad, there was musical education, even
higher education in music, in Finland. But it was perhaps not quite as organised yet as it
eventually would be, when musicians were finally able to specialise in a certain field of
musical expertise. Nor had the idea of “modern” conductorship been thoroughly integrated or
canonised in Finland. At the Sibelius Academy conducting studies began in the early 1940s –
quite late, compared to Central Europe – but only in the late 1960s, when Jorma Panula first
strated to teach the class, were forms and teaching practices established.

What is significant is the important role of these musicians who also conducted, for they
have had an inarguable role in building the system that exists today. It was perhaps even
easier to be a versatile musician earlier, with the idea of “everyone doing everything” being a
very practical and natural part of musicianship. In my opinion, what is different today is that
the versatile musicianship has become institutionalised and part of the educational structure of
the academic musical training in Finland. Today such musicianship also has negative
undertones: the role of a conductor has changed so much that “everyone wanting to conduct”
has become more problematic. The standards have risen and the system of educating
musicians, especially soloists and conductors, has become highly selective. Expectations are
different; the technical and interpretative skills are observed more closely than all-round
artistic abilities and social roles. In short, what was natural before has become controlled and
standardised. In a way a highly individual and selective musical life has made versatility more
difficult than it was before.

This study concentrates only on the theoretical, social, and practical structures of
conducting as an institution. For this reason, historical conductorship is only briefly touched
upon and the question of musical versatility will be studied in the contemporary context of
institutionalised education. This quite narrow but intentionally chosen point of view leaves
out many important questions and influential personalities who have made a valuable impact on the profession, an important subject matter that merits further study.

Generally, conductor studies, both as a field of study and as a term, do not exist in an established sense. Introducing conductor studies as a new concept was originally the idea of Professor Robert Hatten, who kindly suggested that I explore the possibilities such a point of view might offer.

In the present thesis concept conductor studies means a field in which historical (here concentrating on the recent history), sociological, or musical (here gestural, communicative, and interpretative) subject matters related to being and working as a conductor are examined. In other words, what is not studied is conducting as a technical skill. Conductor studies also include such questions as identity, construction of conductorship, working communities, and the surrounding society, along with its cultural and musical life.

With an unestablished field of study such as this one, the theoretical and methodological focus could be on almost anything. One must decide what the concept means in this particular case. Here, the point of view is musical, sociological, and, at times, semiotic.

1.2 Materials and structure of the study
Available published histories of conductors tend to have a strongly individualistic and biographical emphasis. They provide valuable material for creating a historical context and a uniform idea of the background, not least for Finnish conductors. Such histories do not, however, serve more analytical. The specialised academic research on questions such as the sociology of conducting, and on the historical or social development and construction of conductorship is very limited.
On the other hand, there is a great deal of biographical material as well as numerous books on musical institutions, all of which help to form a picture of the social background of conducting as an institution – as conducting has been understood here. There are also multiple technical guidebooks for conductors, sometimes including a chapter or two about the history and philosophy of conducting.\(^{11}\)

Since the material that concentrates on conducting as a profession from the historical, sociological, and practical points of view is limited at best, two central studies have been chosen for a general referential basis. They are Elliott T. Galkin’s *A History of Orchestral Conducting* and *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting*, edited by José A. Bowen.\(^{12}\) These have been selected because they come closest to my point of view by including both historical and practical aspects. Galkin claims his book is the first thorough investigation on the history of conducting with an attempt “to explain the evolution of the craft with chronological reference to styles of music, orchestras, and the theories and techniques of time-beating”\(^{13}\). As the first extensive and critical study of the subject, Galkin’s study has to be taken into account here.

Bowen’s *Cambridge Companion* represents the latest research published on the subject and as thus is particularly interesting: it shows how slowly the fixed structures and conceptions change, while serving as an interesting counterpoint or “update” to Galkin’s study. Galkin concentrates on an individually constructed idea of conducting and the historical development of ways of conducting, while Bowen builds on the idea of different conducting traditions and practices – ideas that are central in my study.

Finnish conductors have been studied very little: the history of conducting has not yet been written, nor has the sociological construction of the institution – one of the main

\(^{11}\) See, for example, Schuller 1997.


\(^{13}\) Galkin 1988, xxxii.
interests here – been previously studied. In general there is very little written material to be found about these, especially concerning conducting as work. Academically valid writings about conductors or conducting in Finland are mainly limited to the history of Finnish music and the two earliest symphony orchestras, the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra (1882), and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (1927). There are several biographies about conductors but among them only a few have been published from 1990s onwards. In addition to biographies, there is a handful of substantial articles on the subject.

The most recent and so far the only book that consistently presents any Finnish historical conductors in connection with, and as a part of, the history of institutionalisation in music is Professor Matti Vainio’s biography of Robert Kajanus, published in 2002.\textsuperscript{14} However, Vainio’s book too concentrates on Kajanus as a composer, and says very little of his career as the first professional Finnish conductor. No specific theoretical research has been done on conducting, as it has been studied in this dissertation.

As for other written material important for the study of conducting, there are plenty of theories and other materials on gestures, both in general and on musical gestures in particular.\textsuperscript{15} The theories of musical gestures – especially Robert Hatten’s – have been used in recent musicological study, in Finland as elsewhere.\textsuperscript{16}

So little previous research done on Finnish conductors and on the construction of conductorship, there did not seem to be enough material on which to base a study. Thus, this study consists mainly of interviews with Finnish conductors Atso Almila (b. 1953), Mikko Franck (b. 1979), Hannu Lintu (b. 1967), Susanna Mälkki (b. 1969), Eva Ollikainen (b. 1982), Tuomas Ollila (b. 1965), Sakari Oramo (b. 1965), Jorma Panula (b. 1930), Esa-Pekka Salonen (b. 1958), Jukka-Pekka Saraste (b. 1956), and John Storgårds (b. 1963).

\textsuperscript{14} Vainio 2002.
\textsuperscript{15} The ones central for this study will be introduced in Chapter 3, Gestures and conducting.
\textsuperscript{16} See, for example, Virtanen 2007.
These conductors represent the different generations of conductors who have studied in Jorma Panula’s conducting class. It would have been beneficial to be able to include a list of all the conductors who have studied with Panula. This turned out to be impossible, since the Sibelius Academy did not update the student files from the early 1980s to the late 1990s, most of the years covered in this thesis. In addition, almost all other documents, including the material from the conducting class, have been destroyed. There was an attempt to create such a list with Professor Panula and his students, but it did not seem to provide valid enough result for an academic study, besides which it was very time consuming.

With most conductors there was more than one interview. All interviews are listed in the Bibliography. An interview with British conductor-composer Oliver Knussen was also included in Part II, Chapter 2.3.2, The Tanglewood connection. The role of this interview is minor, but still important for the wider contextualisation, and for studying the pedagogical continuum that developed around the Tanglewood conducting course with its similarities to the continuum of Finnish conductors, even including personal contacts.

The interviews have been used and analysed according to the theory of a qualitative interview, mainly using the studies of Robert Kahn, Charles Canell, Steinar Kvale and Pentti Virrankoski. All interviews with one exception were recorded and a transcription made of each.

The interviews are mainly treated as empirical material – insofar as possible. They are also sometimes used as background information, if what has been said by one has been said by all or by most so that it could be considered a fact. An interview as research material has a somewhat subjective and, some might argue, unreliable nature, and can therefore never be treated empirically in the purest scientific sense. Nevertheless, the interviews for this study

---

18 The first interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 22.9.1998, was not recorded because of technical problems. The conversation has been transcribed and checked by Salonen. The interview contains important facts on the education of conductors during the period of Panula’s classes 1973–1993 and it has been added to the transcribed interviews and used similarly as empirical material.
have not been understood or used as *paroles*. Because the interview is a frequently-used method in sociological study in general, it also seems to fit well into the discussion of the more specific questions related to conducting as work and to the construction of conductorship.

Because it was necessary to use such research methods as interview, the material had to be validated and justified as the main source of information. Furthermore, both the methods and the material were to respond – either by supporting or by contradicting, or ideally both – to the implications of the chosen theories. The use of the word *respond* here is intentional: an expectation that the theoretical process will produce only results that validate the hypotheses and which do not allow one to question them may lead only to a partial reading and to limited research results. To avoid a situation in which everything that does not quite fit the framework of the theory is simply left out, I have deliberately allowed the material to direct the study’s theoretical progress.

The study is divided into an Introduction, parts I, II and III, and Conclusions. Part I introduces the theory, concentrating first on the more general sociological context, and then proceeds to the more specific theory of gestures. Part II deals with the historical and sociological development of conductorship in Finland and the practices of education and work. Here the goal has been to find and bring to the surface, or to “filter” from the material, the *core* of the profession, which has then been analysed using an extensive case study as an illustrative and methodological example of applying the theory to practice. This takes place in the final part, the Analysis.

1.3 Research problems
As mentioned at the beginning of this Introduction, the main research problem is what kind of sociological construction is conductorship as a mythological, historical, sociological and practical phenomenon. There is also the question of whether the core of the profession can be found, whether it can be theorised and analysed and how. My hypothesis is that the core can be found through the theory of gestures, through which it is possible to study and analyse the working process and the situation. What is also expected is that the gestures of a conductor are analytical, gestural and social. The analytical and gestural (concrete) gestures happen on a very concrete level and together form a repertoire of gestures, which a conductor then varies. On a more abstract level the so-called social gestures develop from educational to working gestures and define the historical and sociological development of conducting as a practical skill. The key word uniting all these gestural levels is communication.

Sociologically, the main question is what kind of educational and institutional continuum does Finnish conductorship constitute in the context of an art world – here meaning the musical life in general, the orchestral institution in particular, or, most important, conductors as an institution. What is also interesting is how and in what kinds of sociologically understood forms has the institution operated and still operates today, and where does the development of Finnish conductorship fit within the context of the Central European tradition of conducting.

The structure of the study

Part I first introduces the sociological framework of the study. It concentrates on the concept of an art world and the different applications of this term. How these particular theories suit the study of conducting will be discussed as will the kinds of ideas, potential explanations and further questions they prompt. The end of Part I introduces those theoretical aspects of a musical gesture that will be used to study conducting gestures. Because the study of musical
performance does not have a specific theoretical emphasis, it will not be discussed at this point, but will be introduced and applied in Part III, Analysis.

Following Part I, which defines the more general context and main theoretical aspects, Part II concentrates on the particular subject matter of this thesis: Jorma Panula’s conducting class, his educational system, and conductors who have studied with him and carry on this practical tradition. The purpose here is to introduce the educational system on which the ways of working are based in Finland – the ideas behind the Finnish conductorship.

Part III of the study, Analysis, illustrates the chosen theoretical aspects with practical examples. The purpose of this part is to test whether the chosen theoretical points of view, introduced in Part I, are applicable to the practices of the work, which have been discussed in Part II. The goal is to find out if these points can bring out something new and relevant to the practical process of conducting. A lengthy case study with conductor John Storgård was arranged especially for this purpose. The whole process and the results of this study will be summarised in the Conclusions.
I THEORY AND APPLICATIONS

1. On the sociology of conducting

The title of this doctoral thesis contains the key concepts of the whole study. Those concepts are *gesture, institution, education,* and *conductorship.* Even if the more specific theoretical focus is on gestures, the general theoretical framework is sociological, which hopefully makes the usage of such concepts as institution, education, and conductorship more meaningful. In the sociological context the key terms, as mentioned earlier, are *core activity* and *core skill,* *identity, roles, continuum, margin,* and *fringe.*

The concepts that have been derived from the general concept of a musical gesture are *practical gesture* and *social gesture.* Practical gesture is closer to the general idea of a musical gesture, meaning the musical ideas written in a score that then become physically manifested. In addition to practical gestures, I suggest that there are social processes and practices that define the conductorship. These extend from the education of conductors to professional working life. These processes and practices – for example, the ways of teaching, and applying what has been learned to actual working situations – can also be seen as different types of gestures. These are the social gestures. Based on their functions, social gestures are here divided into *educational* and *working gestures.* They will be discussed later, in Chapter 2.5.

In this first chapter the sociological theories are merely introduced, not thoroughly studied and analysed. This is because my theoretical and analytical focus is on gestures and
the theory of gestures, with sociological theories defining the general context. The selective overview presented in the following sections is also important for introducing terminology. Clearly, there would be several subject areas that are closely related to conducting and conductorship and would be important to consider. However, to avoid shifting the focus from gestures to sociological study, the sociological theories referred to in this thesis will not be given more emphasis here.

The sociological framework has been constructed of different art world theories. In the following chapter the history of the term “art world” will be explained briefly, but the focus will be on two theories in particular: one introduced by Howard S. Becker in *Art Worlds* and the one by Larry Gross, discussed in his article “Art and Artists on the Margins”, published in the collection *On the Margins of Art Worlds*.\(^{19}\)

Becker’s theory has been chosen both because of his book’s status as a pioneer work on the subject, referred to by most if not all subsequent theorists, and – perhaps most importantly – because of Becker’s background as a musician. His study has become one of the central source books in the sociological study of arts, and its influence can be seen in one way or another in all the sociological art world theories developed thereafter. It is based solidly and practically on the idea of artistic activity as work and on patterns of cooperation, with music included in the practical examples given throughout the study.

Larry Gross, on the other hand, in his *Preface* to *On the Margins of Art Worlds*, and in the above-mentioned article, discusses the status, education, and marginality of an artist. All these factors are central to the present study. Since the focus in each book differs slightly, these theories seem to complete each other in a way that seems fruitful for further investigation. In addition, Gross acknowledges Becker as one of the background figures to the

\(^{19}\) Becker 1982 and Gross 1995b.
collection of articles in *On the Margins of Art Worlds*. This makes it possible to see his theory too as a reflective commentary of a certain kind.

Gross’s own article also touches on communicative theory, which serves as a link to the theory of gestures. The two theories are based partly on the same principles that make up the theory of gestures as it has been dealt with in this study. This is desirable, considering that *communication* is intended to be the key word uniting all the gestural levels discussed here.

Art world theories seem well suited to the sociological study of musical life, the interaction between conductors and orchestras as institutions, and music – like the other arts – as shared labour. The goal has been to find theories that not only suit the sociological framework of this particular study, but also seem not to have been applied to the study of conducting before. The chosen theories of sociological *art worlds* seem to fill these requirements.

The idea of the making of art being a cooperation between an artist and a group of people sharing the task of producing an artwork is central to this study. These theories seem to support the idea of orchestras being the art world-like work communities, within which the relationship between a conductor (the said artist) and an orchestra as an institution (the network of cooperative people) is constantly under negotiation.\(^{20}\) These theories include such subjects as different sociological positionings, artistic identities, and roles. They seem to answer many of the questions related to the education, work, and identities of conductors, as well as to the social patterns and relations inside musical work communities.

The socio-history of conducting as an institution in Finland has its beginnings in the development of the educational system. The term *socio-history* is used here as distinct from *social history*, to mark the difference between the history of social structures and society as a

\(^{20}\) The term is used here as Howard S. Becker uses it in his theory; see Becker 1982, page 32.
context for musical phenomena, and the history of musical phenomena as subjects for sociological study. In other words, the subject matter of the following chapters is considered to belong to the field of contemporary sociological study rather than to history. The focus is on institutions and their history as sociological phenomena – in other words, on *institutionalisation*.

This division has been done with the understanding that history is automatically included in every contemporary sociological study. However, it has seemed unnecessary to include any further discussion on social history here, in the belief that it would lead the subject matter too far from my focal point. I refer to Ivo Supičić, 21 who in his *Music in Society* points out, that “the social history of music and the sociology of music should not be confused, although they are closely aligned.”

Supičić says that “the problems addressed by the sociology of music were formulated for the first time toward the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century”. 22 However, the sociological study of music has only recently begun to address specialised questions related to such matters as relationships among musical life, society, and the different factors attached to them. These include, for example, musical institutions, musical and professional identities, marginal musical phenomena, and education. As Supičić says: “The sociology of music is only now beginning to establish itself as a specialized scholarly discipline.” 23 It has to be noted that Supičić’s book was published in 1987 and must be considered from a distance of twenty years. Nevertheless, I find Supičić’s comment to be somewhat valid also today, since this particular field of study still remains unestablished in many ways.

---

21 Supičić 1987, page xiii.
22 Ibid., page 7.
23 Ibid., page xii.
1.1 Art world theories and the study of conducting

Since art world theories form the theoretical framework for this study, the most important concept here is an art world. An art world is a “place”, usually both concrete and agreed upon, inside of which certain conventions and agreements regulate artistic activity. In this study the idea of an art world is closely linked with institutions. Musical life or concert life (of a given society) could be seen as an art world – specific and concrete when it comes to concert halls and similar venues, and agreed upon because it functions according to certain generally accepted rules and practices. Similarly, an orchestra as an institution constitutes an art world. Conducting as an institution is regarded as an art world here, although being more agreed upon than concrete it is difficult to define by the same standards.

What makes the institution of conducting unique as an art world is its dependence on the orchestras. There are, in fact, two interrelated. This idea goes very well with the idea of two communicational spaces or modes studied later in this thesis and already touched on in the Introduction: the communicational space which includes a conductor and an orchestra, in a space where an audience is present. These spaces are both concrete and agreed upon, because they are ruled by conventions – and here can be seen the reason why the art world as a theoretical concept seems so well adapted to conducting.

If the musical life is seen as an art world, then it becomes possible to include such important matters as the recording industry, producers, agents, media, and commercialism within that world. These matters too are concrete and influential, especially when it comes to the promotion of orchestras, conductors, and soloists. This is a very relevant and interesting area of musical professionalism, but because it is such a large subject matter, it has been omitted from this study, and requires further investigation.

---

As already mentioned in Introduction, I am speaking only of orchestral conductors in this thesis; choruses and opera have been omitted from it.
The history of the concept art world has been explained concisely by Erkki Sevänen in *Taide instituutiona ja järjestelmänä. Modernin taide-elämän historiallis-sosiologiset mallit* (Art as an institution and a system: The historical and sociological models of modern art life).\(^{25}\) The term “art world” was first introduced by Arthur Danto in his article “The Art World”, first published in 1964, and further discussed – although Danto himself has claimed not quite accurately interpreted – by George Dickie.\(^{26}\)

Howard S. Becker has introduced his theory in *Art Worlds*, based on the theories of Danto and Dickie.\(^{27}\) Becker points out that the concept of an art world, used in a metaphoric and even loose way by many writers, is used in his study in “a more technical way”, technical meaning a practical and concrete study of patterns and processes of artistic activity as work. Becker’s “focus has been on forms of social organization”, on institutions and art as the joint labour of a number of people and a sociologically functioning network.\(^{28}\)

As a theoretical premises for the main theses of his book *Taide instituutiona ja järjestelmänä*, Erkki Sevänen represents art in society as a cultural and social phenomenon that can be divided into two theoretical approaches. These are art as an institution and art as a system. The former has an established tradition, especially in the United States and Britain, while the latter includes mainly German theorists.\(^{29}\) Because both the theoretical and the practical focus of my study is on musical insitutions (orchestras and conductors as institutions) and on institutionalisation as a process, the chosen theoretical approach represents the Anglo-American line.

All the above mentioned theorists representing the Anglo-American tradition form a ‘cumulatively’ progressing theoretical continuum. This continuum could be called

\(^{26}\) It is more thoroughly discussed in Dickie’s (1971) book *Aesthetics: An Introduction*. The Finnish translation (1985) has been referred to here.  
\(^{27}\) Becker 1982, page x. 
\(^{28}\) Ibid.  
conversational, meaning that the theorists comment on each other, and through this discourse each theorist endeavours to take the ideas a step further. The theories of Arthur Danto are discussed further in George Dickie’s works, on which in turn Howard S. Becker has partly based his terminology related to the idea of an art world. Becker, in turn, has been cited by Larry Gross. What is interesting here is how the theories have evolved and been applied, and therefore it has not been my intention to study and discuss each theory in itself, but to examine how the different art world theories have been responded to and analysed further by other researchers. Three particular theorists have been chosen: Becker, Gross, and Simo Säätelä, whose article discussing Danto and Dickie will be briefly examined.

What has to be taken into account is that the idea of a theoretical continuum does not mean that there is unity among all the theorists – for example, the role of an art world in George Dickie’s theory is less significant than for Danto, for whom it plays a major role, while Becker and Gross have based their entire studies on the concept.

_Danto and Dickie considered_

As Simo Säätelä mentions in his article _Taidemaailma: taiteen kehykset ja paradigmat_ (Art world: Framework and Paradigms of Art), Danto’s definition for the term “art world” is not very clear and has led to many different interpretations. According to Säätelä, Danto’s art world is predominantly conceptual and is based on theories of art and their interpretations. It is a “conceptual basis for art, overstepping the mere physical existence of a work of art, and making its special ontological position as an ‘interpreted’ entity possible”.

30 See especially Dickie 1985 [1971].
32 Säätelä 1986.
33 Ibid., 20. All the following quotations have been translated by A.K.
34 Ibid.
In other words, as Säätelä continues, the role of the theories of art is, according to Danto, to make art possible. However, Säätelä says, that even if Danto makes comparisons to Heidegger’s *Zeugganzes* (a system of interrelated tools, the parts being dependent on the entity and vice versa), and Wittgenstein, the idea is incomplete, because Danto does not connect his idea of an art world to the concrete practices of art. This is also why Danto’s theory is difficult to apply to the study of music and musicianship, especially if the subject matter – as in this case – is practically biased.

Dickie, on the other hand, according to Säätelä, has introduced the term “art world” with a different emphasis. Säätelä says that “Dickie has underlined that art is communal activity by nature, and he aims to outline its ‘institutional’ structure, the social framework within which art works exist”. For Dickie, art is “activity with social roles”, which implies that his theory has practical contact points, so to speak. Ultimately, Säätelä points out, Dickie does not discuss these topics any further.

On view here, however, is the functional core around which the theories of Becker and Gross, and the ideas of art world and art-making as collective and practical activity (as well the negations that possibly arise) are built. In this way Dickie’s ideas are very similar to the focus of this study: artistic activity – in this case, conducting – as an institutional and communal activity with social roles.

**Becker and Art World**

Becker divides the sociological study of the art worlds into two different approaches: the “aesthetic”, and the “social organizational”, the latter being the principle for his own

---

37 Ibid.
According to Becker, these two styles of analysis do not necessarily “conflict or contradict one another. They may just be two different sets of questions asked of the same empirical materials.” Even if the practically emphasised “social organizational” approach Becker uses suits the study of conducting, I have decided not to exclude entirely the aesthetic view of the subject matter.

At the beginning of the research process, it seemed quite clear that the focus would be merely on the social and practical aspects of conducting as an institution. However, as the role of the theory of gestures and the gestical communication became more and more important, it turned out that it would simply be impossible to outline the aesthetic view. Even if the aesthetic approach to art worlds is not used in this study as such, it seemed necessary to acknowledge its presence, so to speak, with such matters as interpretation and artistic individuality being considered later in the text.

Becker uses the term art world “to denote the network of people whose cooperative activity, organized via their joint knowledge of conventional means of doing things, produces the kind of art works that art world is noted for.” He has treated “art as the work some people do”, and has been “more concerned with patterns of cooperation among the people who make the art worlds than with the works themselves”.

Becker’s usage suits my purposes very well, for I have regarded conducting as work, that happens through the artistic activity of a network of people – the joint knowledge and activities of an orchestra and a conductor working together cooperatively. With conductors, however, there is the question of leadership and the need of a musical authority with both

---

40 Becker, page xi.
41 Ibid., page x.
42 Ibid., page ix.
historical and practical roots\textsuperscript{43} to be considered. There is a solution for this, too, in Becker’s theory, via “an understanding of the complexity of the cooperative networks through which art happens”\textsuperscript{44}.

An art world is built on a constant negotiation between social, economic, aesthetic, and material matters – on training, on a variety of activities in the process of creating, manufacturing and distribution of art works, and on the response and appreciation of audiences and art critics.\textsuperscript{45} The key idea here is the variety of activities – the “division of labor”, as Becker calls it – in a work community. According to Becker, “situations of art making lie somewhere between the extremes of one person doing everything and every smallest activity being done by a separate person”. This means that “every art, then, rests on an extensive division of labor”.\textsuperscript{46} According to Becker there is always work to be done that supports the work of the artist.

The idea of shared knowledge is similar to the idea of the work community, that includes a symphony orchestra and a conductor – the two institutions which, because of the size and working culture of the modern, full-size symphony orchestra and the role of the modern conductor, in a wider sense include each other. Even if the orchestras have become more and more independent, self-ruling entities, while conductors, in turn, have become “soloists”, both are the institutions which in practice cannot work separately.

Similarly, Becker’s idea of extensive division of labour seems to fit conducting as institution well, especially if the conductor is the chief conductor or the artistic director of his or her ‘own’ orchestra. According to Becker, inside this institution which the orchestra, the

\textsuperscript{43} I am referring here to the historical process as a result of which the musician acting as a leader took a new role in front of an orchestra for practical reasons, this change of position leading to the so called ‘modern conductor’ standing on a podium during the late nineteenth century.

\textsuperscript{44} Becker 1982, page 1.

\textsuperscript{45} Becker 1982, pages 3-4.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., page 7.
conductor, and the personnel make together with their cooperatorional work, all activities that need to be accomplished are done by different people.

The community of an orchestra and a conductor could be seen as an art world. In a way there are art worlds that include each other: the one described here, and the one within which it works, that is, a musical life. On the other hand, musical life as an art world is included by the art world of culture and cultural life. This art world, as Larry Gross says in his article “Art and Artists on the Margins”, is a “psychological periphery” or a “reservation”, marginal from the point of view of the non-artists and the other people working inside it.47

 Gord and Marginality

Both Howard S. Becker and Larry Gross discuss the Western idea of an artist, as someone whose identity and social role have developed since the Renaissance into an idea of a romantic genius. They also discuss the many ways of being an artist in today's world and the issues that artists confront. On these issues the ideas of Becker and Gross differ. While Becker does not deny the special role of the artist and the art work he or she produces, he does believe that artistic identity and its definitions, as well as the forms of the division of artistic labour change over time.48 What interests Gross, on the other hand, is the historical development, “asking why modern Western societies have come to view the arts as a preserve for elites from which most citizens are estranged”.49

The idea central to this chapter is how Gross understands the concepts of an art world and the place an artist has in it. In the Preface to On the Margins of Art Worlds, Gross implies that there is an aesthetic bias in the collection of articles selected for the book, his own article included, which represent an approach to art worlds in which Becker is not particularly

49 Gross 1995a, page viii.
interested. This is one of the reasons why Becker and Gross have been selected for closer reading here – to bring out the points where the “aesthetic” and “social organizational”, as Becker puts it, either come close to or differ from each other. I find this contrast important, as a means to understand better the dilemma between the practical and the aesthetic (or the technical and the expressive, to use the terminology of this study), which makes the analysis of conductors’ gesticulation so complex.

In his Preface, Gross begins by naming Becker as a point of departure for an approach to art that, according to Gross, represents the opposite of the romantic image of the artist:

It is not necessary to deny that artworks are in some way special and are different from other products of human activity nor to argue that artists are in no significant sense different from other workers who produce goods and services. But treating the production of art as work and artists as workers and examining the conductions under which these activities take place illuminates much that is obscured by the dictates of romantic individualism.\(^{50}\)

While Becker pays more attention to the role of society and art as a social, joint activity, Gross focuses on the role of the individual artist. Whereas Becker goes straight to the sociological structures of making art a cooperative activity, Gross begins his article Art and Artists on the Margins by discussing art through the basic model of communicative theories: an artist creating a work of art, which is then appreciated by an audience. He\(^ {51}\) views this pattern as including the basic, universal elements of art making:

Although wide disparities among cultures and periods appear in their concepts of who can and should be defined as an artist and in the recruitment, training, and treatment of these individuals, in the modern West it is assumed that unique individual attributes – generally called talent – mark those eligible for the role of artist.\(^ {52}\)

\(^{50}\) Gross 1995a, page vii.
\(^{51}\) Ibid., page 2.
\(^{52}\) Gross 1995b, page 1.
For Gross, the basis for the discussion of art worlds is the romantic idea of the artist as genius and outsider, whose work is based on the demands of originality and creativity. In addition to the question of the role of conductors and orchestras as institutions, there is another interesting link to conductors: the question of mythical maestros, based on the same romantic idea of an artist as genius with its implications of untouchability and unquestionability. Here Gross offers a valuable theoretical tool with which to question the structures of the myth. The applicability of this theoretical approach to conducting and its results will be more thoroughly considered in the Chapter 1.5.

The idea of an artist being an outsider follows the idea of marginality. As already mentioned, Gross has an idea of art being on the margins – the artists living in a “reservation”. He says:

I am speaking of a reservation in a sense that we tend to view the arts as institutions that exist at the fringe of society. These are cultural “spaces” that real people visit in their spare, fringe time but that only fringe, spare people inhabit in their real time. The arts can be said to exist on a reservation, therefore, because their “territory” is foreign to the majority of the population, is visited briefly by a minority as a leisure-time tourist attraction, and is lived in by a tiny minority of special people.\(^\text{53}\)

Gross continues by saying that only those people with special qualifications are “considered eligible for (or condemned to) full-time residency on this reservation”.\(^\text{54}\) This is an idea that can be applied generally to all the arts.

With conductors, however, the question is two-fold. If being on the margins means skills acquired by highly specialised education, the idea fits extremely well. It may be easier, at least hypothetically, for a person to be an amateur painter or a writer, for example, without formal training, and become publicly known and appreciated – but to be an amateur conductor and get opportunities to work with professional orchestras is in many cases not

\(^{53}\) Ibid., pages 3-4.
\(^{54}\) Ibid., page 4.
possible, even if there are well-known and highly appreciated conductors who have not had formal training in their background.

This is, of course, a generalisation, written with the understanding that every art has rules about amateurship and integration into the professional world. However, the criteria for accepting visiting conductors in professional orchestras have become so demanding that in practice it may be impossible for an inexperienced conductor even to begin to gain experience. This exclusivity supports the idea of conducting as a highly selective institution, and thus on the marginals, even in comparison to many other professions in the musical life. At the same time there is a problem: conductors are dependent on orchestras and other ensembles, which again brings the question closer to Becker and to the social organisational approach.

On the one hand, conductors have historically followed the same path and are, in fact, a very good example of the romantic myth of the artist as an individualist and an original, creative genius – and as such, an outsider. If taking into account that the basic social patterns in which conductors and orchestras work together have been, more or less, always essentially the same, conductorship as a phenomenon truly seems to be a myth. On the other hand, considering the visibility and reputation the ‘great conductors’ gained during the twentieth century, it seems wrong, even absurd, to say that conductors have been on the margins of musical life. This dilemma as well as other questions related to conducting and marginality will be more thoroughly considered in Chapter 1.5.

Among Gross’s criteria for someone aspiring to live on a reservation are vocation. In the case of art this “vocation” is, according to Gross, “defined by the mysterious spark of talent, even genius, that sets one outside (above?) the mainstream”.\footnote{Ibid.} As Gross says, the term “vocation” implies things as making art being something one is destined to do, making the
artist someone who has been ‘chosen’ for that particular position he or she has. It also implies that there is something mythical in the production of art works by such artists.

However, I argue that not all artists live and work on the margins, if the criterion for art is to be something mysterious and made by an outsider-genius – even if it happens on the margins of society. There are interesting and telling differences in the nuances of the following words: profession – work – occupation – vocation – calling – business. Some artists “just work”, while others may have even more mundane purposes and do what they do mainly because it is profitable. On the other hand, there may be artists who by occupation are conductors, while others may consider conducting as one of several occupations – something they do seriously but not as a primary activity.

This list of nuances (which could be even longer) came into being after serious consideration of how the question of defining the professionalism of a conductor could be. It seemed to be a good idea to specify the problem and to explore the possible definitions for being a conductor. There seemed to be so many ways of being a conductor that using just one word – even if all the overtones are taken into account – was not diverse enough to explain or even depict them. It could be expected that the same goes for all the arts, and artists.

Artistic activity as a vocation has been studied from the point of view of art history by Deborah J. Haynes in The Vocation of the Artist. Her title underlines the specific nature of the work of an artist in particular – not just anyone in general. It is the vocation of the artist. Like Gross, Haynes links vocation with ‘calling’. She uses Remedios Varo’s painting The Call as a starting point for her analysis and asks: “Who calls? We cannot know”.57

However academically it is approached, the artistic vocation seems to encompass something profoundly mythical and inexplicable. Haynes, citing Adam Smith and Karl Marx, introduces the same idea that Becker has studied, albeit here with a sociological bias: division

56 Haynes 1997.
57 Ibid., for example page 30.
of labour as a reason for division of status – in this case, artistic and social status.\textsuperscript{58} In other words, division of labour not only is unavoidable in a society, but also is necessary in a way to create these hierarchies in which some people are allowed to take the position in an art world that might marginalise them.

However, for Becker the hierarchies are less social, political, and economic than those Haynes makes in her study when citing Smith and Marx. The hierarchies are present, but studied from a slightly different point of view. The basic idea is still the same: there has to be some kind of differentiation to make such a phenomenon as artistic genius, myth, or special vocation or calling possible.

Without going any further into Haynes’s analysis, which naturally is very differently biased than that of this study, it is possible to find some general structural similarities. Haynes has also decided to open the terminological tangle by introducing a list of synonyms borrowed from Hannah Arendt but used with a slightly different emphasis: “labor”, “work”, and “action”.\textsuperscript{59} Haynes says:

\begin{quote}
In The Human Condition Hannah Arendt introduced a useful set of distinctions concerning work by analyzing human activities in the world in terms of labor, work, and action. Arendt believed that the task of human beings is to produce things that transcend human mortality. In short, we create in order not to die. Labor is cyclical and repetitive. Work is teleological: It has a beginning and end, is instrumental, and is often violent. Action is unpredictable, irreversible, and anonymous. As defined by Arendt, each of these forms of work has its own characteristic; and I think they suggest specific ideas about the vocation of the artist.\textsuperscript{60}
\end{quote}

This quotation is, of course, taken out of the original referential context and not analysed thoroughly, but the idea has been selected because it seems to be similar to the ideas explored in this study. What is profoundly different is that Haynes is looking for alternatives for

\begin{footnotes}
58 Ibid., page 38.
59 Ibid., page 44.
60 Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
interpreting artistic *vocation*, while in my study I have looked for alternatives to artistic *activity* as a distinct, sociologically understood concept.

Without going deeper into Haynes’s analysis, there seems to be a common ground for all arts, socially, theoretically, and terminologically. It seems that the same set of questions can be directed to any artist representing any field of art. Many of the issues seem to suit conductors as an institution extremely well.

In addition it should be noted that in the history of music and professional musicianship, conductors were the last group to become noticed and considered as virtuosi. This means that within music as a field of art, there were other forms of professionalism long before conductors emerged, and their ‘job description’, so to speak, started to become differentiated during the twentieth century and became a *myth* as recently as the 1990s.

The idea of an individual talent also has an important role in Howard S. Becker’s *Art Worlds*, even if the approach is different. The individuality and its public recognition is, in fact, a source for Becker’s term *core activity*, a specific artistic activity that is characteristic of an artist in a certain branch of art. The next section will discuss the core activity of a conductor – a *core skill*.

1.2 Core activity – core skill

In a way, Becker’s term *core activity* is his equivalent to the list of synonyms presented above, with a very practical emphasis. He says:

> Participants in the making of art works, and members of society generally, regard some of the activities necessary to the production of a form of art as ‘artistic’, requiring the

---

61 See, for example, Galkin 1988.
62 Along with the name *virtuoso* naturally came the first inclinations towards the idea of mythical maestros, but the socially critical term *maestro myth* came into being during the 1990s, when Norman Lebrecht first published his book *The Maestro Myth: Great Conductors in Pursuit of Power* in 1991. See Lebrecht 1992.
special gifts or sensibility of an artist. They further regard those activities as the core activities of art, necessary to make the work of art. The remaining activities seem to them a matter of craft, business acumen, or some other ability less characteristic of art, less necessary to the work’s success, less worthy of respect. They define the people who perform these other activities as (to borrow a military term) support personnel, reserving the title of ‘artist’ for those who perform the core activities.  

In a musical performance, for example of a symphony, one’s first thought is to reserve the title of artist to the composer. The social changes inside the work community, however, has granted this role to the conductor, who not only gives form to the music through his special skills and interprets it, but also “plays” it – the orchestra being his instrument. Becker offers a humoristic but realistic example, that is close to the idea that I have tried to express here:

Marcel Duchamp violated the ideology by insisting that he created a valid work of art when he signed a commercially produced snowshovel or a reproduction of the Mona Lisa on which he had drawn a moustache...thus classifying Leonardo as support personnel along with the snowshovel’s designer and manufacturer. Outrageous as that idea may seem, something like it is standard in making collages, entirely constructed of other people’s work.

With the hope that this comparison will not, in turn, be considered outrageous, it is suggested here that while Becker’s example is not comparable to the relationship between a composer and a conductor, there have been examples among the conductors of the past, where the role of a certain conductor has overrun the role of the composer. This, in fact, is one of the reasons why there is an on-going debate about whether a musical work should be interpreted or realised. This question will be discussed in Chapter 2.6 of Part I.

Generally speaking, the sociological role of a conductor as a musical primus motor – both the artistic freedom involved and responsibility of preparing the musical works from score to performance – is the conductor’s core activity. How it is done, in what way this core

---

64 Ibid., page 19.
activity has changed over time, and what kinds of daily negotiation performing the artistic activity requires are questions of quite another kind.

Core activity seems a particularly useful term here because it extends to the complex structures of larger work communities. It will be often referred to later in the text – it has been used both specifically to define the focal point of conductors’ professional activities and skills, and as a more abstract theoretical concept indicating the sociological core of the different aspects of conductorship.

Even if Becker’s term core activity is based on a practical consideration of the arts as work, it has still been treated as a sociological and theoretical term rather than a practical, concrete matter that might also be discussed in a less scientific way. Becker’s term and theory are thus very useful when studying the nature and core of the work that conductors do. However, since the actual matter – what conductors do – is very difficult to define or even to understand if not conducting oneself, it seemed fruitful to include an even more practical approach to the same matter yet from another point of view.

In his book A Compleat Conductor, Gunther Schuller has used the term core skill to discuss more or less the same thing as Becker; here one can see Schuller’s practical equivalent of Becker’s core activity is a core skill. It is very tempting to find similarities in the terms, even if there is not a direct link between them. In a way one could simply say that Becker’s approach is more theoretical because it has its roots firmly in sociological theory, while Schuller’s term represents the practical ‘application’. In the chapter entitled Philosophy of Conducting, Schuller says:

Every conductor, after all, thinks of himself/herself as embodying the highest moral artistic integrity and possessing all the requisite skills to interpret the great masterworks of our literature. We must therefore consider more precisely the specific core skills with which the conductor can effectively respond to – and achieve – the stated challenges. A

---

simple definition of the art of conducting could be that it involves eliciting from the orchestra with the most appropriate minimum of conductorial (if you will, choreographic) gestures a maximum of accurate acoustical results.\textsuperscript{66}

The specific core activity that becomes the core skill of a conductor is a \textit{gesture}, in all the forms that gesture becomes apparent in the work. In other words, the core of conductor’s work is the \textit{conducting gestures} (“conductorial gestures” as Schuller puts it), which in this study mean not only the concrete gestural movements made while conducting in front of an orchestra, but also all those gestures involved in the processes of becoming and being a professional conductor.

In fact, Schuller’s \textit{conductorial gestures} seem to reveal the core of the whole question: these gestures are conductorial, that is, characteristic of a conductors in particular. However, even if it provides a very useful and characteristic term, “conductorial” seems to include merely the gestures that take place when one actually conducts. The term \textit{conducting gestures} has been used here, to add more levels to the discussion of the subject and to include the sociological and social aspects related to gestures.

It should be mentioned here that it would be impossible to study these questions if Becker’s theory of the core activity of an artist were not included or taken as a basis for the whole discussion. Without this theory, this very practical matter would not have the same relevance in the context of an academic study.

Schuller’s idea of a specific core skill of a conductor working with an orchestra is an interesting addition to this discussion because, like Becker’s theory, it implies that the core is the artistic activity itself, not an aesthetic or otherwise more or less hypothetical consideration of the nature of being an artist – here a conductor. Again like Becker, Schuller seems to discuss the making of art as a social activity closely tied to and dependent on the structures and cooperation inside the art world. Both the core activity and the core skill are therefore

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid.
closely tied to the question of *artistic identity* – here conductorship – as a personally and socially\textsuperscript{67} constructing, even constructed, matter.

1.3 Identities

In *Art Worlds*, Howard S. Becker deals with such questions as what is considered art inside the boundaries of an art world, or rather how art is defined and on what grounds some forms of art or certain art works are included or excluded. These things are being defined by the participants in an art world, and they are constantly going through the process of re-definition. There is also the relationship between the artist and his or her ‘support personnel’ to consider, bringing to the surface the possibility of conflicts.

According to Becker, “since the definition of the core activity changes over time, the division between artist and support personnel also changes, leading to difficulties”.\textsuperscript{68} These points of potential conflicts breaking and changing the positioning inside an art world are the ones that Becker is tracing. As his\textsuperscript{69} main interests lie in the artist and art as work along with the position of an artist in the cooperative pattern of people making the work of art in question, the differences between the “artistic” and an “unartistic” approach to work are also subject matters that need to be discussed. These words are central partly because both always have to be present inside the art world in order to support the sociological structure of professionalism.

The context is again an art world, inside which the artistic and social activities take place. These activities affect the way the artistic identity of an artist develops, is constructed and under negotiation, and becomes emphasised. Sociological study operates with opposite terms that bring out the dualistic nature of the concept of artistic identity – the terms used here

\textsuperscript{67} On personal and social identity, see Lepistö 1991.
\textsuperscript{68} Becker 1982, page 19.
\textsuperscript{69} Ibid., pages 16–19.
are personal and social, borrowed from Vappu Lepistö.\textsuperscript{70} She has discussed these terms – or rather concepts – in the study \textit{Kuvataiteilija taidemaailmassa}\textsuperscript{71} (Artist in an art world).

Lepistö’s theory of artistic identities is also based on the idea of an art world as it has been interpreted since Howard S. Becker, while her idea of artistic identity is based on Erwing Goffman’s and Georg-Herbert Mead’s\textsuperscript{72} theories of a two-fold identity, divided into social and personal. Lepistö’s study has a central role in the present study in more than one way: not only are the different identities and types studied, but to too are the questions concerning the integration of an artist to an art world. She links together the concepts of an art world, an identity, myths and types, all of which have to do with an artist integrating, and being integrated, into the field of artistic activity and the structures of an art world as a sociologically understood construction – in other words, an artist being \textit{socialised} and “stepping into” the art world professionally.

An identity is one of the important theoretical concepts of this study. As mentioned by Lepistö, the theories of artistic identities in general are so closely linked with art world theories, that they can almost be understood as a parts of the same thing, or at least identities can be seen as one specific level on which to operate when analysing the structures of art worlds. Identities are therefore presented here as part of the same theoretical framework as art world theories. The already mentioned positionings and roles, as well as the question of types discussed later in the study, will be observed and analysed through identities.

Even if there are theories and analyses significant for the study of artistic identity,\textsuperscript{73} it is mainly the identity-theories of Vappu Lepistö that are referred to in this study. Identity would be an interesting subject for extensive further study, but because the sociological aspects have

\begin{footnotes}
\item[70] Lepistö 1991.
\item[71] Ibid.
\item[73] There is, for example, Stuart Hall’s study of cultural identity; see Hall 1999.
\end{footnotes}
intentionally been considered the context for the main theoretical questions dealing with gestures, sociological theories have therefore merely been touched on here.

When observing the idea of personal/social artistic identity presented in Vappu Lepistö’s theory, there is a very interesting concept that can be detected behind the artistic activity that is intertwined with the two-fold identity: the ongoing balancing between the personal and social identities that is constantly present in all artistic activity. Like Becker’s core activity it also changes over time. The question is also about emphasis and about which ‘mode’ of identity is more dominant – and when and why. Both the art world and the society surrounding it affect the process of constructing an identity, consciously as well as unconsciously. Vappu Lepistö implies that an identity is not only a result of a social process, but also a constructed matter:

The concept of identity is usually divided into personal (individual), and social (community-bound) identity. The personal identity represents mostly a person’s subjective idea of self, while the social identity becomes the objective and institutional side of self, which becomes activated during different situations of interaction.\(^{74}\)

The term *construction* has been used frequently in my study. It is not one of the terms Lepistö uses, but is nevertheless useful here. As already mentioned, it carries in itself an intentional implication of a sociological art world being a purposely built structure, influenced by several factors whose positions usually are hierarchical and their functions evaluative. As also said above, in the context of this study the term does not carry the ideas of, for example, constructive theories within it. It seemed important to mention this again, since such terms as construction could easily be used carelessly. In a way this term suits the study of conductors very well: since it is a fact that conductors have historically been considered mythical, legendary, and “great”, there has to be a theoretical tool to analyse these terms or concepts.

\(^{74}\) Lepistö 1991, page 32. Transl. A.K.
One recent study should be mentioned here, *Music and the Sociological Gaze* by Peter J. Martin, where the problems of *social constructionism* are touched on. Here Martin discusses an issue that “concerns the implications of the contention that the meaning of cultural objects is not inherent in the objects themselves”. He continues:

> Neither does their meaning somehow exist independently of social life. Rather it is constituted in and through the interactional processes of real people in real situations. What is entailed, of course, and what some authors have considered a radically new idea, is that ‘pieces of music’ do not have a single or unambiguous meaning which is the business of the analyst to decipher. Instead, meanings are created, sustained, and challenged in processes of collaborative interaction; indeed, from this perspective, cultural objects may be said to be *constituted* through such processes.

Even if, as Martin says, his is not “a novel suggestion”, it has to be pointed out that some of the terms and ideas he uses related to the social construction are also related to what is discussed in the present study. Here, I believe, the subject matter is also similar to the central ideas behind Becker’s art worlds. The purpose of this example was not, however, to try to link the term *construction* with constructionism. Rather, it was to demonstrate that even if it is possible to define one’s own usage of a certain term seemingly distinct from other implications, the term always carries intrinsically something from the surrounding field of study.

What is proposed is that the concept of *conductorship* is a constructed identity that has come into being, developed, and gone through quite radical historical and social changes. With time, the need for balancing between personal and social needs seems to have increased. With unions taking care of the rights of orchestra musicians, the work communities have, from the point of view of the research, become more ‘sociological’, meaning that there are no longer are dictatorial maestros with the right to hire and fire. Modern symphony orchestras

---

75 Martin 2006.
76 Ibid., page 17.
have become self-ruling entities whose institutional activities are based on the idea of co-operation, to use Becker’s term – with each job being done by a separate person and all closely linked to form an effective network. This network has reduced the power of conductors, who seldom make decisions by themselves.

There are also the complicated structures of the ‘musical’ work community – the conductor and the orchestra working together. In this respect, too, the conductor’s ‘place’ in the art world, which the work community can be understood to be, has changed. Even if the conductors interviewed for this study mentioned that there is still a need for musical authority, at the same time the relationship between conductors and orchestras – at least in Finland – has become more collegial.  

Behaviour that was generally accepted from the ‘great’ conductors of the early twentieth century is no longer tolerated. The same goes for standards of orchestral sound, with higher requirements within the orchestras themselves.

There are institutions and social environments such as different work communities that shape one’s identity. These institutions often function interactively, affect each other, and sometimes cause conflicts that require negotiation. Applied to conductors, the art world might, for example, be the musical life, and the social work community an orchestra, within which the identity is constantly being moulded and changed. For a conductor, the question of identity is very much about being in front of an orchestra – the different modes of being in the situation and in the space. These questions will be introduced and studied more closely at the end of Chapter 2, where these modes of being and their relationship to the terms identity and role will be discussed more thoroughly.

In general, an identity is seen here as something that is shaped partly by the person himself or herself, partly by the sociological aspects that affect it from outside. Role, on the

---

77 The great differences in the working culture in different musical traditions must also be taken into account. For example, in Central Europe there are orchestras that have very deep-rooted ways of working and a strong sense of unity in matters regarding the relationship with and behaviour towards conductors.
other hand, is seen as something that is merely taken. There are different situations occurring in the course of daily work that require a conductor to change his or her way of being in front of an orchestra – different modes of being. This is what I would like to use the term role for. Whether conducting is actually a form of acting will be discussed at the beginning of Chapter 3.

When discussing the field of art from a sociological point of view, one should also mention the pioneers Janet Wolff and Pierre Bourdieu. Both naturally represent different theoretical views, but some of their ideas are similar to the subject matter of this study. Again, there are several important and central theorists who could, and should, be mentioned. However, the above-mentioned theorists and theories who were chosen for the short overview of the sociological framework of this study seemed the most applicable here. In addition, there has been an endeavour to present and discuss the principal Finnish researchers and theorists that have studied these questions in order to define the position of this study in the previous research on the subject matter.

1.4 Conclusion: marginal or fringe?

The reason for returning to the question of marginality here is because most of the terms and theoretical concepts discussed above are combined in marginality. As the ideas discussed above about identity show, the profession of a conductor can be seen to be both a personally and a socially constructed matter. As mentioned, the concept of myth, which has served as the starting point for this study, is closely related to the term marginality. Marginality both confirms some ideas and obscures others that are attached to being a conductor.

---

The need to separate oneself from the crowd has very strongly played a strong part in constructing what has been called conductorship. Sociologically speaking, myth as historical matter has meant greater social differences in the work communities; these differences have become apparent in questions of authority, musical decisions, and conductor’s power over musicians. From the point of view of personal identity, such differences set the conductors of the early twentieth century apart from the work community, placing them in a marginal position, even if from the social point of view they were more visible than ever.

From the point of view of the research, the term “marginal” can also be seen as a tool with which to obscure the ideas of “Western conductorship” when studying the origins of the so called “baton-conducting” tradition. In connection with tradition, the practical question of how an orchestra has been conducted could be rephrased to consider what has been the role of its leader: that of a musician playing along with the ensemble as a keyboard player, a soloist, a leader or a concertmaster or the one of the “modern” conductor, standing in front of the orchestra. 79

The change in the role of the musician leading the ensemble is also central for Elliott W. Galkin, but the focus in his study seems mainly to be on the development of baton conducting and the conventionalisation of its practices from the 1850s onwards. 80 He refers to the standardisation of orchestras and concert culture, the process of which began during the latter half of the 1800s and finally arrived at the forms more or less valid today by the turn of the twentieth century. What has not been taken into account here is that actually the tradition of what I have called “conductor-musicianship” has in fact not ceased to be. From the point of view of present study, the question is more about identity: how a conductor sees his position

79 There is a difference between a leader and a concertmaster here, the latter being a profession – someone’s job – that has been created and established along with the development of the modern symphony orchestra. By leader, on the other hand, is meant the role of a musician – perhaps a conductor as he or she might be called today – playing along with the ensemble and leading it.
in a working situation with other musicians, whether they form an ensemble or a full-size symphony orchestra.

Galkin has chosen the specific year 1855 as a culmination point: it is the year of the publication of Hector Berlioz’s *L’Art du chef d’orchestre*, “the pioneer study of modern baton conducting”. Berlioz’s book was a work with which “the conductor’s new status in the age of personal ego and individuality was dramatically epitomized”, the role of an ensemble musician leading the orchestra giving way to a modern conductor. The latter part of the nineteenth century is also significant here for being the time during which conductors became and were acknowledged as the “newest” – and latest – group of virtuosi. The rise of what Galkin calls the virtuoso conductor “coincides with the period during which public concerts became the primary centers for musical activity”. In press and public recognition conductors were comparable to other popular virtuosi by 1880. The development of virtuoso conductorship is parallel to the process of the modern conductor and Western conductorship, leading to such long-lasting concepts as mythical maestros.

It is interesting to perceive that Galkin seems to consider the earlier conducting practices and the new status of a conductor as exculsionary, the rise of baton conducting from the mid nineteenth century practically overriding all previous methods of conducting. These two periods, the diverse methods and the time of baton conducting, form two successive phases in the historical line of development of conducting, following but also substituting for each other. While thoroughly presenting the early printed documents on conducting and giving the above mentioned Berlioz much thought, Galkin overlooks another book with the same title *L’Art du chef d’orchestre*, by Paris Opera conductor Edouard Marie Ernest Delvedez, published in 1878, by remarking only that “Delvedez’s treatise was old-fashioned for its time, for it pleaded the cause of the violin-bow conductor, who was no longer active in any

---

81 Ibid., pages xxxiv and xxxviii.
82 Ibid., page xxix, also pages xxv and 42.
European country except France”. 83 Later in his book Galkin states that “the violin director was destined only to be a transitional figure in the development of conducting.”84 The same goes for keyboard conductors. These historical types of leadership are not entirely absent from the chapters discussing modern conductorship and do appear occasionally as sort of “modern-day resemblances”, but they are more virtuosic exceptions than practitioners of living and currently valid traditions.

In fact, there seems to be an inconsistency in Galkin’s theory here: he proclaims that the tradition I have called conductor-musicianship ended with the rise of the baton conductor, yet his book mentions conducting musicians such as violinist Pinchas Zuckerman illustrating what conducting is today, or rather at the time the book was published the 1980s. This seems merely to confirm that the tradition of conductor-musicianship still exists, and has in fact continued to be all the while. Again, I emphasise that the question is more about identity – how one’s musical identity as a conductor is presented.

The structures on which the ideas of conductorship are built change very slowly as do all general ideas of musicianship and musicians, especially those considered legendary. Until recently, thanks to the biographical approach having mainly been used in writing the history of musicians, soloists and composers as well as conductors, the history of lives and careers of individual conductors has been in focus. Much of what has been written follows along biographical lines while neither performance studies nor the study of musicianship seems to have given conductors much thought. Especially when writing of twentieth-century conductors, this fact must be acknowledged, as it is an inseparable part of conductorship and the analysis of the tradition.

However, a still more important question is how these phenomena are treated in musicological research. What makes the mythical aspect of conducting a particularly

---

83 Galkin 1988, page xxxvi.
84 Ibid., page 479.
interesting and fruitful subject for analytical study is the generalisation of these ideas that has made the concepts of *mythical, legendary,* and *virtuosic* quite unarguably common and widely used.\(^{85}\) The phenomenon is both historical and sociological, although so far the emphasis has been only on the former. Considered both given and “self-induced”, these ideas inevitably carry contradictory elements that emerge when subjected to analytical study. Artistic genius and brilliance also has a dark side, and this in a way separates the artist from the rest of society, which adds certain glow to his or her person.

In *Romantiikan uni ja hurmio* (Romanticism’s Dream and Rapture) Eero Tarasti refers to the idea of an artist who exhausts himself at an early age, a Nietzschean model for a romantic genius, and a type of artist who has not only been historically and socially, but also psychologically and even medically defined.\(^{86}\) Another model for this can be found in Goethe’s *Werther*.\(^{87}\)

Here one again comes across the idea of the romantic artist – discussed by Larry Gross in his article but referred to by most sociological theorists. With these ideas, the discussion quite inevitably turns back to *marginality*. The position searched for by an artistic genius, as Larry Gross\(^ {88}\) shows, is quite firmly attached to marginalism as a sociological question.

As seen above, the word *marginality* in relation to conductors is in many ways contradictory. However, there are theoretical reasons to consider marginality one aspect – problematic but important – of conductorship as both a historically and a sociologically understood form of artistic professionalism, defined through its functionality and places in the context of an art world.

However, if one is not quite satisfied with all that the term *marginality* implies, it is possible to use an alternative term instead: *fringe*. Not as evaluative a term as marginality,

\(^{85}\) For more on virtuosity, see *Musikalische Virtuosität* by von Loesh, Mahlert, and Rummenhöller (2004).
\(^{87}\) Tarasti 1992, page 11.
\(^{88}\) Ibid.
fringe still carries the idea of being on edge. With marginality, there are historical and social reasons, that at least in the past, have directed the path of being an artist and the process towards marginal positioning. With fringe, there is perhaps a slightly stronger implication that the person in question has chosen this position himself or herself. The basic idea here comes from novelist Anne Tyler, when she describes the position of the heroine of her book:

She tended to stay on the fringe of things, observing from a distance, and she had noticed that what she observed was often outside the normal frame of vision… In fact she’d been very content with things just the way they were; her set-apart position had felt comfortable…

The person Tyler is talking about has decided to stay on the fringe, facing towards the center of action, observing things that people do not normally notice.

Whether conductors stay on the fringe is, in my opinion, a question of identity, but here the question is about how the conductor chooses to emphasise professionalism while working. The same goes for being in front of an orchestra, where the conductor has to decide what kind of a role to play. In a way, for the musical performance to stay under control and to keep the intended shape, structure and interpretation, a little observing-from-a-distance must actually be necessary.

There are also those conductors who have been trained professionally, but instead of pursuing a careers as conductors, have taken other roles in the field of music. They have not ended up being on the margins, but (naturally some more than others) have decided to stay away from the center of action and work to support the activities of the institution. Usually their role is vital, because they take care of the things that – as Tyler says – are “often outside the normal frame of vision”.

---

89 Suominen-Kokkonen (1992) has discussed the idea of fringe and gender in *The fringe of a profession: Women as architects in Finland from the 1890s to the 1950s.*

With Finnish conductors one might ask whether the institution of conducting in such a peripherally situated, northern country is in fact on the margins of the field of music. Historically and traditionally such a situation might be true, compared with the so-called Central European tradition. There are, however, other – social, sociological, and above all educational – factors, that contradict this conclusion today.

The timeframe of the present study is defined by the years when conductor, composer and pedagogue Jorma Panula was the professor of the Sibelius Academy conducting class, 1973–1993. During this time, Panula created a Finnish system of educating conductors that can still be seen in conductors’ training today. Professor Panula still teaches regularly all over the world, and his “methodless method” has become internationally well-known in the professional circles. Since it is dangerous to use such words as unique or exceptional, the system as well as its practical and sociological effects is introduced in detail in Part II of this study.

2. Gestures and conducting

As proposed in the Introduction, the main theoretical goal of this study is to find the practical core of the conducting profession. In the previous chapters the focus was on the Beckerian idea of the core activity of a conductor – in other words, the conductor’s social place, role, and identity. From the sociological point of view, the core can be identified in those social situations where communication between a conductor and an orchestra takes place. The following chapters will, in turn, concentrate on the practical core of conducting – a core skill of a conductor, as Gunther Schuller calls it in his book The Compleat Conductor.⁹¹

---

The hypothesis is that this core can be found in situations with an orchestra in which concrete gestical communication takes place. In a way there are two communicational spaces interacting: the concrete and practical conducting situation happens in the social situation, while the *modes* of being in the situation are slightly different.

What is expected here is that the core skill of a conductor is comprised of different kinds of gestures, or rather different *types* of gestures that take place on different levels of gestural communication. These levels become apparent during the whole process that conducting involves, from studying the score to performance. In other words, what a conductor looks for in getting to know the music is what he or she aims to achieve in the end, in sounding form during a performance. The rehearsing process is where the conductor endeavours to bring the music written down in a score on the one hand, and its execution on the other – as close to each other as possible. Thus, what I am studying here is whether this core skill can be analysed and understood theoretically, and further, how I might detect and define musically and gestically, or even socially the *gestures* emphasised in the processes of conducting, education and work.

It seems to be a widespread belief that gestures are a self-evident matter when talking about conductors and conducting. Gestures are often understood through pre-suppositions. Nothing seems to be more obvious than saying that a conductor works with and communicates through gestures. In fact, there are two opposite aspects here: while gestures seem to be something automatically assumed to belong to the mental picture we have of an orchestral conductor, the gestures are also something that conductors themselves have trouble describing.

In addition, it seems that there are several, very complex levels of gestural communication on which to operate that lie behind the movements of a conductor’s hands, which so often are understood as “orchestral conducting”. As a result of this multi-level and
many-sided concept of a musical gesture, the choice of title for my study, as well as the term I am using, was a conscious play on words: conducting gestures can be understood either as a type of musical and performance gesture, or as an individual activity – someone conducting.

It is, of course, true that in reality the gestures of a conductor will, through training and professional experience, become automated. Eventually, conductors do not pay much attention to beat patterns or how each musical thought becomes a gesture. They may not even realise precisely what they do to achieve a certain effect – an inspiring and personal interpretation would probably be impossible to produce if they did. Knowledge of the technique becomes part of their own natural language and expression.

However, the self-evident nature of conducting gestures provided the first impulse that prompted me to study conductors’ gestures more thoroughly – or rather to study the theoretical nature of the conducting gestures that seem to appear in very complex working processes. The starting point was the hypothesis, that there are different types of gestures (or different aspects of a conducting gesture), that can be detected and categorised according to their function.

What I have tried to do is to understand better the complex way of the largely non-verbal communication that takes place between a conductor and an orchestra – from the point of view of an outside observer. What has not been my purpose is to try to find any truths about conductors’ gesticulation, communication, or ways of working. Rather the goal has been to give one example of how gestures could be approached from the outside position of a researcher, who is not herself a conductor. As mentioned in the Introduction, this is a position I have persisted in maintaining. In this study I have relied on the expertise of professional conductors themselves, mainly in the form of interviews, and occasionally on other documented sources such as conductors’ writings.
These views and personal opinions as well as the case studies observing conductors at work have been read and analysed using some central theories and ideas about musical gestures. The aim has been to see if it would be possible to find some kind of general pattern, within which personal input, choices and interpretative decisions of a conductor take place. What is also important is the situation and space: the above-mentioned ways or modes of being in front of an orchestra and a stage and concert hall as a communicational space.

Initially, my goal has been to study the gestural processes from the point of view of the conductor, concentrating mainly on the notation-based musical gestures and their communicativeness. Then came the realisation that a conductor is not only one musician, but a musician with an instrument consisting of as many as a hundred other musicians. In addition, there was also the role of the audience to consider.

With sociological theories a new gestural level became apparent. It seemed necessary to divide the gestures not only according to their musical, technical, and expressive functions, but also according to their social functionality, which can also be understood as gestures, such as concrete ways of training that later turn into working practices, or more ideological means of passing on the conducting culture and ideas of conductorship.

2.1 Conventions
Regardless of whether a conductor has gone through a (more or less) formal training in a conducting class or learned the necessary skills working directly with orchestras, there seem to be certain general patterns that regulate the educational and working processes that are here considered to be constructed of gestures. In other words, even if there may be considerable differences in the education of conductors, there are still certain tradition-bound ideas about

---

92 There are three case studies arranged specifically for this study, two in Part II (the education of Finnish conductors, with Jorma Panula and Atso Almila) and one for the analysis in Part III (with John Storgårds).
the basic principles regulating the skill and shared by all professional conductors who are under the influence of a certain tradition. For example, even if the education of Finnish conductors can be considered in many ways exceptional in the context of Western conductorship – a term used here to define a historical and practical context that includes both the Central European tradition, and the tradition of the so-called conductor-musicianship – without there being any schools in conducting technique, Finnish conductors still belong to this historical tradition.

These general ideas that tie all conductors together professionally are, in my opinion, the conventions on which the idea of a conducting gesture too is based. An illustrative example might be the basic beat patterns: even if conducting has been and is taught differently in different schools, all conductors belonging to the “Western” tradition which is the context for this study share the knowledge of these principles as a pre-requisite for their work. Conventions are also a useful way of outlining the subject matter, the focus being on professional conductors with a similar educational backgrounds and shared practical and cultural conventions that regulate both the profession and, to some extent, the ideas of conductorship.

Another example may be illustrative in defining the kind of professionalism the conductors in this study are expected to share, together with the above-mentioned ideas that are called conventions here. In the eight-part television series Panula’s conducting course, dancer and choreographer Heikki Värtsi works with Jorma Panula’s conducting students, concentrating on the physical aspects of conducting. He, in turn, is invited to conduct the rehearsal orchestra for the Sibelius Academy conducting class. The music is Debussy’s

---

93 Why such an evaluative word is used is the subject of Part II, which concentrates on the education of Finnish conductors.
94 Keeping in mind here the division into two traditions introduced in the Introduction.
95 Documentary series Panula’s conducting class I-VIII. Directed by Anna-Kaarina Kiviniemi. The Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE), 1992. This series and its role in the education of the Finnish conductors will be discussed more thoroughly in the Part II of this study.
Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune. Värtsi had worked with the music and the story as a dancer and a choreographer, but had never conducted a symphony orchestra before. His gesticulation in front of the orchestra is extremely expressive, with wide, beautiful movements of the hands, but it is completely spontaneous and naturally has very little to do with the way conducting gestures are traditionally understood and studied. Värtsi’s gesticulation is clearly not tied to any conventions of conducting, simply because he does not have the kind of basic knowledge professionally trained and working conductors have, no matter what their educational background.

In other words, when analysing the so-called conducting gestures, the context is defined assuming that conductors, who are intentionally referred to as a group here, share the basic “building blocks” of gestural communication. My hypothesis is that these basic skills – the technique of beating time – which can be learned with practice, are technical gestures. These skills are included in all gesticulations when conducting an orchestra, and even a person less into making art than Värtsi could adopt or mime the posture and the hand movements linked to the visual idea of an orchestral conductor. For a professional conductor technical gestures are the basic tools or physical material with which to begin working. I want to stress that “technical” is not regarded as a negative term in this study, but is one of the terms needed to specify the different aspects of conducting gestures and to define the process of conducting.

Taking the gestures to the next, expressive and interpretive level, where they become what has been called expressive gestures, is a much more complicated matter. A basic difference can be seen between the technical and the expressive gesture: every conductor is expected to master the technical gestures, but there is also the chance that the expressiveness of the communication is just not there, and the conducting does not extend beyond mere time-beating. These questions will be studied more thoroughly in the following sections.
The conventions are not only historical and theoretical, but also very much a practical matter. The hypothesis about the practical analysis of conducting gestures in Part II is that there is a specific repertoire of gestures that conductors follow and that they vary. The discussion of the idea of a repertoire will be based on the theory introduced here. What is supposed in the analysis is that the repertoire of technical and functional gestures is tied to the above-mentioned conventions, and through what has been called social gestures is in a way a result of them.

The social gestures represent the context in which conducting as an activity as well as the concrete gestures with different functions takes place: first in educational situations in a conducting class, then with orchestras as a part of professional working life. These social gestures, divided into educational gestures and working gestures, are a pre-requisite for the practical conventions, or in other words, a way of passing them on.96

Howard S. Becker’s idea of conventions is mostly based on the practical “micro-level” of the conditions of artistic work.97 These conditions are either very concrete, such as an artist’s materials and equipment, or more abstract, such as a system of notation. Conventions, according to Becker, may also have to do with the circulation of art works – in other words, their reception – which may represent either a practical view of the subject or social situations on a more abstract level, such as negotiation and acting against conventional ways of working.

I find many of Becker’s ideas applicable in the general sociological context of this study, but it seems that there are also points where his sociological theory verifies the theory

96 In order to avoid misunderstandings, the terms musical, technical, and expressive are the ones that will be used in this study. The same goes for the terms educational gestures and working gestures, which will be read and analysed in a more sociological context. The latter two terms have been specifically invented for this study, with the intention of describing and verbally illustrating the specific functions of these five types of gestures.
97 Becker 1982, 31-34.
of gestures. What seems central is the opportunity to “do things differently”, as Becker says. This is an idea that is closely related to what Robert Hatten has expressed with his concept “external effect”, which defines the role of a performer and his or her influence. Hatten operates here with rhetorical gestures and uses the term disruption – the performer’s intentional influence on the performance, implying an intention to change or act against something conventionally established – working thus with a disruption as a rhetorical gesture.

In Interpreting Musical Gestures Hatten says that “rhetorical gestures disrupt or deflect the ongoing musical discourse, contributing to a contrasting dramatic trajectory”. In practice a performer’s or here conductor’s choice of a tempo, for example, can be disruptive if it deviates noticeably from the composer’s original indication. According to Hatten the external effect of the performer may be limited by such things as history and for example score markings (performance practices).

These markings and accepted practices, and the way they usually are played or otherwise interpreted – and, for historical reasons, should be played – are the conventions. Working intentionally against conventions is a “rebellious act”, someone’s disruptive gesture. I understand these historical and practical limitations to equal Becker’s conventions, while the concept of external effect matches his idea of an artist intentionally changing conventional ways of making art.

The limitations that artists, including conductors, confront may make it difficult, even impossible, to execute an interpretation that goes completely or sometimes even slightly

---

98 Ibid., 32.
99 I am referring here to my notes from Robert Hatten’s guest lecture 27.11.2003 on musical gestures. This series of lectures was arranged by the VEST doctoral program, and took place in the Department of Musicology, University of Helsinki. I refer to this particular source because it is the only source in which the question of an external effect in conducting has been specifically considered and discussed.
100 Hatten 2004, 95.
101 The communicational aspects of the external effect will be studied later in this text, in the context of communicational theories.
against the conventions. The conventions are tied to social situations – in this case an orchestra, which might oppose what the conductor wants; or a knowledgeable audience might disapprove or in an extreme case not even show up. However, it also seems possible to act against the conventions. Becker thinks that these intentional acts against the conventional ways of making art – the disruptive gestures, as Robert Hatten illustratively and logically calls them – become possible through negotiation. In Becker’s words, negotiation “makes change possible”. As Becker states:

Though standardized, conventions are seldom rigid and unchanging. They do not specify an inviolate set of rules everyone must refer to in settling questions of what to do. Even where the directions seem quite specific, they leave much to modes of interpretation on the one hand and by negotiation on the other.

Becker continues:

A tradition of performance practice, often codified in book form, tells performers how to interpret the musical scores or dramatic scripts they perform. Seventeenth century scores, for instance, contained relatively little information; but contemporary books explained how to deal with questions, unanswered in the score, of instrumentation, note values, and the realization of embellishments and ornaments. (…) The same thing occurs with visual arts. Much of the content, symbolism, and coloring of the Italian Renaissance religious painting was conventionally given, but a multitude of decisions remained for the artist, so that even within those strict conventions different works could be produced.

There are directions given to an artist in the form of conventions that, in spite of strict cultural and social boundaries, leave the artist some choice. Negotiating within these limits makes change possible. This process is linked to the idea expressed in this study that the conventions and working against them are the premises on which the conductor creates his or her personal interpretation of a certain score – a move from the technical gestures towards the expressive.

103 Lecture by Robert Hatten, 27.11.2003.
104 Becker 1982, 32.
105 Ibid., 31-32, italics added.
The technical gestures represent the boundaries, within which the conventions exist. Deliberately going against conventions makes it possible to bring the sounding result nearer the conductor’s personal intentions and ideas about the composition and what he/she understands to be nearest to the composer’s idea.\textsuperscript{106} Success in this, therefore, would depend on the conductor making the right choices and decisions.

2.2 On a theory of musical gestures

When speaking specifically of musical gestures one must acknowledge that the basic unit, so to speak, from which to being is a gesture in general. There is a semiotic level of communication for which Winfried Nöth\textsuperscript{107} gives several possible ways of approach in the book \textit{Handbuch der Semiotik}, in the chapter \textit{Kommunikation und Kode}. The semiotic concepts that seem most useful here are \textit{Kode, Medium, Funktion} which can be \textit{kommunikative} or \textit{strukturelle}.\textsuperscript{108} The theories that concern the \textit{Nichtsprachliche semiotische systeme} (non-verbal semiotic system), especially the theory of communicational gestures classified, or rather re-classified, so to speak, have a significant role here. The theory by Umberto Eco will be referred to and discussed later in this text.\textsuperscript{109}

One also has to take into account the role of R.L. Birdwhistell’s\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body Motion Communication} and the need to analyse systematically the nature and functionality of signification in movement – here the nature and functionality of the movements of a conductor and making the movements significant. Kari Salosaari\textsuperscript{111} explains Birdwhistell’s system in his article \textit{Eleellisyysten tutkimuksesta näyttelijätyössä} (Of

\textsuperscript{106} It must be taken into account that there are always conductors who deliberately act against what the composer has intended according to the directions left in the score. I am making a generalisation here and expect that the most accurate realisation/interpretation of the composer’s intentions is the goal towards which the process of conducting is heading. This is also what the conductors in Jorma Panula’s conducting class have been trained to do.

\textsuperscript{107} Nöth 1985, page 121 ff.

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid., pages 130 and 152.

\textsuperscript{109} Eco 1984.

\textsuperscript{110} Birdwhistell 1970. See also Bouissac 1973.

\textsuperscript{111} Salosaari 2000, page 4.
the study of the gestical in acting). Salosaari points out, that what Birdwhistell’s system of analysing human movement is focused on is a kind of physical expression whose function is communication and which can be seen as learned. This idea can be directly applied to conducting, and the idea of learned technical gestures that become expressive that will be introduced later in the text.

In his book Untwisting the Serpent, in a chapter entitled Gestus Daniel Albright, referring to G.E. Lessing,\textsuperscript{112} uses the definition of a gestus that I find very illustrative here:

A gestus is a bodily pose or gesture that speaks; a hieroglyph corporeally embodied in a human performer; a whole story (gest) contracted into a moment. The term gestus was popularized by Lessing and was taken up enthusiastically by Weill and Brecht…\textsuperscript{113}

A gesture of a conductor is essentially “a bodily pose of gesture that speaks” as well as “a whole story” that happens in a moment. These phrases introduce the two main questions of this chapter, and in a way they also summarise the most significant aspects of the theory of conducting gestures.

\textit{Conducting gestures}

The different conducting gestures considered in this study have mainly been developed from Robert S. Hatten’s\textsuperscript{114} theory of a musical gesture. These theoretical ideas have naturally been applied on a very basic level, this study not being a further analysis of the subject, but rather an attempt to find the basis and the theoretical aspects which might suit the study of a previously untouched subject – conducting gestures in particular.

There are also other descriptions and theories of gesture – either in general or concerning conducting in particular – that will be used, such as those by Gunther Schuller,

\textsuperscript{113} Albright 2000.
\textsuperscript{114} Hatten 2004.
Pierre Boulez, Monica Rector, and David Lidov. The first two authors represent a practical view of the subject, while Rector and Lidov discuss gestures semiotically. However, because Robert Hatten’s *Interpreting Musical Gestures* is an extremely thorough survey of the nature of musical gesture, with both general and specific observations on the subject, a few of his theoretical ideas have been taken as a basis for this chapter. They seem to be the most central ideas when trying to define a theoretical basis for conducting as has been studied here.

The goal has been to apply some of the above-mentioned theoretical ideas to conducting and to try to move from the variety of definitions of a musical gesture in a more general context towards more specific questions concerning the gesticulation of a conductor in particular. Because conducting gestures seem to become apparent in different shapes and on different levels – or rather become differently emphasised at different points of the process of conducting as mentioned above – the possibilities of classifying these shapes or *types* will also be studied here. It also seemed to offer an interesting opportunity to extend the term to the sociologically-emphasised educational and working gestures that could also be studied when applying Hatten’s terminology. Such gestures will be considered at the end of Chapter 3.

In *Interpreting Musical Gestures*, Robert Hatten remarks that “perhaps no other term has been used in such a bewildering array of contexts as the term *gesture* in relation to music.” Hatten\(^\text{115}\) continues by giving examples of possible definitions for the term:

---

\(^{115}\) Ibid.
culmination or climax? Can it be encompassed by a single musical event – a single note, or a rest?116

The first question that needs to be asked therefore is what is meant by a gesture in the context of this study. With regard to conducting – which seemed confusing at first – the term gesture could refer to most of the above-mentioned definitions. There are notated, sounding, and physical aspects involved in the gestural process of conducting as well as aspects that have more specifically to do with phrasing and dynamics. Similarly, a conducting gesture is simultaneously both notated (by composer) and sounding. It becomes analysed, seen, heard, and responded to during the different phases of the working process – different aspects or types of the gesture, so to speak, becoming emphasised differently according to the function the gesture serves.

In documenting conducting as a process, it is also interesting to consider whether the gestures have a direction, a shape, or a culmination point – and if so, towards which point or purpose do the communicative gestures as a process head. These are very abstract matters and should be the subject of another study in order to be fully considered analytically. Robert Hatten117 describes a gesture as a “characteristic shaping” that gives “sounds expressive meaning”. According to this line of thought, giving musical gestures a sounding form through gestures characteristic of an orchestral conductor is the main purpose – or the core – of the gestural communication between a conductor and an orchestra.

In the context of the present study the term characteristic can be defined by the above-discussed conventions, which regulate the set of recognisable gestures that can be identified in a certain context – here the modifiers being the historical tradition, the basic conducting technique shared by all conductors, and professionalism.

116 Hatten 2004, 93.
117 Ibid.
If seen as a process, a conducting gesture could be seen to develop and take different forms from analysis to performance. Hatten uses the term *continuity*, which I find very useful here. In addition to a shape, a direction, and a goal, a conducting gesture seems also to have an *origin*. I will try to find a theoretical basis for these aspects in the following chapters and study them more thoroughly in practice in the analysis (Part III) of this study.

The hypothesis here is that there is a culmination point, in fact several, whose ‘place’ in the process one can try to identify by dividing the gestures into different hierarchical groups according to their function. The basis for this division is gestural *types*.

### 2.2.1 Defining musical gestures

As mentioned, the basic concept here is a *musical gesture*. In general, a musical gesture differs from a human gesture, because it exists on a level of communication where specific “language skills” are needed. With this language, however, the variety of ways of interpreting gestures is considerable, musical gestures not being directly tied to clear, unambiguous meanings that would be he same for everyone.

According to Robert Hatten, musical gestures have a meaning that is very complex, and “often directly motivated by basic human expressive movements”. Musical gestures “go beyond the score to embody the intricate shaping and character of movements that have direct biological and social significance for human beings”.

All the motoric, social, personal, and even emotional factors that are attached to gestural communication in music make gestures very complex to analyse. It seems almost impossible to separate them from the “pure” theoretical core. In the process of conducting, the basic movements of the hands, the technical gestures, as they have been called in this study, are

---

118 Ibid., 94-95.
filled with something that makes them expressive, even emotionally charged. In his article “The Subjective World of the Performer” Roland S. Persson says:

Clearly emotions, feelings, and affects are paramount issues to musicians in communicating and understanding music. In fact, the musician’s role is so intrinsically tied to the subjective world of emotion that attempts to regard a piece of music, or a performance of it, as in a way detached from a positive emotional experience of some kind, is often frowned upon by musicians…The reasons that music has emotional significance, however, are complex and often paradoxical.

The fact that gestures – naturally not always but hypothetically and maybe even ideally – are so essentially tangled up with and affected by all the social and subjective matters, including physique, makes the gestures of a conductor difficult to describe. Verbalising what happens seems almost impossible – even to conductors themselves. However, as Robert Hatten says, gestures

…may be inferred from musical notation, given knowledge of the relevant musical style and culture. Indeed, even without access to relevant stylistic and cultural information, musical performers will seek to find a suitably expressive gestural embodiment of a musical score, perhaps by accommodating it to their own bodies’ expressive styles.

With Finnish conductors, personal physical expressiveness of gestures seems to have been the result of the surrounding musical culture, especially in the form of education: the highly personal way of making music different from anyone else, including being regularly in front of an orchestra and creating an individual way of gesticulating with an orchestra, has been encouraged by Professor Jorma Panula, on whose educational system this study is focusing. A good example of this is that Panula’s students have never been shown how to conduct; rather the musical score and their own video-taped images have served as the “mirror”.

---

120 Hatten 2004, 94.
According to Hatten, gestures may also be “inferred from a musical performance even when we do not have visual access to the motions of the performer.”\footnote{Ibid.} This “aural imagery” with which a listener can create a picture of concrete gestures by listening with a kind of recognition, can also be applied to conductors. In addition to the possibility of imagining the physical movements and the gestures of a conductor by listening to a recorded performance, for example, there are some aspects of the conductor’s process that involve a sound without its visual execution, namely, the musical gestures notated in the score by the composer analysed and prepared without the orchestra actually present.

In one of the key sentences for the present study, Hatten says, “Gestures may be comprised of any of the elements of music, although they are not reducible to them; they are perceptually synthetic gestalts with emergent meaning, not simply ‘rhythmic shapes’”.\footnote{Ibid.} The fact that, once physically executed, a gesture is already and inevitably a synthesis of several things and becomes shaped with an emerging meaning supports the idea that a conducting gesture is a process that, to borrow Hatten’s words, is comprised of different elements that are first technical and then become expressive. In a way this process moves cumulatively, gathering different aspects as it goes, that will bring the sought-after result in the sound of an orchestra. The term “synthetic” is very illustrative here: to attain the working situation where a conductor considers the gestural communication to be as near as possible to the ideal, all these hierarchical levels of gestures that together are a synthesis are needed and necessary.

Hatten continues by saying that “gestures may also be hierarchically organised, in that larger gestures can be comprised of smaller gestures”.\footnote{Ibid.} I understand conducting gestures to be hierarchical in a way that the motoric movements that are technical but not yet expressive are hierarchically lesser than functional gestures. Similarly, unintentionally performed
gestures are hierarchically lesser than purposeful, intentional gestures – even if by no means lesser in other respects. These differences of emphasis are what has been the basis for the idea of *gestural types* in this study.

The progression of a conducting gesture from musical and technical to expressive, as they have been called here, represents the idea of a process on a smaller scale. Preparing for a concert from rehearsals to a performance, is a larger process. In addition, there are structural processes comprised of the musical factors that form larger interpretational entities that are also hierarchically organised. In other words, a transitional passage which consists of preparing a tempo change and the gestures used to create an expressive entity would be such a process; so would phrasing that, for example, has a dramatic function.

If the purpose of the process of conducting is to progress from technical gestures to expressive gestures that in the end are ideally expected to bring out the notated gestures written into a score in a way intended by the composer, then what happens in the “middle ground” between the different phases has a significant role here. This mediating area of the process is where the “idea” develops in conductor’s mind and turns into a visually executed gesture. As conductor John Storgård implies, what happens in this middle-ground is what the concrete gesticulation is for:

> It all begins with having an idea in your head. It is the same with playing an instrument – you just can’t play even one note without having gone through a certain process in your head. Then, if you feel lazy, your playing sounds lazy, or if you’re not thinking about what you play, it can be heard. If you don’t pay attention to how you play a certain note, it becomes indifferent or boring. But if you have a clear image of what kind of tones to use, then it happens. The same goes with your gesticulation in front of an orchestra; it can be seen from your hands if you have something to say.¹²⁴

One might also suggest that this would be the ‘place’ where the origin of a conducting gesture is to be found. The situation where the gestures take place is, in a way, a communicative

---

space. Differently emphasised gestures – types – affect the way or the mode of a conductor’s being in a situation. A possible theoretical model for this will be introduced in the next chapter.

2.2.2 Gestural types

The idea of different types of conducting gestures developed in this study has its roots in a discussion with Robert Hatten that took place in November 2003 in Helsinki. While considering the idea of applying the theory of gestures to conducting was being considered, Hatten sketched a model including such terms as conducting gestures (either didactic or exemplifying), parameters, and interpretation. I have settled on applying his idea to a structure in which conducting gesture is understood as a process, but I divided it into even smaller parameters according to the special characteristics of conducting gestures.

The didactic gesture has not been studied because of the specific educational context of this study, the Panula-based pre-supposition being that everything communicationally important should be expressed only through the hands and body. There is a didactic level of “telling” along with the level of “showing”, as Hatten puts it, but the role of speech will be only briefly touched upon here. Instead, I have concentrated on the process that begins with analysing the score and continues to the rehearsals and finally culminates in the performance, dividing parameters into musical and technical. The term interpretation, in turn, equals what I am calling expressive here.

In a way all these types are different aspects of the same unit of a conducting gesture, which has different forms and functions depending on which stage of the process of conducting it becomes a conducting gesture, therefore, is a “basic unit”. Naturally the process

---

125 See Appendix III.
126 The discussion took place in 27.11.2003, during the above-mentioned guest lectures in Musicology, University of Helsinki.
127 Ibid.
of conducting is a compilation of many gestures, that seem to appear in varying *repertoires*, according to the composition being conducted.

The situation that serves as a starting point for the kind of division I am about to make is not very encouraging. Many may say that it is impossible to detect how and of what aspects the gestural communication that is the basis for conducting is comprised. There is always the fact that the technical and the expressive/interpretational are very difficult to separate from one another in the first place. For one person, technique *is* the way to express what there is to say; for other, any waving of hands passes as conducting. However, when so many conductors themselves often refer to this dilemma, it is interesting to try to analyse and specify what make up the process of conducting.

I would like to stress the fact that the idea is *not* to see the different gestural levels as being separate from each other; in my opinion, this separation is not even possible. Rather the gestural levels are intertwined and together make an essential part of the process and of the musical outcome. Marjaana Virtanen has come to a similar conclusion:

> ...exploring the gestures of the score can awaken images of the physical playing gestures, which indicates that gestures in different levels are in some sense Inseparable. During the gestural negotiations of performers in rehearsal, the merging of these different manifestations of gestures is obvious...\(^\text{128}\)

The idea of a physical gesture already being in the musical gestures of the score will be studied from one conductor’s point of view in Part III.

In the following chapters, I intend to explain these different types of gestures that have different fuctions in the process of conducting and that become intertwined in rehearsals and concerts. The point of view, as already mentioned, is that of the conductor’s.

Musical gesture

The gestural process of conducting begins with a musical gesture.129 The nature of a musical gesture in this study is analytical. In other words, a musical gesture is a type of gesture that is notated by the composer and selected by a conductor while analysing the music. It is a gesture selected from the score by the conductor to be further analysed and specifically taken into account in the coming, sounding interpretation. Because it does not exist only in print but is – at least potentially – also a sounding gesture that will be executed and interpreted in practice by a conductor and an orchestra, the term musical has been used instead of analytical. It can also be thought, hypothetically, that the musical gesture written into a score will attain a sounding form in a conductor’s mind while he or she is reading the score.130

Since not all gestures written into a score by the composer will be given the same degree of attention by the conductor, the musical gestures also seem to be part of a repertoire of musical gestures. Or rather, because of this selectivity, the origin of the repertoire of gestures is, in fact, in the musical, analysed gestures. However, according to the principles of Professor Jorma Panula, the repertoire of musical gestures the conductor finds the most important – the overall idea of the score in a musical, analytical sense – should ideally be as close to the composer’s ideas as possible.131

A musical gesture can, for example, be a single note, a chord or a harmony, a rhythm or a rhythmic pattern, a phrase, a melody, a theme, or a musical transition in texture, or have to do with instrumentation, timbre, phrasing, and articulation. In other words, musical gestures can be either theoretical factors – details – in a score or larger, textural elements.132 They can be detected through basic music analysis, but in the context of conducting, the analytical

129 This type of gesture is included with the knowledge that the research concentrating purely on the musical gestures of the (written) musical score is considered problematic. However, it seems to suit the study of performing well – and as it is one part of a conductor’s working process, it is impossible to exclude here.
130 Several conductors interviewed for this study mentioned that they ‘listen’ to the score in their minds while preparing for a concert.
131 Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
132 Hatten 2004, 93. See also Schuller 1997, 12.
process, however, is less frequently as straightforward as this. The consideration of other aspects such as sound, the orchestra as an instrument if it is already familiar to the conductor, and acoustics of the hall, are all part of the analysis. For a conductor working with a score the question is never about “pure” music analysis, but about a process affected by the constant consciousness of interpretative/realisational\textsuperscript{133} level of concrete musical execution of the work.

In summary, a musical gesture is a “thought” that is not yet physically executed, but even if it is not yet played, it can have a sounding form on the level of thought. The more familiar the conductor is with the orchestra to be conducted, the more the knowledge of its characteristic sound affects the preconception in the upcoming working situation. As an idea of a concrete sounding form, a musical gesture is abstract in a way that does not yet come with sounds to make it audible and perceivable – seen, heard, and responded to.

\textit{Technical gesture}

When a musical gesture is physically executed and thereby becomes seen and heard, it becomes a technical gesture. Whether technical and expressive gestures can be studied separately seems to be a subject for debate, there being as many personal opinions as there are conductors – and researchers. However, there are many conductors who think that there is a technical level in conducting that is common to all conductors, the expressivity being something everyone adds to the technique to create unique interpretations. This is also the idea that has been followed here – it being, again, only one possible aspect of the subject matter.

Technical gesture is a motoric movement of a hand or hands, that communicates to the orchestra such things as basic elements (“facts”) of the score, and matters such as tempi –

\textsuperscript{133} These terms will be considered later in this study.
things that are needed to keep the situation together and ongoing. As mentioned above, some argue that there cannot be such a thing as a purely technical gesture, a gesture without an expressive content. However, there are technical guidebooks for conductors that explain the basic beat patterns and give purely technical advice about orchestral repertoire, providing conducting students with “tools” with which to create their own interpretations. It seems then that there is a generally acknowledged level of technical gestures that a conductor has to acquire, but which, according to Gunther Schuller, is not enough to make an interpretation.

Therefore, the implication that a technical gesture does not automatically include the expressive aspect is intentional here. According to this idea, a technical gesture can exist without the expressive one, but the expressive cannot exist without the technical – just as it is impossible to create an interesting and individually constructed interpretation of a piece without the necessary technique as a basis, as conductor John Storgårds points out. This is naturally said with the understanding that the actual line between technical and expressive is very thin, and often the two cannot be separated from each other. However, since most people attending conducting competitions can see and hear, there are cases where conducting does not extend beyond mere time-beating.

In a technical gesture the musical gesture becomes a movement of a hand or both hands, being already a gesture that could be said to be characteristic of conductors in general. It is communicative in the way that it carries the basic information and instructions about the music in the form of a visual gesture, but at the same time it is hypothetically possible that a technical gesture is purely technical, without expressive content. In other words, a technical

---

134 As mentioned in the Introduction, after biographies, technical guidebooks for conductors represent the largest group of literature about conductors.
136 An interview with John Storgårds, 1.9.2003. All references in this chapter to John Storgårds are to this interview.
gesture can be purely learned.\textsuperscript{137} It is a motoric movement of hand or hands tied to a specific system or language of signs, established within, and regulated by, convention.

A technical gesture produces sound, and is, in a way, a mediating element in the process between the musical gestures and the expressive gestures that ideally make the gesticulation of a conductor interpretative, personal, and unique. The concrete, technical gestures of a conductor – including posture and body movements, as well as eye contact – form a kind of a transitional middle-ground between what the conductor wishes and intends to communicate, first to the orchestra and through it to the audience, and which way these gestures eventually become heard. This mediation could be called a \textit{transition}, a significant passage between two points. This also suggests that there is progress from one point towards another, justifying calling this gestural and interpretative progression a \textit{process}.

\textit{Expressive gesture}

If a technical gesture is characteristic of conductors in general, an expressive gesture could be seen as a type of a gesture characteristic of a certain conductor. It is a technical gesture “filled” with something that makes it expressive – the point where, in Jorma Panula’s words, “hands begin to speak”\textsuperscript{138}. This is also the most difficult type of gesture to define, explain or even describe. An expressive gesture is consciously and intentionally used to bring out something very specific in music – the ideas of the conductor and the vision of the work making the musical situation a personal interpretation.

The function of the expressive gesture is to bring out the ideas of the composer that the conductor has worked on when analysing the score, or, in other words, execute the musical gestures with the help of the technical ones in a way that the sounding result comes as close as possible to these ideas.

\textsuperscript{137} See Salosaari 2000 on Birdwhistell and learned communicative movements.
\textsuperscript{138} Interview with Panula, 27.11.2001.
Ideally, the conductor’s gestures should include parallel technical and expressive aspects. On the technical level the technical, motoric movement should come automatically, while the expressive, interpretative level – the thoughts, decisions and intentions of the conductor – simultaneously “fills” it. This means that the technical gesture is hierarchically lesser than the expressive.

According to Gunther Schuller, turning the motorical, technically emphasised movements into an expressive interpretation or a realisation ideally would require the gestures to be expressive:

...a mechanically, technically accurate performance may be clinically interesting, but unless its accuracy also translates into an emotional, expressive experience – for the listener, the musicians (including the conductor) – it will be an incomplete realization, one that will not – indeed cannot – adequately represent the work.  

As conductor John Storgårds puts it, the movement of the hands puts into practice and secures what the conductor wishes to express and to mediate. What has to be noted is that, on average, the gestures used by a conductor actually are either more technically or more expressively emphasised. It seems that in practice the concrete gestures of a conductor are almost never just technical or expressive. As Robert Hatten says, there is always the external effect involved, the performer’s contribution, that shapes the living musical situation. This should mean that the sounding gesture can be differently biased, either the technicality or the interpretativeness being the dominant factor.

As the conductors interviewed for this study mentioned, in a very complex situation that does not turn out the way the conductor has intended, making it difficult to bring out the expressive and interpretative ideas, it is possible to keep the situation together and ongoing

---

139 Schuller 1997, 13.
141 Lecture by Robert Hatten 27.11.2003 referred to above.
with one’s technical skills. This is, however, intentional, and involves the conductor’s choice and conscious decision-making.

**Classifying gestures**

Since some kind of hierarchy of conducting gestures seems to exist, some kind of a theoretical system seems necessary for operating, as well as for specifying and clarifying the relations and differences among different hierarchies. There are several studies in which interpretational gestures of a musician have been mapped and classified, for example, the ones by Jane Davidson and Monica Rector\(^{142}\). Rector’s semiotic essay *Towards a classification of gestures in orchestra conducting* is more abstract, even if it was written specifically about the gesticulation of conductors. It has been published as a part of a collection of essays in honour of Algirdas Julien Greimas. The essay sketches a complex semiotic system classifying what Rector calls “gestuality” of an orchestra conductor, including several categories.

Because of its semiotic nature, Rector’s system of classification seems to fit this study extremely well. Because the system is based on the idea of *categories* I have not based any further analysis of this study on it. Since musical gestures are clearly a subject for categorisation, that was the first choice of a classification model for developing the analysis. Yet, it began to seem that it was impossible to actually *categorise* conducting gestures, for the simple reason that all types of gestures – musical, technical, and expressive – are equally present, only being emphasised differently at different points in the process of conducting. *Hierarchy* thus seemed to be nearer the idea of this study.

The goal here has not been to study the differences in the musical functions of the gestures – that is, whether a certain gesture, for example, is used to change dynamics, work on phrasing, or pinpoint a certain musical gesture picked out from the score to create a specific

\(^{142}\) Davidson 2002. Rector 1985. Along with Rector’s article, David Lidov’s (2005) study *Is Language a Music* was considered but not directly applied here. See also Kühl 2003.
effect. This would have been an interesting level on which to work on, but it would probably have complicated the theoretical construction that will in many ways remain a work in progress.

One of the reasons that makes strict classification of conductor’s gestures difficult is what Pierre Boulez\textsuperscript{143} refers to in his book \textit{Boulez on Conducting}, namely, that conducting contemporary music may require a completely ‘new’ set of gestures for certain musical and notational factors that have not existed before.

In \textit{Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language}, Umberto Eco refers to such concepts as \textit{correlational codes, code book} and \textit{dictionary}\textsuperscript{144}. He expresses an idea that seems quite applicable to the idea: correlation between codes. Here gestures could be seen as \textit{codes}; the \textit{repertoire} consisting of these codes that becomes apparent while conducting a score would be a \textit{code book} of a kind. The basic collection of gestures that a conductor can use and vary could form a dictionary. Eco uses Morse code as an illustrative example that has a resemblance to notation:

\begin{quote}
The Morse code is a \textit{code book} or a \textit{dictionary} which provides a set of correlations between a series or a system of electric signals (written down as dots and dashes) and a series of alphabetic letters. As we shall see…, there are codes correlating expressions to expressions and codes correlating expressions to contents.\textsuperscript{145}
\end{quote}

Correlations can operate between codes, expressivity and contents in gestural communication. Eco has given his chapter the title “\textit{The rise of a new category}”, and because there is \textit{correlation} – which in my opinion operates with levels that are, if not parallel, then at least more organic and less organised than categories – between gestural elements, it seemed necessary to create a “new” categorisation here too.

\textsuperscript{143} Boulez 2003, pages 97-104 (‘A new vocabulary of gesture’).
\textsuperscript{144} Eco 1984, page 165.
\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
Georges Mounin\textsuperscript{146}, in *Semiotic Praxis*, talks about *an encyclopedia of sign communication*, which, as an idea, is similar to Eco’s *dictionary*. What is implied is that here are a number of definitions or explanations that serve as a *repertoire*, from which to choose those signs – gestures – with which to operate, and, at the same time, the level or the nuances of communication.

Instead of categories, as said above, *hierarchies* seemed to be a better concept to use, to analyse how and in what way the differently biased gestures actually become apparent while conducting. A hierarchy is evaluative, but a less strictly classifying and perhaps less differentiating term. It has been used in the analysis (Part III) to study how and under what circumstances the differently emphasised gestures either come to the surface or become less emphasised.

In addition to the above-mentioned theorists, there is also Jane Davidson’s system of studying musical gestures that seems particularly useful for this study.\textsuperscript{147} Davidson’s system is based on the practical observation of a musician at work, and on mapping and sketching a kind of *repertoire* of performative gestures that become apparent either during a rehearsal or performance. As it is also practically biased, this system has most affected both the case study and the analysis in Part III and helped to create a special hierarchical system for studying conducting gestures.

2.3 Two semiotic *modes* of gestural communication

In analysing the communication, there are two different aspects or *spaces* that do not seem to fit the same theoretical model.\textsuperscript{148} The first is the space that involves a score, a conductor, and

\textsuperscript{146} Mounin 1985, 81.
\textsuperscript{147} Davidson 2002.
\textsuperscript{148} I find Jean-Marie Jacono’s theory of *mediation* very interesting in the context of the theory of this study. See Jacono 2003, 102-104. See also page 108 (which refers to sociology and mediation).
an orchestra – in other words, what happens on stage. This is where the musical, technical, and expressive gestures take place and create a musically and interpretationally developing process. The other space includes the whole concert hall with an audience. Here the communicational situation (social) is so different that it cannot be analysed with the same principles as the former (social but also private).  

Since the same situation needed to be analysed from two different theoretical points of view, it was important to find a theoretical tool with which to specify the structure of each. Eventually, a model was found that, even if based on quite a basic semiotic and communicative pattern, seemed to be applicable to both. The chosen model is the triangular model of (Peircean) pragmatic semiotics, each corner of which represents one factor or participant in the communicational situation, allowing it to be applied very freely to different situations.

Score-conductor-orchestra

The first mode of gestural communication is the situation or space discussed above – the one including a score (with musical gestures), a conductor (who transforms technical gestures into expressive), and an orchestra (through which the gestures become sounds heard in the concert hall). Here I have primarily relied on Harri Veivo’s version of the theory of a sign in pragmatic semiotics, represented in *Semiotiikka. Merkistä mieleen ja kulttuuriin*  

(Semiotics: From sign to mind and culture).

As Veivo says, a sign is a mediating, triadic relationship that brings together the object, the sign-vehicle, and the interpretation, which together are the sign. As mentioned above, there is the basic semiotic triangular pattern to be detected here, but the application

---

149 Here I have applied the sociological terms introduced by Vappu Lepistö (1991).
150 Veivo – Huttunen 1999, 40-49. Transl. AK.
with the mediating element is more “tridimensional”, and therefore more useful when studying the structure of a conducting gesture.

Veivo\textsuperscript{151} uses a musical score as an illustrative example of what I have decided to call a “sign-vehicle” here, while the musical work itself is the object, these two together with the interpretation being brought together by the sign. When applied to conducting gestures, the focus seems to shift from the musical work to the score. The level that can be expected to be, so to speak, is no longer the musical work, but the score, because hypothetically there are no gestures without the score, only movements that have no context to make them meaningful. The idea of the triadic relationship is still the same, except that in this case the object would be the score, and the sign-vehicle is the conductor carrying the concrete, perceivable “being” of the gesture, which then becomes interpreted.

Especially if we keep to the opinion that the different gestural types are actually different aspects of the basic concept \textit{gesture}, it is therefore the \textit{sign} that brings together the gestures in the score, their concrete (first technical and then expressive) form, and the interpretation – the interpreter being the orchestra, which gives the gesture a sounding form.

In this application the functional relationships between the musical, technical and expressive gestures are roughly illustrated in the form of the following figure:

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{gestures_triangle.png}
\caption{Visual, concrete gesture
\\textit{Gesture in a score} \hspace{0.5cm} Interpretation}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{151} Veivo 1999, 41.
The arrow pointing from a score to an interpretation is included to represent the level that hypothetically can be understood – and taken – as “given”. What has been written in the score is the material the conductor begins with, the starting point being the same for everyone. The score is the context that makes the gestures meaningful, and thus, in a way, is a prerequisite for interpretation as well as the conductor is “vehicle”. The score consists of the written musical elements – the musical gestures – that cannot be displayed – turned into technical and functional – without an intermediary (a musician or a group of musicians), but that one can expect to find when discussing a conductor directing a musical work.

The two arrows from the score to the conductor and from the conductor to the interpretation indicate the process from analysis to sound – music as it is finally performed – and as it hypothetically progresses. The arrow from the conductor to the score would be the external effect, the conductor acting against convention or setting himself or herself intentionally apart from conventions. There could be yet another arrow from the interpretation to the conductor, indicating the opposition of interpreters. This, however, belongs to the category of a disruption leading to a conflict, and being somewhat rare. I will not go into it further here.

What could be added to the interpretation is an idea of a transitional gesture: the coloured area inside the triangular pattern pictured above represents the gesture as a mediating element. It could also be seen as the ‘place’ of the transitional gesture, the in-between that includes all the aspects of the score, but would be the place where the transitions from one aspect or stage in the process to another can be located.

In other words, this would be the place where the origins of the different types of gestures could be seen to be. This mediating element that leads from one type of gesture to

\[152\] Compare Jacono’s (2003) definition of mediation.
another as the process evolves, graphically illustrates the points which otherwise are difficult, if not impossible to define and describe. For example, the point where a technical gesture turns expressive would be impossible to locate without some kind of a pattern or model. Of course, this pattern explains nothing as such, but on the other hand, that was not its main purpose. Instead, what is looked for is a way to organise otherwise somewhat detached concepts and terms and to try to determine whether there is any actual connection inside the communicative space.

At first the communicative model introduced above seems to fit the patterns of an orchestral work and communicational situation with a conductor perfectly, involving the source and the receiver as well as the acts of encoding and decoding. But there is also the role of an audience, which has to be taken into account.

Conductor-orchestra-audience

Michael L. Quinn has applied the same triangular model – here borrowed from the Prague school – to the communicational situations in acting where there is an actor, the actor’s stage persona, and the audience to consider. Here the situation becomes more a space, even more than it was with the score, a conductor, and an orchestra, as presented above.

In his article Tähteys ja näyttelemisen semiotiikka (Stardom and the semiotics of acting), Quinn approaches the question through the idea of stardom – a kind of equivalent of what has been called here virtuoso musicianship/conductorship and mythical maestros. This model would also be a good theoretical tool for analysing these questions as well. Here, however, the focus is in the communicational space, and how Quinn’s model can be applied to conducting.

---

153 Quinn 2005; the article was translated into Finnish by Johanna Savolainen.
In Quinn’s\textsuperscript{154} model the left corner of the triangle is the actor who has an “expressive function”, with the “referential function” in the top corner, and an audience with a “responsive/reactive function”\textsuperscript{155} in the left corner. Unlike Quinn’s model, another set of arrows could be added, depicting events when applied to a musical situation with gestures.

In a concert hall, there are performers – a conductor and an orchestra – whose role is expressive. What their activity conveys is the music, i.e., the gestures in a sounding form, transformed into a referential form that can be understood and responded to by the audience. The additional arrows represent the effect the sounding form has on the communication between a conductor and an orchestra, and the effect the presence of an audience has on performers at the same time as the audience is the receiver.

In this model “outside knowledge” plays an important part – in this case, the audience has knowledge and expectations of the performers, music, and conventions regulating the social and musical situation itself.\textsuperscript{156} In a space where there is a conductor and an orchestra,

\begin{quote}
\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}[>=latex, scale=0.75]
\node (A) at (0,0) {Expressive};
\node (B) at (1,1.5) {Referential};
\node (C) at (2,0) {Responsive/reactive};
\draw[->] (A) -- (B);
\draw[->] (B) -- (C);
\draw[->] (C) -- (A);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., 45.
\textsuperscript{155} Transl. of the terms by A.K.
\textsuperscript{156} Quinn 2005, page 45.
this response and the reaction from the audience represent the third, “tridimensional” factor in the communicational space.

It is important to emphasise that a concert hall is also an acoustical space, as well as a social environment bound by certain conventions. As an acoustical space, the hall affects both the process and the musical outcome, that is, the sounding form of the gestures executed during rehearsal or performance – as well as the communicative space that is created in the situation between the conductor and the orchestra. As a social environment, a hall is a space where the entire concert situation is largely regulated by special agreement. Just like inside the more private space of a conductor and an orchestra, here too the above-mentioned acting against conventions becomes apparent, negotiation takes place, and disruptions as a rhetorical gestures are either accepted or rejected. This is another, concrete way in which the audience responds to and has an effect on the communicational situation.

In the next chapter I will discuss whether the theory of gestures actually meets the sociological framework of the study. What will be considered is the possibility of different ways of being – and acting – in front of an orchestra.

2.4 Conducting gestures meet sociology: Modes of being

One of the most frequently asked questions related to artistic work must be how much does the artist appear as himself or herself in the process of making art. That is, how much of what we see and hear comes from personal experience and self, and how much in turn is ‘acting’. This basic question is common to all arts, not just theatre, with which the question seems most often connected. The same applies to all performing arts, and even a writer of fiction appears,

157 On the different aspects of concerts, concert halls, and concert hall acoustics, see Küster (1993): Das Konzert. Form und Forum der Virtuosität.
158 Hatten 2004, 95.
consciously or subconsciously, somewhere in the textual layers of the book he or she is writing. Setting the potential banality of the question aside, there seems to be a point in considering the dynamics and politics, even the psychology, of being on stage.

Because “acting” is a somewhat controversial term, it has mainly been replaced simply with the term being. This chapter will discuss in more detail the ways or modes of actually being before an orchestra. The assumption is that a conductor must modify his or her being and way of acting when working with an orchestra – after all, he or she is on stage. An interesting question is, how much does a conductor appear as himself or herself when in front of an orchestra, and is there a need to “act” to make his or her interpretative and expressive musical intentions seen and heard. Following the thematics of the previous chapter, these ways of being and acting – being and not being on stage in a certain way – in a sense are gestures, too, bound by certain conventions, against which one acts. Vappu Lepistö says:

> While acting publicly in his or her role, an artist at the same time acts according to the expectations of the art world, or consciously against them. There is an idea of theatre hidden in the role; life is being performed on ‘stage’, somehow ‘arranged’.  

In Acting (re)considered, edited by Philip B. Zarrilli, a collection of articles on different aspects of acting, Michael Kirby writes of ‘acting and not-acting’. He says:

> To act means to feign, to simulate, to impersonate… In most cases, acting and not-acting are relatively easy to recognize and identify. In a performance, we usually know when a person is acting and when not. But there is a scale of or continuum of behavior involved, and the differences of acting and not-acting may be small. In such cases categorization may not be easy. Perhaps some would say it is unimportant, but, in fact, it is precisely these borderline cases that can provide insights into acting theory and the nature of art.
With the kind of terminology referred to above, it is impossible not to make references to theatre, which makes this an even more complex matter. One has to consider whether a conductor is the equivalent of an actor, or perhaps (and maybe more) like a director. There are also the dialectics between being on stage and off stage to take into account. These questions seem valid enough to be presented here, at least for further discussion, even if this study does not permit a thorough theoretical investigation of the subject from the point of view of theatre.

The idea of conductors’ being in front of an orchestra is very often based more or less on pre-suppositions. What is usually thought of as the basic situation, so to speak, is when a conductor stands in front of an orchestra with a baton. In addition, writings by conductors themselves describing the experience are naturally based on what is really happening on the podium, but these writings, as important as they are for this study, are not particularly theoretical in a scientific way or based on research.

This “scene”, which in a way it is, contains all the communicative elements that are needed, but no one seems to have studied or even questioned the ways of being in front of the orchestra. In other words, no one has yet discussed the possibility of there being different, varying ways of being in front of an orchestra, bound to the functionality of working situations.

Most of the time, being in front of an orchestra seems to be all about dynamics, politics, and psychology – and how these vary and differ from one situation to the next. By this I do not mean personal differences of behaviour or different practices of working that vary among conductors, but the sociological situation of interaction – the politics of a musical situation, so to speak. This includes identity, roles and positions, that is, how the conductor integrates into the working situation and what kind of a role he or she, either consciously or subconsciously, plays.
The main question is, does one need to “act” or “manoeuvre” when working to keep an orchestra of about a hundred players musically balanced and together, and if so, in what kind of personal/social situations does such acting take place.\textsuperscript{162} The second important question in this chapter follows from the above and concerns the socio-historical context of conductorship: how has being a conductor been sociologically constructed, either personally or socially?\textsuperscript{163}

At the same time there are certain opportunities where the conductor can affect the situation. These opportunities tend to be mostly musical, but there are a fair number of psychological or even external factors in the process. Interestingly, most of these factors become noticeable at points of conflict, creating situations where even acting may be needed to redirect the tensions towards as good a musical result as possible.

\textit{The view from the podium}

When analysing the working situation on the podium, conductor John Storgårds implied that the conductor cannot always reveal to the orchestra how he experiences the situation.\textsuperscript{164} Sometimes it is necessary to make the musicians believe one thing, even if it is quite contrary to what one actually feels or thinks. As an example, he mentioned a situation where a conductor – especially a young one – realises that, maybe because of physical limitations, he is not able to convey the ideas the way he has intended:

Yes, that is a difficult situation. When you realise that something is not going to happen the way you have intended to with your movements, speech and expressiveness, there is a danger of freezing in front of the orchestra, and things getting even more difficult. In such situations you should first try to stay calm, then

\textsuperscript{162} I am referring here to Vappu Lepistö’s sociological theory that artistic identity is divided into personal and sociological aspects. This theory has been discussed more thoroughly in chapter 1.4. Roles as a part of identity are discussed in previous section 1.4.1.

\textsuperscript{163} The concept of socio-history is defined in the introduction for the Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{164} An interview with John Storgårds, 4.6.2004, made as part of a case study of the conductor, 31.5.--4.6.2004. All quotes are from this interview. See also Part II, Analysis.
secondly try force yourself to be even more effective, since apparently that is what is needed. You have to make the orchestra even more alert. You do not succeed in doing so by getting nervous. You can become nervous afterwards, or during a break, but not in front of an orchestra. It does not do any good.165

Whether this is a question of acting is a matter of personal interpretation. “Acting” is not the word John Storgårds uses. Nevertheless, I find it might be useful and descriptive. In the interview Storgårds underlined the necessity of convincing the orchestra of your musicianship.

This art of convincing, so to speak, might be something with which the word acting could be replaced. It is not something that is necessary, but it may be useful, even imperative, to use in order to restore the balance of an unforeseeable and sensitive situation. I am thinking here especially of points where conflicts arise or compromises are needed – those situations Storgårds mentions, where the conductor simply has to convince the orchestra of what he is doing, even it is not what he intended. I would like to avoid the idea that there are any negative connotations in the word “act”, or any implication that the conductor is deceiving or trying to manipulate an orchestra. Rather the question is about adopting a certain role to re-evaluate the situation and redirect the tensions that may arise in these situations to achieve the best possible musical outcome. Marjaana Virtanen uses the term persuasion in a similar kind of situation:

More or less one-sided negotiation in the form of persuasion is continuously present in rehearsal, particularly between the conductor and the orchestra, when the conductor leads the orchestra with persuasive gestures to follow his view of the interpretation. Persuasion is, after all, a typical way for people to attempt to obtain desired outcomes during strategic interpersonal communication…166

165 Ibid.
166 Virtanen 2007, 190.
Social situations may force the conductor to take a certain role or change the role according to
what is required. Making these rapid evaluations and acting accordingly seems to be a skill
that develops with experience and age – the ability not to let the musicians see or even suspect
that there might be something wrong. A different case altogether is a direct conflict for
example with one musician who is not willing to cooperate – a situation requiring quite
different and more concrete means in order to be resolved.

Still another question is how much of what is done happens consciously, and how much
in turn is done subconsciously. What makes analysing orchestra rehearsals difficult, for
example, is that they each progress in a very different way. Even if some conventional
patterns regulating working situations are always apparent, there cannot be two exactly
similar ‘takes’ of a piece of music – the whole idea in fact being to construct the composition
rehearsal by rehearsal. It is possible that a conductor will change something quite radically
from one rehearsal to another, sometimes even during the performance. The same rules apply
when discussing the situation from the conductor’s point of view. It is impossible to know
beforehand what will happen and, as John Storgårds\textsuperscript{167} says, what the actual sound of the
orchestra will be until you are in the middle of it. Therefore, it might be impossible to detect
or define how consciously or unconsciously necessary decisions have been made. It looks like
the process of a conductor, in a way, is more unconscious than, say, that of a writer. The
reason for this is in the interaction: a conductor’s reactions are bound to time and the on-going
communicational situation with as many as one hundred other people. One could imagine
same kinds of reflections and tensions in a drama rehearsal among the director, an actor and
all the co-actors.

\begin{footnote}{167 Interview with John Storgårds, 4.6.2004.}
Kari Salosaari, in *Perusteita näyttelijäntyön semiotiikkaan* (*The Semiotics of Acting*) has studied how the modalities of being are transformed into emotions.\(^{168}\) Salosaari refers to Louis Hjelmslev’s *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language* and the choice of nuances of feeling – here *being*.\(^ {169}\) Salosaari also discusses the study of gestural in acting in his article “Eleellisyden tutkimuksesta näyttelijäntyössä” (*On Gestural in Acting*), and the non-verbal aspects of this activity.\(^ {170}\)

With conductors the more radical purposeful deviations from what has been intended or expected seem to take place when something goes wrong. These points do not necessarily have to be direct conflicts, but conflicts tend to bring issues more clearly to the surface than does everyday negotiation. It is more usual that there is an ongoing process of reflection, re-evaluation, and adjustment in the process of conducting, the need for drastic action being marginal. It should be noted that severe conflicts do notarise very often. Most conductors interviewed for this study shared the opinion that extremities – the process of rehearsing being either perfect success with an uplifting concert, or a total catastrophe ending with the conductor packing his or her bag determined never to return – are rare. Most of the work is done in the middle ground between the two extremes.

The principles of working change when a conductor is chief conductor or an artistic director of an orchestra. A long-term relationship makes certain musical and practical things automatic, hopefully in a good way, although not always. It may be that after a long period of time the musical resources, together with the working relationship, come to an end. But if a good working relationship is formed between a conductor and the orchestra, then in the conductor’s own opinion it begins to show, and to affect the sound.

---

\(^{168}\) Salosaari 1989.


\(^{170}\) Salosaari 2000.
This intensiveness of music making and the opportunity for long-term development must also affect the role and the position of the conductor involved. Basically, the more familiar both parties are with each other, the less need there should be to be on guard – one can allow more of one’s self into the process.

Interestingly, this seems also to be the question of conducting practices and of the effects of both age and experience. John Storgårds describes how it is possible to create very dramatic musical climaxes by holding back the tension with very small-scale physical movements, a skill that can be learned with time, practice, and experience:

Whether the audience realises how a certain musical thing is actually realised in practice is not a matter of great importance, but from the point of view of an orchestra it is. It is significant that you are constantly present in the process with intensity extending to your movements, which should stay subtle and controlled. When something completely amazing then suddenly happens, something that the orchestra has not anticipated or expected from you, the effect it has inside the orchestra is immense. Not many can do that. It requires years and experience to get the courage to hold back one’s expression, to minimize the size of one’s gestures, and at the same time believe that one is still capable of maintaining the intensity. It is also a question of self-confidence.\(^\text{171}\)

The idea of acted roles is perhaps more directly seen in practice with the legendary conductors of the twentieth century. I am thinking here of the question of whether the conductor’s role has been intentionally constructed.

Sociologically, at the beginning of the twentieth century the conductor’s position granted an authority that was not to be questioned, with the conductor doing the hiring and firing of musicians more or less just as he pleased. The roles of the maestros were so consciously constructed with certain characteristics that they became later models for different conductor types – there is a “Toscanini-type”, a “Furtwängler-type”, and so on. Conductor types will be studied in Part II, Chapter 2.3.1. The question of type is also

\(^{171}\) Ibid.
interesting in the theoretical context of this study, since there have been conductors known to have had a tendency towards a very theoretical approach to working with scores.

One of the main points of interests in the present study then lies in the historical process of the developing sociology of (the Finnish way of) conducting as a profession and practical skill, and whether the conductor’s role has been intentionally constructed, and if so, how. It seems that these aspects mingle during the process, partly intentionally, partly unintentionally. I also believe that there is always an “unexpected” element in a musical process that cannot be predicted, affecting both the working situation and the role the conductor assumes.

**Sociological point of view**

In the context of sociological study the situations – even conflicts – between a conductor and an orchestra are similar to the patterns of collective artistic activity. Howard S. Becker says:

> When specialized professional groups take over the performance of the activities necessary to an art work’s production, however, their members develop specialized aesthetic, financial, and career interests which differ substantially from the artist’s. Orchestral musicians, for instance, are notoriously more concerned with how they sound in performance than with the success of the particular work…

It is true that orchestras have a collective musical opinion, which they might not be ready to give up, as implied in the text quoted above from Becker. Usually, a conductor and an orchestra are seen as one unit, where the conductor is not even mentioned, as in the quotation above.

However, my subject here is not this unit as such, but these two intertwined institutions – conductors and orchestras – working together and being dependent on each other. Therefore I feel that the sociological theories that are concerned with the process of making art as a cooperative activity between one artist and many suit the theoretical framework of this study

---

exceptionally well. One practical example of this is the completely different kind of a bond a visiting conductor forms with an orchestra, compared to a chief conductor or an artistic director working with the same orchestra on a regular basis.

According to Becker, aesthetic conflicts are bound to happen. Because “specialized support groups develop their own standards”, it follows that “the artist’s involvement with and dependence on cooperative links thus constrains the kind of art he can produce.” It is clear that an orchestra cannot be considered as a ‘support group’, but in a way the pattern is familiar. There are certain artistic standards that may, if brought to a head, affect the work of a conductor. As John Storgårds put it, there are ways to redirect and change the course of the musical situation – ways that I have suggested might be called acting. There is a balance between one’s personal self and one’s role that has to be sustained in creating a self-ruling artwork – a performance of any kind. The same goes, in my view, for other performing arts as well as music, for example, with theatre. In a way, the conductor does create roles and scenes by interpreting a musical work written by someone else; conveying whose musical intentions should, after all, be the main purpose of the working process.

2.5 Social gestures of being and working

The education of artists is a subject that most sociological theorists, including Becker and Gross, have made one of the main themes of their theoretical works. Art world theorists, especially such as the ones studied in Chapter 2 of this study, see the art world as a social network of institutions, with art schools and artistic education having an essential role in analysing its structures. It follows from this that one of the important questions is the integration of an artist into the art world. Vappu Lepistö says:

173 Ibid., 27.
To progress in the profession of art requires an artist to adopt the interests, tendencies and values of the art world, as well as the identity that one is assumed to create and build. Through these a professional competency is being acquired, the ways of acting inside the field learned according to its rules, and the position created in an art world. Stepping into the art world is the key point in the development of the career of an artist.\textsuperscript{175}

In Finland the most important sociological development concerning conductors as an institution has to do with young conductors integrating into professional life after having studied in the conducting class. There are historical changes that have affected the process of sociological development in general, such as the institutional development within orchestras that have reduced the power of conductors, and educational progress leading towards phenomena like collegiality and versatile musicianship.

In Finland the cooperative networking has been very active, partly because there is only one institution of higher learning in music in Finland, the Sibelius Academy. Other reason is the development of conductors’ education, especially during the twenty years of Jorma Panula’s professorship (1973–1993) in the Sibelius Academy conducting class.

During this period the conducting class created a wide network, not only within the Academy among conductors, composers, and instrumentalists, but also between the class and professional symphony orchestras. While both the practices of working and the structures of work communities have changed quite radically, the focus has also shifted away from intentionally constructed roles towards more practically emphasised patterns of shared labour.\textsuperscript{176}

The idea of networking leads to another important matter: the learned ways of working and being in front of an orchestra. In Finland the working practices and ideas about conductorship have mainly been learned and adopted from the Sibelius Academy conducting

\textsuperscript{175} Lepistö 1992, 29. Transl. A.K.
\textsuperscript{176} As a comparison, see also Shepherd 1977.
class. The way of passing on the ideas, knowledge, and a way of working has been called here *educational gestures*.

The interviews with Finnish conductors show that because the whole system of educating conductors has concentrated on the future professional working life of the students, the learned ideas and practices have, with time, transformed into *working gestures*. Because of the collegiality and cooperativeness that have characterised the system from the very beginning, as well as its notable sociological consequences for the musical life and musicianship in Finland, these so-called *social gestures* seemed to tie the sociological theories and the theories of a musical gesture together. The term “social gesture” has been developed specially for this purpose.

Since Jorma Panula’s retirement in 1993, the ways of teaching conductors have been passed on by his students. There is an educational continuum in Finland that is also a historical phenomenon, but which has become more sociological in nature over the last twenty years. The next part of the study, Part II, concentrates on the educational system created by Panula and its practical and sociological effects; it also discusses more thoroughly the ideas of an educational continuum and the social gestures in practice.
II ON PRACTICE OF CONDUCTING

1. Introduction: Educating Finnish conductors

Many of the current working practices of conductors in Finland today are rooted in their training. During the last twenty or thirty years the education of Finnish conductors has become closely tied to the opportunities for practicing provided by professional symphony orchestras. This has not been a matter of chance, but a conscious process of development in the field of professional musical life in the country.

Apart from this distinct period of time, the way conducting has been taught at the Sibelius Academy, the only university of music in Finland, has varied considerably. The early history of the class seems fragmentary, and the teaching practices have gone through changes after Panula’s retirement. Nonetheless, the basic principles on which the educational system was built mainly during the 1980s and the early 1990s are still valid today.

The core of the system developed by Panula is an orchestra, a conductor’s instrument, which varies from small instrumental ensembles to larger chamber and symphony orchestras. Due to the skills and knowledge acquired through practice with “real”, different-sized rehearsal orchestras and full-sized professional symphony orchestras even from the first years of study, the preparedness of the young conductors has increased significantly during the last twenty or thirty years. During the 1980s these practices also led to the above-mentioned unique system of collaboration between the conducting class and Finnish symphony orchestras. Today the so called “public training”, as Panula’s former student Esa-Pekka Salonen describes it, forms an essential part of the process of developing conductorship. It

177 Specifically those younger generations of conductors currently working who have studied with Jorma Panula in the Sibelius Academy conducting class.
has also proved to be beneficial for the orchestras, who, in turn, gain from training and recruiting conductors.

Towards the end of the 1990s the effects of this collaboration with professional symphony orchestras on the educational level had proved to be so significant that this feature began to define the relationship between the orchestral institution and conductors in Finland in general. This has, in turn, had a profound effect on public concert and musical life – “public” being understood as a sociological term here. It has also affected the more private or even ‘invisible’ part of the work of both conductors and orchestras. I am referring here to the duality of the idea of a professional artistic identity, and the work itself being both public and private – simultaneously, seen and not seen by the audiences. The term invisible is mine, intended to imply not only something that is not seen, but here also something that is not generally known. The contacts made by Panula have also extended to other fields of professional musical study. For example, young Finnish composers have benefited substantially from the developments in the education of conductors and from the activities of the conducting class through active collaboration.

The present study was preceded by a book entitled Panulan luokka (Panula’s Class). In the book I concentrated on the Jorma Panula’s period in the Sibelius Academy conducting class, his pedagogical career and teaching practices. The book was based on interviews with Panula and seven contemporary Finnish conductors – Mikko Franck, Tuomas Ollila, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Sakari Oramo, Esa-Pekka Salonen, John Storgårds, and Hannu Lintu, interviewed in this order – who studied in the class with Panula. For the present study the material has been augmented with several more interviews, including conductors Atso Almila, Susanna Mälkki

---

179 The division of artistic identity into personal and social (“public”) by Vappu Lepistö 1991.
180 Ibid.
181 Konttinen 2003. The present chapters 1.1 to 1.4 are based on the material and the research work done for the book, unless otherwise mentioned.
and Eva Ollikainen. Conductor-composer Oliver Knussen also kindly took part, discussing the dualism of being both conductor and composer, and the heritage of Tanglewood.

In the earlier book I included a brief account of conductors’ educational history in Finland, that led to Panula’s class. The effects his retirement has had on the training of conductors, the current situation in the class, and the ongoing influence of his teaching have also been considered. The system introduced by Panula is summarised in the next four chapters of the present study, as an introduction to the chapters in which the practical and gestural aspects of conductors’ work are discussed. Because a considerable amount of critical research work was needed for writing and publishing the book Panulan luokka, and the result has been evaluated and corrected by the interviewed conductors themselves, I decided to use the basic research there as well as the material collected also as a basis for the following chapters. In the last chapter, Chapter 1.5, my purpose has been to consider how the teaching practices introduced by Panula are currently being passed on. I also intend to compare their effects and usage in the class during his professorship and today, to bring out the features that in my opinion make the practical continuum. My goal has also been to find reasons for calling this continuum a tradition, although one of a kind.

Since there is a notable lack of basic research on Finnish conductors in the Finnish language, drawing a continuous historical time-line, not to mention separating a certain specific period or a problem from the whole, is difficult. I have kept this in mind while outlining and defining the focus period. The years between 1973 and 1993 seem to be significant for the educational development of conductorship in Finland. These twenty years also represent the first distinctive period of time that can both be brought out as a sort of culmination point and also the other hand seen logically as a part of the whole.
1.1 Education of conductors before Panula

The development the conductors’ education of and specific teaching practices generally progress alongside historical and institutional developments. This statement may even seem self-evident, since the institutional establishment generally goes hand in hand with the expected establishment of practices. Yet it does not apply to the Sibelius Academy conducting class. The class was founded in the early 1940s, but the educational activities remained somewhat unorganised until the beginning of the 1970s, with a variety of pedagogical methods being used.

Before the conducting class was founded in the Sibelius Academy and before specialised education in conducting was available, young conductors had to acquire the necessary special skills by studying abroad. The first professional conductor in Finland, Robert Kajanus (1856–1933), studied in Leipzig. He followed the rehearsals of the Gewandhaus Orchestra playing under the baton of the legendary Hans von Bülow (1830–1894), and he studied scores. Kajanus and Georg Schéevoigt were the first conductors in Finland to have adopted the “new” identity of a modern conductor, working mainly as orchestral conductors. Kajanus also composed, but was better known as a conductor.

By the next generations, conductors already had music schools where they could acquire basic musical education, although they often travelled abroad to complete their education and improve their skills in conducting. Conductor Jussi Jalas (1908–1985), the first teacher of conducting at the Sibelius Academy, studied in Paris. He started his conducting

---

183 Matti Huttunen has written about these issues in Esittävä säveltaide, in which he discusses the Finnish music from the point of view of the performing arts. See Huttunen 2002, 415-416. It is remarkable that Georg Schnéevoigt was, in fact, already very interested in working with an orchestra in a way that could be said to show early interest in conducting as a profession, and he wrote an early article on the subject; see Schnéevoigt 1926, pages 335-337.
studies with René Baton (pseu: Rhené-Baton) (1879 –1940) but moved on to attend the conducting courses of Pierre Monteaux.  

Jalas, a son-in-law of composer Jean Sibelius, began his pedagogical career in 1943. Officially, his teaching was registered to have begun during the spring term 1944, but it appears to have been disrupted by the war. Jalas’s teaching resumed at the beginning of the school year 1945–1946. This new academic term also marked the beginning of the first two-year conducting course, the first students graduating from the class at the end of the spring term in 1947. By comparison, the first conducting class or “program in conducting” started in Leipzig Conservatory began in 1905 with Arthur Nikisch.

Jussi Jalas introduced his own way of training conductors, based on formal analysis and a method of singing all the melodies to be conducted to the lyrics of quatrains-structured folk tunes. Jorma Panula attended these lessons for a while before actively enrolling studies in conducting. Panula remembers that the conducting students learned to master the baton by directing it to little specks on the wall, trying to hit them. After a few years Jalas decided to concentrate on his career as a performing and visiting conductor, and left for the United States where he spent the first half of the 1950s.

Between 1950 and 1955 the conducting class was taken over by Leo Funtek (1885–1965), the conductor of the Finnish Opera, and the first to introduce the idea of orchestral training in the class. Jussi Jalas returned to Finland and took up teaching the class again in 1955, but resigned in 1965. Until the spring of 1968 the class was taught by conductor Ulf...

---

185 Jalas is well known in Finland for being close to Sibelius and one of the most thorough and devoted interpreters of his music. Jalas also translated Cecil Gray’s book *Sibelius, The Symphonies* into Finnish with a commentary. The British tradition of conducting has also made an impact on Finnish music and conductors: for example Henry Wood, Adrian Boult, Thomas Beecham, and John Barbirolli – who also visited Finland – were known as notable Sibelius conductors.  
186 All references to the academic terms and teachers are taken from the Sibelius Academy annual reports, during the terms 1943–1974.  
188 Jalas explains this system in detail in his memoir; see Jalas 1981.  
189 Interview with Jorma Panula 27.11.2001.
Söderblom (b. 1930). Even if the teaching continued uninterrupted and the class was in professional hands, neither the system nor the teaching methods had been firmly established as yet.

The five years during which Leo Funtek taught were more important than it may have seemed at the time. Jorma Panula studied in Funtek’s class in the years 1951–1953, and later developed his ideas of teaching, using the advice he got from Funtek as a basis for his own pedagogical system and educational practices. All Funtek’s students played an orchestral instrument, and together they formed the first rehearsal ensemble for the conducting class. They conducted music written for and suitable for smaller ensembles, such as the overtures of Beethoven, and smaller works by Richard Strauss. The class also used the piano and learned to read scores in all possible keys. Funtek also familiarised his students with difficult passages from the works of the basic repertoire, using examples collected by conductor Herman Scherchenm,\textsuperscript{190} and teaching them practical “tricks” to overcome the difficulties.\textsuperscript{191}

The academic year from the autumn of 1968 to the spring of 1969 was unfortunate for the conducting class. As many as four different teachers were responsible for the class during one year. The first to take over the teaching duties was conductor Tauno Hannikainen (1896–1968), who had lived in the United States and made a career conducting the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for several years.\textsuperscript{192} Hannikainen taught for two months, but passed away in October. The class was taken over by Simon Parmet (1897–1969), who had worked as an assistant to Arturo Toscanini and made a notable career in Finland. But the next spring, illness forced Parmet to leave teaching in March of 1969.

\textsuperscript{190} The book entitled \textit{Lehrbuch des Dirigierens}, published in 1929.
\textsuperscript{191} Interviews with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001 and 5.11.2002.
\textsuperscript{192} Lappalainen 1995, pages 46-52.
Conductor Okko Kamu, who studied with both Hannikainen and Parmet, remembers that Hannikainen had the habit of bringing recordings of his own performances to the lessons, and using them as examples, while Parmet preferred to demonstrate what he meant and wanted by playing the piano. Kamu taught the class for a year together with Jorma Panula.

In the year 1969 the class was being taught – first temporarily, then permanently – by Jorma Panula (b. 1930). He worked both as a temporary director and professor of the class during the year 1970, and was appointed its professor in 1973. He taught the class until his retirement in 1993 and has continued to work with it periodically since. A student of both Leo Funtek and Simon Parmet, Panula found in the work of his mentors a basis on from which to begin developing his own way of teaching. Following Leo Funtek’s idea of having a permanent rehearsal ensemble with which to practice, Jorma Panula changed the entire way of educating conductors in Finland during the next twenty years.

Between the years 1973 and 1993 the activities of the class were completely re-organised, and new teaching practices were created. During the twenty years of Jorma Panula’s professorship the system of training conductors also became institutionally established – it became an educational standard and a practical basis for the syllabus of conducting studies in the Sibelius Academy. The structures of both the entrance examination and the degree examination for a conducting diploma were reconstructed, and the Sibelius Academy conducting students began working with their own permanent rehearsal orchestra—the most important of the institutional reformations and the one with the most significant effects. Currently, this rehearsal orchestra – “rehearsal band”, as the students call it – is a permanent chamber orchestra of twenty-five musicians. Jorma Panula also introduced video-taping in the class, which, when combined with the orchestral conducting sessions, has proved to be the most efficient of the practices used for training conductors.

193 Mansnerus 1977, pages 12-17.
194 I use term “practice” and not “method”, because Jorma Panula emphasises that he does not have a method.
1.2 Panula’s class

The years of Panula’s professorship formed the first distinguishable, continuous period of time in the educational history of conducting in Finland. “The Panula years” as a distinct phase of the educational history of conductors is also significant on the grounds of having had a direct impact on more, musicians than conductors alone. Panula has also sought to expand the activities of the class to all areas of musical education, introducing the idea of versatile musicianship, where “everyone is doing everything”, as his former student Esa-Pekka Salonen describes the phenomenon.

According to Salonen, versatility is a significant feature of a small musical culture. In Finland it has always been natural for musicians to train and make a many-sided career in more than one field. Salonen himself is an example of this, being both conductor and composer, as well as having the experience of being an orchestral musician, playing the horn. He says that the basic idea comes from the educational reality, there being only one university in Finland, with all the students, no matter what they study, being accustomed to working and spending time together. Panula’s conducting class was a catalyst for versatile conductorship and professionalism. In violinist, conductor, and composer John Storgårds’ opinion

…the kind of musicianship and spirit that Jorma has made a distinctive feature of the education of Finnish conductors supports the trend towards all-round professionalism in conducting.\(^{197}\)

These ideas have also changed certain aspects of the orchestral institution, its activities and working practices as well as in concert life. While the conducting students have benefited from the co-operation by gaining practical knowledge in professional working situations, the orchestras have become more aware of the idea of networking. Many young conductors have

---

\(^{195}\) Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.

\(^{196}\) Ibid. This is of course the case everywhere, not just in Finland.

\(^{197}\) Interview with John Storgårds, 1.9.2003; quoted in English in Konttinen 2004a.
played in the same orchestras they conduct, and in a way have already integrated themselves into the work communities. The orchestra’s musicians know them and have worked with them and perhaps accept more readily the change in roles. In addition, the orchestras, by giving conductors-to-be the chance of working with them, also have the opportunity to keep an eye, so to speak, on potential new visitors and musical directors.

From a sociological point of view, the period of Jorma Panula’s professorship also marked the beginning of the first practical conducting tradition in Finland. It began to take form from the middle of the 1990s onwards. As already discussed in the Introduction, there has never been a tradition in conducting technique in Finland.

What has been developing along with the historical tradition is therefore not a specific, recognisable way of conducting that could be defined by certain attributes and called a ‘school’. Instead, it seems that the continuum is not only historical and sociological, but also practical. By practical continuum I mean the specific manner and methods of teaching that have been passed on along with the conducting culture: the ideas of conductorship, collegiality, collegial responsibility, and work. When reading through the interviews made for this study, I noticed some common features emerging from the material. It seems that the former students of Jorma Panula have started to reflect on their own “history” and to analyse the processes leading from the class to the professional lives. Some have also started to teach and to pass Panula’s practices on to the next generation of conductors.

To some extent it is possible to generalise these features. In fact, these features have become so common that many conductors interviewed on the subject actually connected them with the word tradition. These questions will be given more consideration in Chapter 2.

I argue that Panula’s way of training conductors could be called unique. As evaluative as the word sounds and is generally considered to be, there are actually very practical reasons
for calling this system a unique one. It has certain specific features and practices not known to be in use in other institutions in which conductors are educated. It appears that these features, such as orchestral work as a part of the study, cannot be found on the same scale elsewhere.\textsuperscript{198} Panula also seems to be the first to have used video-taping as a part of his teaching.

The system has had widespread effects on more than one layer of Finnish musical life and effects on musical education not only in Finland but also internationally. Because of the increased number of foreign students admitted to the class, where Panula still comes to teach, and through his many masterclasses and workshops abroad (several a year), it is justifiable to say that these practices have also had an impact on how conductors are being taught, in a wider context. Of the conductors interviewed for this study,\textsuperscript{199} those who had also studied abroad were asked to compare training and its social effects in Finland and with those other countries historically belonging to the so-called Central European tradition. They claimed that the system developed by Jorma Panula has been quite exceptional and implied that its effects are ongoing.

The training system based on regularly conducting a permanent rehearsal orchestra has, to this extent, been used only in Finland and St Petersburg. There is a rehearsal ensemble in Stockholm, but it was established after Panula started to teach the conducting class of \textit{Kungliga musikhögskolan i Stockholm} (the Royal Music Academy).\textsuperscript{200} The so-called “continental” way of training conductors often means using only one or two pianos in a class. In practice, as conductor Sakari Oramo points out, this means that for those conductors having conducted only piano while studying, the conducting diploma may be the first opportunity to

\textsuperscript{198} There has been a rehearsal orchestra in St Petersburg, but the co-operative system between the conducting class and the professional symphony orchestras, especially during the 1990s, is said to be quite a unique phenomenon. Interview with Tuomas Ollila, 25.8.1998.
\textsuperscript{199} For example interviews with Tuomas Ollila, 25.8.1998; Jukka-Pekka Saraste 29.8.1998; and Sakari Oramo, 17.9.1998.
\textsuperscript{200} Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
work with a full-size symphony orchestra.\textsuperscript{201} As Mikko Franck\textsuperscript{202} in turn observes, this is equivalent to an instrumentalist being given an instrument to rehearse just three or four days before a performance. The same goes for competitions, which for some young conductors may be the only opportunities to work with a full-size symphony orchestra in a professional, if not conventional, context. In Finland working with the rehearsal orchestra is still the key element of conductors’ training. Even if the system of collaboration between the conductors studying in the class and the professional symphony orchestras is not as actively in use as it used to be, the practice has had a profound impact on Finnish symphony orchestras and is still evident in their hiring policies and to some extent in their working practices.

* * *

What is given in the next chapters is an account of the core of the system referred to above. The ideas of core activity and core skill are central, used here to define the core of the activities and skills prominent in the education of conductors. In this study the concept of the Beckerian core activity – or a core skill, as Gunther Schuller puts it – of a conductor is tied to the gestures mentioned earlier. Here the gestures are divided into two groups, educational gestures and working gestures, under which categories all gestural communication should hypothetically fit. By educational and working gestures, I mean the way of acting that defines, respectively, both teaching and working as action and communication.

Both categories have to do with the practices of conducting, and there are remarkable similarities in how these occasion-tied gestures function. They will be studied and discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 3, *Gestures: analysis*. These two levels of gestural communication are introduced in the following chapters. I will be concentrating first on the

\textsuperscript{201} Interview with Sakari Oramo, 17.9.1998.
\textsuperscript{202} Interview with Mikko Franck, 12.6.1998.
educational gestures, before examining how these gestures are carried into working situations with orchestras.

These chapters deal with the practice of training conductors, and the processes of integrating students in the conducting class into professional work communities. Generally speaking, these communities include all musical institutions, but in this study, I am concentrating on professional symphony orchestras as work communities. However, I will also briefly take into account those conductors who study in the conducting class, but do not end up working as professional conductors or with professional orchestras. Since the practices of training that lead to working life form the main subject matter, the focus is in questions related to the gestures appearing in the process of analysing, rehearsing, and performing a score – working on several different overlapping gestural levels partly simultaneously.

Although conducting is a highly personal matter, there are some general, shared conventions\textsuperscript{203} that affect and shape the process. These conventions are partly the result of the historical development of both conducting and orchestras, but they are also influenced and regulated by the educational background of conductors – how they have been taught. These shared conventions are part of the practical tradition discussed above. For example in many Central European countries strong traditions and schools in conducting technique are reflected in the way conductors gesticulate and how they work.

In the – intentional – absence of schools and traditions in conducting technique, the educational system built by Jorma Panula has been based on individualism and on students having the opportunities for personal, practical experiences in conducting, including the observing themselves in concrete working situations and rehearsing an orchestra, not just working with mental impressions or in a classroom with one or two pianos. As a result,

\textsuperscript{203} I refer here to Howard Becker’s theory of conventions in an art world. See Becker 1982.
Finnish conductors seldom look visually very much alike or have someone else’s mannerisms – for example their teacher’s.

I also find that one possible and very important reason for the absence of schools and technical traditions is the role of contemporary music in Finland. The generations of conductors, composers, and instrumentalists who have studied at the Sibelius Academy during Jorma Panula’s time are the ones who have started up the Korvat Auki group of young contemporary composers, the ensemble Toimii!, the chamber orchestra Avanti!, and the annual contemporary music festival *Musica Nova* – as early as in the late 1970s and the 1980s. Especially during Panula’s period the conducting students have studied and conducted as much contemporary music as possible from the very beginning and they continue to work with the above-mentioned institutions.

This has naturally lead to optional and even unconventional working practices, and created a need to learn to take in and convey, for example, completely new notational systems. For these reasons, I see that the conventions regulating the work of conductors are, in the context of the musical education in Finland, strongly educational-bound. The conventions and how they are mirrored in the working culture of conductors – both Finnish and those from other countries who have studied in Finland – will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 2, *Conducting gestures*.

Gestures are understood here as differently defined and emphasised processes, for example, as sociological processes, from training in the class to working in a professional work community, and practical processes, from analysis to performance. Discussing processes is also discussing transitions, here from a student life to a professional one, and from analysis to performance. Once again, most important than is what happens “in between”.

115
1.3 Speaking hands – a philosophy of teaching

With the education of musicians in general, a *method* is a word commonly used to describe teaching practices. Perhaps most readily perceived as something to do with teaching soloists, for example, violinists and pianists, method is also a word most strongly connected with the ways conductors are, and have been, trained. With Finnish conductors, and the Sibelius Academy conducting class, it is a term requiring redefinition. By his former students Jorma Panula is described as a “man without a method”.

Theoretically, it should be noted that this comment implies that there is an opposite – a method – against which this lack of method is measured. In practice, there has never been a method: Panula claims that he himself has never wanted to create or use when teaching. For him, even the idea of teaching someone to conduct is complicated concept in itself. Basic motor functions should naturally be highly developed and motor co-ordination combined with a (preferably) suitable character with psychological sense and overall professional musicianship.

These qualities should not be forced, but allowed to develop according to a student’s personal tempo. One’s personal development should not be restricted by ignoring individual requirements in training, the physical abilities and the processes of learning being different with each student. This is why there should not be too many students studying in the class at the same time. In this context the term “method” carries the potential for negative side effects: at worst it can limit one’s personal capacities, or even set back otherwise naturally progressing musical and professional development.\(^{204}\)

According to Panula, the duty of a teacher is to correct obvious technical mistakes and answer questions proposed by students. He himself encourages students to question what they have been taught, even to argue if they do not agree with what they are told. The most

\(^{204}\) Salonen 1980, pages 10-14.
important thing is that the students think or learn to think for themselves. The rest is up to the students, their personal musicianship and individual choices. They either already have the potential abilities in them, or they don’t. If they do, the teacher should lead them in the right direction, and help them to find their own personal ways of gesturing and working. If they do not, there is nothing to be done. In addition to highly developed motor co-ordination, and advanced theoretical skills, the students should already have knowledge of orchestral practices – the experience preferably acquired through advanced studies on an orchestral instrument and, even more important, through orchestral playing. All this should come naturally to anyone working as a conductor. Some basic things, such as beat patterns and beating in different metres simultaneously, can be learned by practicing.

Combining all these skills in one person, who in addition knows how to work musically and psychologically with a full-sized orchestra and has the abilities to bring the best out of this instrument, is something that cannot be taught. Students can be advised and important knowledge shared, but ultimately there has to be the thing called “talent” and a willingness to work hard – the latter, in Panula’s words, taking over ninety percent of the study. The responsibility for the progression of one’s career is one’s own.  

Along with the use of rehearsal orchestra and video-taping, Jorma Panula has two main principles when teaching: the teacher should not show the students how to conduct, and speech should be limited to an absolute minimum. As implied in the title of this chapter, the focus is on the conductor’s hands: the hands should not only work clearly and functionally, but also speak. This leads to very uncertain territory and raises the question of how to find words to describe something for which there are no words. There is a paradox here, since the idea is not primarily to verbalise things, but to bring them out gesturally. This means conveying information and ideas to an orchestra and thereby to an audience with movements.

---

and gestures of hands, but also being conscious that the hands are the most important mediator on which the core of communication is focused.

In other words, the information and ideas mediated through the hands – the gestures – are the core activity or the core skill of a conductor’s communication. It is clear that there cannot be a communicative movement without an idea, conscious and purposeful, subconscious, or learned, that precedes it. In a way the musical idea is the most important factor and could also be seen as the core of the communicative situation. But since in my opinion a gesture includes both the idea and its physical execution, I would still like to see gesture as the core of the communicative process. However, one should convey what one intends to say through the hands rather than through explanation. An orchestra should be able to read everything from the hands of a conductor, the reaction time being as short as possible. The clearer the movement, the shorter the reaction time, enabling the orchestra to play more responsively and more accurately.

Jorma Panula’s way of teaching, or his philosophy of teaching, could be summed up with his own term, “speaking hands”. By this he means the central role of gesticulation, the information becoming visible and understandable through the hands. It is impossible to outline the role of speech in the process of conducting entirely, since it is necessary to explain some things to the orchestra while rehearsing. Speech must not, however, become a more important medium than the hands. What is important is the size and clarity of the gestures. Speaking visually with one’s hands, and explaining things verbally to the orchestra as little as possible is also the most important and the most efficient way of communicating. If the movements of the hands are controlled and focused, preferably taking place in a relatively small area in front of one’s body, than it is possible to maintain a high level of concentration.

A movement being a hierarchically somewhat lesser concept than gesture here.
Basically, the orchestra has to follow the gesticulation of the conductor more intensively, because the way the information is conveyed physically is very compact. Maintaining intensive eye contact, and keeping one’s gestures considered, purposeful and economic, is also the only way to keep the orchestra together and alert while playing – a basis on which to build one’s own interpretations. Economising gestures is, as must be pointed out here, only a starting point for a beginning conductor. The goal is to increase the range of interpretative means with time, creating personal way of gesticulating based on intensive contact with an orchestra.\textsuperscript{207}

The term “speaking hands” is central to Jorma Panula’s teaching philosophy, but it also reveals the core of his teaching practices. There are two main things to consider: one is the concrete practical ways of training, through such means as rehearsal orchestra and videotaping, and the other consists of the ideas and principles regulating positions, authority, and communication in teaching situations. I understand these ideas as the principles regulating the category of educational gestures; these will be discussed more thoroughly in the following chapters.

1.4 Orchestra and video

The Sibelius Academy conducting class did not get its own permanent and paid rehearsal orchestra until the 1980s, but, as already mentioned, conductor Leo Funtek taught with an orchestral ensemble composed of his conducting students as early as 1950. Jorma Panula studied with Funtek from 1951 to 1953, and, after Funtek returned to his post at the Finnish Opera in 1955, this practice was continued by Panula. However, there were both practical and ideological obstacles. At first mainly woodwind and brass players took an interest in playing in the rehearsal orchestra, these players evidently needing practice in the solo parts of

\textsuperscript{207} Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
orchestral works. There was a lack of string players, the main problem being related to the educational ideologies: at the time there was a strong opinion among the teaching staff that orchestral playing disrupted instrumentalists who were working towards a career as performing artists.\footnote{The fact that orchestral playing has been underestimated in the past is telling: during the autumn of 2004 there was a debate in the press on the ensemble playing skills of young instrumentalists intending to become orchestral musicians. A statement on the subject was made by Sakari Oramo, which was then commented upon by Gustaf Djupsjöbacka, the Rector of the Sibelius Academy. Oramo requested that the Sibelius Academy should pay more attention to the education of future orchestral players, especially that of string players. In his reply Djupsjöbacka promised to work on the subject to make the young instrumentalists more orientated to orchestral work and ready to adjust musically themselves into the work communities.}

Gradually, due to the efforts of Jorma Panula, the activities and the size of the orchestra – now approximately twenty-five players, the size varying according to the music played and the participation of the conducting students – were finally fixed. Panula took over the class in 1968, and according to the Sibelius Academy Annual Report 1968–1969, the conducting students were already being allowed to conduct the Sibelius Academy Symphony Orchestra. During the next term a quintet and an ensemble of fifteen players were used in the class. There is no official record to be found, nor an accurate year to mark the establishing of the rehearsal orchestra, but as late as 1986 the now permanent rehearsal orchestra, where musicians are paid for their involvement, still did not exist.\footnote{Karttunen – Otonkoski 1986, pages 20-31.}

Along with the rehearsal orchestra, pianos, usually two, have also been in use in the Sibelius Academy class, often accompanied by conducting students playing on orchestral instruments. Using a permanent rehearsal orchestra of at least twenty-five musicians is very expensive, making it necessary to divide teaching between preparatory studies and orchestral sessions. The preparatory studies were, and still are, conducted as described above, using two pianos, the students playing along either at the piano or with other instruments – or singing in parts, if necessary. During Panula’s period it was usual for the students to play whatever instrument happened to be at hand. This practice is evident from documented class material.
Besides being humorous at times, these situations also prove that the students were expected to have wide-ranging musical skills and knowledge of different instruments. This is a skill needed by all conductors: to be able to work with a full-sized orchestra, one has to know all the instruments, how they sound and what is possible for the musicians to play. In practice this means that from 1968 onwards there has been some kind of an ensemble to conduct in the Sibelius Academy conducting class almost all the time.

However, the opportunities for practicing with a full-size symphony orchestra were – and still are – rare. Such opportunities still need to be found elsewhere, outside the Academy. This is a paradox, since a symphony orchestra is a conductor’s instrument, and requires practice just like every other instrument.

The use of a rehearsal orchestra is beneficial for the conducting students in more than one way: playing along and conducting the “band” during the teaching sessions widens the perspective from the podium on both sides of the music stand. Having the immediate experience of being conducted by a colleague affects own conducting. There is also a question of balance and the ability to listen to how the different sections of the orchestra work and sound together. A conductor must know how these collective and interactive aspects of sound work in an orchestra, one reason why it is extremely important to have the experience of being an orchestra musician as a background for conducting studies.

Working with a ”real” orchestra also served Panula’s goal of avoiding stultifying routines in both teaching and learning. Conducting and everything that had to do with it was supposed to be a living process, not a stable or unchanging state. Everyone developed at their own pace, but the most important thing was to develop constantly by heading towards something new. An orchestra as a living work community is constantly under change, musically, physically, and psychologically. The working situations with an orchestra are

---

210 Interview with Hannu Lintu, 10.2.2000.
211 Interviews with Jorma Panula, 29.11.1999 and 27.11.2001.
always built around unexpected elements, with constant renewal also being required from the conductor.

During the period of Jorma Panula’s professorship, the background of being an orchestral player became one of the important factors in the education of young conductors in Finland. It also began to carry weight on the entrance examinations, where experience in orchestral playing and knowledge of an orchestra’s practices were desired. In addition to theoretical examinations, and auditions with the rehearsal orchestra, students applying for a place in the conducting class were expected to prove their readiness and skills by playing their own instrument.

Jorma Panula introduced video-taping into conductors’ training at the first possible opportunity. Video has proved to be the best way for aspiring conductors to learn to how to “play” their own instrument, the orchestra. It has not only become an established method among conductors in Finland, but is also used in those countries abroad where Panula still actively teaches. Confronting students who are unwilling to take advice or who do not believe what they are told, Panula finds analysing the video the best – and a quite inarguable – way of pointing out and correcting errors.212

In practice, the conducting sessions with the rehearsal orchestra are video-taped and the tapes watched and analysed afterwards. This also serves the important purpose of not interrupting the actual conducting situation unless it is absolutely necessary. The idea is that all the conductors are present and take part equally in the general conversation. During Panula’s period these discussions continued after the class was over, collegiality and the idea of a “fair play” being central. What Panula wanted was to create an atmosphere in which one could get professional feedback from one’s colleagues. When beginning to work in the field,

212 Interview with Jorma Panula, 29.11.1999.
there is seldom anyone to give a truthful opinion unless a wife, husband, or colleague says honestly and outright what was good and what was not.

Analysing the video-taped material has a very important practical function: in working with an orchestra in an actual musical situation, the conductor has to concentrate on several different tasks at the same time. These tasks range from reading the score and listening to the orchestra’s sound to being aware of the musicians doing the playing. The constantly living situation often requires taking part in many non-musical aspects of the work community as well. It might not be possible to hear and observe oneself conducting, a problem not only young conductors but also more experienced ones have to confront. Gunther Schuller, whose book *The Compleat Conductor* Panula recommends to his students, describes this ability to listen as having a “third ear”:

> I like to think of that listening ear as the ‘third ear’, an ear which ‘sits’ well outside the conductor’s body and listens not only to the totality of what the orchestra is producing but also the effect that the conductor’s conducting is having on that orchestra and on the music. It is therefore a highly critical, a highly discriminating ear; it is a regulatory ear. But it must also be a self-regulatory ear. It must be as much directed to one’s self (the conductor) as at the orchestra.\(^\text{213}\)

In Panula’s system the practice of video-taping is directed towards this kind of profession-related self-knowledge and awareness of the effects one has on the sound of an orchestra. During the time of study, while it may still be difficult to perceive these matters from outside oneself, so to speak, video gives the conductors a very truthfull picture of what they do and how they look while conducting. Musical matters such as trailing behind the orchestra or physical ones having to do with good posture and movement on the podium may be difficult to realise, until seen clearly on a video. Panula says that sometimes young conductors do not believe what they are being told, and some even begin to argue if they are asked to correct

\(^{213}\) Schuller 1997, page 17.
their mistakes and mannerisms. Seeing the video-taped session usually puts a stop to all the arguments, since “video-tape never lies”.  

Analysing a video is also a useful way to observe the effect of one’s conducting on the orchestra. However, as Panula himself reminds watching the video is a skill in itself and requires practice. Training to observe oneself critically while conducting – a skill that is not self-evident, even for professional conductors and one that develops with experience – at its best leads to self-evaluation and awareness. For this reason the young conductors in Panula’s class were not given any concrete examples of while conducting, but instead encouraged to observe themselves at work by means of the video-tape. This way the only visual impression they had was their own.

The use of video has been continued, since Panula’s retirement and with good results. But working intensively as a closely-knit group in the spirit of solidarity has lost its meaning. This is a point that might easily be overlooked or attributed to nostalgic reminiscence, but in fact it is a significant and telling aspect of Finnish conductorship: in a situation that constantly requires laying oneself open to the public, the psychological training acquired during the years of study – discussion, interaction, criticism, and co-operation – serves as an important background for developing self-criticism. Such training also provides an idea of what is to be expected when working with professional symphony orchestras, the principal employer of the majority of conductors. Panula says that many problems have been solved in these situations: if encouraged to speak it out, an introverted person can learn to open up and be confident about what he or she wants to express musically and how to do it.

---

214 Interview with Panula, 27.11.2001.
215 Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
216 Ibid.
The continuum of shared knowledge can be seen in practice here, even if the contacts between different generations have altered. Esa-Pekka Salonen, who studied in the class in the late 1970s, mentions that the interaction with senior colleagues while studying was very important for him. Sakari Oramo, on the other hand, studied in the class in the early 1990s, and says that he would like to have had more contact with older conductors, and know more about the reality of the work; while in the class, everything just felt interesting and fun.217 Nevertheless, the aspect of collegiality has continued to be a part of the education of conductors in one way or another, even if the way these encounters have been put into practice has varied – a fact naturally dependent on the persons in question and on whether or not the older conductors of each generation have been socially oriented or pedagogically-minded.

The practice of video-taping conducting lessons has spread, but it appears that the emphasis placed on it elsewhere has been considerably less than in Finland – at least not on the same scale. And using a rehearsal is still not common elsewhere. One notable exception already mentioned is St Petersburg, where a regular, paid rehearsal orchestra has been in use.218 Panula has taken these two basic practices – an orchestra and a video – wherever he teaches. The more the students get to work with different sized orchestras, the better prepared they are to conduct full-size professional symphony orchestras – and to cross the line from being a student into being a professional.

First impressions

When the first generation of students studied in Jorma Panula’s class, video was a novelty. Jukka-Pekka Saraste, along with his colleagues Atso Almila, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and Osmo Vänskä were the first to experience it in practice. Saraste remembers that when he begun his

conducting studies, video had just arrived.\textsuperscript{219} Panula got a video player for the class as soon as it was possible, and it quickly proved to have an essential role in the training of conductors:

I introduced the video in the class, since they did not have one yet. As soon as it was invented, I told that we needed one. The machine was about one meter high, we dragged it around with us, and took it everywhere.\textsuperscript{220}

Atso Almila thinks that it is “an absolutely horrible sensation to see yourself conducting for the first time”.\textsuperscript{221} When the first generation of conductors studied in the class, the experience was affected by the limitations of the technology. In addition to being unreliable and not working at critical times, as Esa-Pekka Salonen recalls, the machine made films that were “black-and-white, which made the effect somewhat distant. It felt like it wasn’t me anymore, it was an old TV-show or a film. These digital videos they have today are such high-quality and in colour, I suppose it must make the effect even more earth-shattering”.\textsuperscript{222}

A video-taped lesson was a “tool” for the conducting students, not only in learning to conduct, but also in learning how to work with an orchestra. Conductors joke that the purpose of it was not to admire themselves afterwards for how good they looked in front of an orchestra, but to get a realistic picture of their skills and learn from their own mistakes. If they were able not to take the situation too seriously, then they had the opportunity to find their own, personal conductorship. In Sakari Oramo’s opinion, it is important to learn to observe oneself from outside, so to speak, with the eyes of someone else – “and also to laugh at yourself, if you have a good sense of humour”.\textsuperscript{223}

\textsuperscript{219} Interview with Jukka-Pekka Saraste 29.8.1998.
\textsuperscript{220} Interviews with Jorma Panula, 29.11.1999, 27.11.2001, and 5.11.2002.
\textsuperscript{221} Almila on video in TV-documentary Kulttuuridokumentti: Jorma Panula 70-vuotta, maestrot onnittelevat [Culture documentary: Jorma Panula 70 years, Maestros congratulate.] Editor Juha Suomalainen. Yleisradio, TV1 Kulttuuritorstai 2001.
\textsuperscript{222} Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
\textsuperscript{223} Interview with Sakari Oramo, 17.9.1998.
During Panula’s period the whole class gathered after the sessions with the rehearsal orchestra to watch and analyse the video-taped performances as explained above. The videotape revealed every bad posture, indistinct of the communication, or technique-related mistake such as indicating the first beat up, instead of down as should be done. At the same time these video sessions strengthened the community spirit, so to speak, among the student conductors. Panula’s principle was that everyone should take part in the sessions, giving each other feedback.

Esa-Pekka Salonen recalls that the most important lessons were learned during the video sessions, watching each other conduct and listening to the comments.\(^{224}\) If there was any “method”, Salonen thinks it came up in these situations. One particular time, he recalls, will never be forgotten:

…we were watching the video one day, and I had the bad habit of opening my mouth when beating down. My hand and jaw were synchronised so that when my hand went down, my jaw also dropped. Jorma watched it for a while, I was trying to conduct one of Haydn’s symphonies with my mouth opening and closing, and when it was finished he said: ‘Don’t worry, you have absolutely no worries whatsoever, if you don’t succeed as a conductor, you can always sustain yourself as an insect-eater.’ There’s a method for you!\(^{225}\)

The television documentary of the Panula’s conducting class filmed in 1984 shows how the video-analysing sessions progressed.\(^{226}\) Panula is sitting in front of a television screen with a few of his students, all watching one person conduct, and commenting on the smudgy, wavering picture on the screen. At times the picture disappears completely, coming back again after a while. The lively commentary continues uninterrupted, and the poor quality of the tape, or the crackle of the voice, get no attention whatsoever. The comments given by

\(^{224}\) Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
\(^{225}\) Salonen on watching the video in TV-documentary *Kulttuuridokumentti: Jorma Panula 70-vuotta, maestrot ommitelevat* [Culture documentary: Jorma Panula 70 years, Maestros congratulate.], edited by Juha Suomalainen. Yleisradio, TV1 Kulttuuritorstai, 2001.
\(^{226}\) TV-documentary *Tempo: Panulan luokka* [Tempo: Panula’s class, edited by Anna-Kaarina Kiviniemi. Yleisradio, TV1 Musiikkitoimitus, 1984.]
Panula are short, succinct, and descriptive, such as “next time the second beat more to the right” or “look at your knees, they are yo-yo-ing”. The students react to these remarks quickly, responding back, with a particularly insightful remark receiving an approving “that’s right” from the professor.

One could get the most out of the video-watching situation, if the video and the conducting were observed from the point of view of an orchestra musician. John Storgårds, who studied in the class during the early 1990s, says that watching a video was most beneficial for those who as orchestral musicians had become accustomed to reacting quickly to the information coming from a conductor:

Especially if you have the background and the experience of working in an orchestra, you’ll see quite quickly – as long as you’re being self-critical – whether what you do while conducting does work or not. You are also able to tell what it is that doesn’t quite fall into place, if something is wrong.227

However, no matter what the background, it is important to concentrate on the contact and the communication with the orchestra while observing oneself conducting. Technical matters that affect this contact are, for example, include how to prepare changes in tempo, conduct transitional passages, and communicate the necessary information clearly with one’s hands. What is important is that the students notice the mistakes themselves. This self-evident, but according to Panula, there are students who, instead of observing the effect they have on the orchestra, keep staring at themselves and their own appearance on the screen. Panula keeps an eye on the students while they watch the video. “Then I try to talk to them and notice that they don’t even listen to me. They just don’t hear a word I’m saying, because of being so occupied

with admiring themselves!”  He says that even if the picture on the screen is the same for everyone, the ways of observing it are very different.

In Panula’s opinion the video is “as important as the professor”, because when the students “see for themselves, they believe what is said”. For a person standing on the podium the impression one gets from the situation with an orchestra can be very different from that of someone observing from the outside. Controlling and assessing one’s own ways of conducting and working is a skill that develops with time. Esa-Pekka Salonen said in an interview that his impressions in watching the videos have changed with time and experience, and also because of not having had contact with his own instrument, the horn, for a long time. The view of an orchestra musician has changed into distinct opinions of how he analyses working situations as an experienced conductor. Like Panula, he uses the video and says that he trains his students to see themselves “inside from outside”. He also finds it important for the students to learn to locate the exact moment when the incorrect estimate takes place and to find the right means to express their ideas and intentions.

1.5 Educating with gestures

Jorma Panula has made a habit of observing every student by sitting in the middle of the orchestra or by its side. This ensures that the orchestra does not see the instructions given to the students nor can it react to the suggested corrections. In Panula’s opinion the student standing in front of the orchestra should be the one making the changes and correcting the balance, entries, and the overall sound of the orchestra. The professor coaches the students silently, usually with gestures. Since the orchestra does not see what the teacher indicates, the student conductor can make the corrections and also to hear and feel the effects of the changes.

---

228 Interviews with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001 and 5.11.2002.
229 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
230 Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
in the sound and playing. Panula prefers to give his instructions – just a wave of the hand, or a more functional gesture depicting a certain musical parameter or an activity that has to do with phrasing and articulation – while the music is going on. This way, as Mikko Franck says, the “new way of playing becomes a natural part of the musical situation”, without “interrupting the musical flow”.\textsuperscript{231} Constant stopping lowers the level of energy, disrupting both the music and the concentration.

There are also other, practical reasons for not interrupting the musical situation or stopping the music. There is usually very little time – often no more than fifteen to twenty minutes per student – to conduct and rehearse the orchestra, and therefore no time should be wasted. The conductor standing in front of the orchestra is also the one in charge and should be allowed to sustain his or her authority with regard to the orchestra without interference. This (practical but also psychological) position should not be questioned, not even by the teacher.

These basic principles are likely to follow the students through their professional lives. Partly unconsciously, partly consciously and purposefully, the students pass them on by teaching, for example. These principles become \textit{conventions}, that begin to show in the way conductors work. Gestures central to the teaching situations in the class, the so-called \textit{educational gestures}, thus become gestures used while working, the \textit{working gestures}. Thus, my conclusion is that the educational gestures – cues and instructions, both practical and psychological, given by the teacher – are decidedly similar to the \textit{working gestures} used by a professional conductor working with an orchestra. As already mentioned, these gestures could also be used by former students should they begin teaching themselves.

\textsuperscript{231} Interview with Mikko Franck in documentary \textit{Kulttuuridokumentti: Mikko Franck, matkalla} [Culture documentary: Mikko Franck, on a journey], edited by Jarmo Papinniemi, Yleisradio, TV1 Kulttuuriohjelmat, 1999.
“Lesson” is a word Panula rarely uses. Rather, he regards teaching as an ongoing collegial dialogue between teacher and students. This means analysing the video-taped conducting sessions with all students present and giving feedback to each other, with the professor commenting and answering questions. Collegial dialogue also means talking about future working situations and potential conflicts. Panula’s conducting students also associate these discussions with the time they used to spend together, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, both in and out of class. As Esa-Pekka Salonen remarks, with this collegiality and exceptional spirit came the intensity and comprehensiveness of studying.\textsuperscript{232}

The idea of interaction has been one of the most characteristic features of Panula’s teaching. It is also a basic principle of working which is used by his former and present students. At its best interaction includes fair criticism and feedback. Naturally, the first and the most important comments are those from the orchestra, which reacts instantly to what the conductor does and reflects it back. But in the special relationship and interaction a conductor has with the orchestra, the question is not about the kind of collegialism learned in the class. The questions of authority and collegiality, both used when talking about the relationship between a conductor and an orchestra, must not be confused. The kind of collegialism discussed here is seen in relation to the idea of a \textit{professional community} that has developed around Jorma Panula, and still continues to be evident, especially among his former students. Panula’s students have been encouraged to ask for his advice and opinion, even after his retirement. They have also taken advantage of that opportunity by calling him, inviting him to their concerts, and showing to him videos of their performances.

Panula has always encouraged his students to acquire as wide an education, both musical and otherwise. This includes having knowledge of different instruments and advanced theoretical

\textsuperscript{232} Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
skills as well as knowledge of history, politics, economics, art history, visual arts, literature, and theatre. As a result, in the words of Esa-Pekka Salonen, the “culture” of many-sided musicianship, a distinctive feature of musical life in Finland, had its beginnings at the educational level.233

Salonen as well as many of his colleagues consider this tendency to have developed largely because of the activities of Panula’s class. At the same time the education of conductors is one area of music education in Finland to have become more widely known abroad.

Conducting Course

At the beginning of the 1990s the Finnish Broadcasting Company (YLE) took an interest in Panula’s idea of making an educational video for conducting students. They decided to film an eight-part documentary of Panula’s conducting class for television. The series was entitled Panula’s Conducting Course, and it was broadcast during the spring of 1992.234 With Panula leading the way, the team planned and realised these programs with the dual purpose of showing the general public how conductors were trained at the Sibelius Academy and of providing educational material for Panula’s students. Within the framework of this project, Panula invited guests to take part in the class training sessions and to work with the students. Composer Einojuhani Rautavaara coached the students while they worked with his music. Rautavaara visited the class often, and Panula used Rautavaara’s music when teaching. There were other guests, too, whose involvement was more permanent. For example, director Sakari Puurunen visited the Panula’s class in its earliest days, to tell the conductors what was expected in situations with staged activities – opera and theatre.235

233 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen 3.5.2001.
235 Discussion with Atso Almila, 10.3.2005.
During the filming, actor Lasse Pöysti gave an actor’s views on what it means to work on stage. Dancer and choreographer Heikki Wärtsi shared ideas about the nature of movement in general, and artist Carl-Gustaf Lilius made drawings of the students in motion while they conducted. After the conducting session Lilius showed his drawings and analysed every conductor’s posture, personal gesticulations, and characteristic movements on the podium. Psychologist Martti Paloheimo also visited the class and discussed the psychology of leadership and positions of authority.  

1.6 From conducting class to professional life

Generally, the integration of young conductors into work communities is a personal matter, having to do with chance and choices they make. During the period of Panula’s professorship, recruiting young conductors developed into an efficient system: orchestras were in touch with Panula, and he in turn recommended his students for appropriate opportunities. Taking advantage of the working opportunities arranged by Panula often led to regular work contacts with professional symphony orchestras. During the twenty years the readiness of the conducting students to work professionally grew considerably; in many cases this system made the transition from student to professional practically unnoticeable, as well as making the profession itself more available to the young conductors. I do not mean to say that this is a rule, with all conducting students integrating effortlessly into professional life. It is, however, a common enough a feature to make such integration a “system” of a kind and an interesting and exceptional phenomenon in the context of the education of conductors in general.

Jukka-Pekka Saraste remembers that the transition from an orchestral musician to a conductor happened gradually. Saraste conducted the same orchestra in which he had been a violinist before beginning to concentrate on a career on the podium. He found this

---

236 Konttinen 2003.
transitional phase, during which much was learned very beneficial. The integration of conductors into professional life also gave the orchestras an opportunity to be in touch with the evolving situation in the field – getting information through the “grapevine”, as conductor Sakari Oramo describes it.\textsuperscript{238} In practice, it was – and continues to be – a major channel of employment for beginning conductors in Finland, where the traces of the recruiting system created by Panula are still seen. Although they have quite a different kind of procedure in applying for positions, young instrumentalists experience something similar.

Esa-Pekka Salonen considers orchestras to have a “social obligation” to young conductors, who are needed in musical life, but who cannot develop or become professionals without the necessary practice – a treadmill of necessity and benefit.\textsuperscript{239} The same goes for the instrumental students studying at the Sibelius Academy, most of whom have also had the advantage of being asked to substitute during their studies in the professional symphony orchestras, thus gaining experience in orchestral and ensemble work.

Along with playing in orchestras, young instrumentalists often play in the rehearsal orchestra, and sometimes continue their studies in the conducting class. Future conductors who start as orchestral musicians have the advantage of familiarising themselves with a large repertoire, and playing under the direction of many different conductors and observing them at work. At the same time the knowledge of both orchestral and conductors’ work has increased considerably.

During Jorma Panula’s professorship collaborative relationships were sought out not only between the conducting class and orchestras, but also between instrumentalists and composers. The rehearsal orchestra did not just serve as an instrument for the conductors, but also the young instrumentalists benefitted from these opportunities to gain experience.

\textsuperscript{238} Interview with Sakari Oramo, 17.9.1998.
\textsuperscript{239} Ibid.
Composers took part in the activities of the conducting class in what Panula calls “laboratoires”\(^{240}\). Composers studying at the Sibelius Academy had the benefit of hearing their compositions rehearsed. This way conductors, who in Panula’s opinion needed to conduct as much contemporary music as possible, acquired both experience and new material to work with. The composers, in turn, received feedback directly from the musicians – from the points of view of both instrumentalists and conductors. There was always the question of economy too: hiring parts is usually very expensive, meaning difficulties in acquiring new material.

This system of active networking still goes on in Finland’s musical life, both on the practical and the sociological levels. Esa-Pekka Salonen emphasises the role of “public training”, which is an essential part of conductors’ education and work.\(^{241}\) This situation differs from that of instrumentalists. The only possible way for a conductor to be trained is to rehearse and perform with an orchestra. There is a practical need for conducting in public in order to become a professional, and the experience can only be provided by orchestras. The orchestras, in turn, keep an eye on visitors as well as potential artistic directors and chief conductors.

There is a permanent demand – indeed a practical need – for conductors in general. Conducting a professional symphony orchestra is not the only option, however – many young conductors begin their careers by working with student and other amateur orchestras.

There are also traces of the Beckerian idea of a “cooperative network” here. Even if in most cases the distribution of work is clear, the actual artistic work in this “art world” is tied to these cooperative patterns of interdependency. Most Finnish conductors interviewed for this study felt that this system of integrating and recruiting also increased the opportunities to find

\(^{240}\) Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
\(^{241}\) Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
work abroad. Some of them even said that just the fact that they were studying in the class was an international recommendation.

The situation has changed since Panula’s retirement; the same kind of system between the conducting class and orchestras is not actively sustained any longer. On the other hand, it has to be noted that conductors’ education in general has undergone quite radical changes. This subject was discussed with conductor-composer Atso Almila, who is currently teaching the Sibelius Academy conducting class. At the time of the interview, in December 2004, there were more foreign students studying in the class than ever. It is no longer the case that most students are Finnish; there have even been times when the Finnish students have been in the minority.

It has become more and more usual for Finnish musicians to study abroad. Different kinds of exchange programs have made this possible, even at an early stage of study. While twenty years ago conductors used to gain experience and through invitations to conduct professional orchestras in Finland, today they travel and study abroad, and possibly begin their international career somewhat earlier than before. This is, of course, a generalisation; the truly talented conductors have become known and have found positions.

However, beginning an international career early is a feature that has emerged, or rather re-emerged, during the last five to ten years. Especially before the teaching in the Sibelius Academy conducting class became organised from the late 1960s onwards, conductors were forced to find special training elsewhere. Often this meant travelling abroad to participate in rehearsals and international courses and master classes taught by well-known maestros of the time. During the last ten years international conducting courses and workshops as well as the above-mentioned exchange programs have become more and more common as a way of completing one’s education.

---

Invited guests

Guests – not only from the other fields of art as was the case with the Conducting Course, but also from professional symphony orchestras – was a common practice during Panula’s professorship. Meeting the musicians as well as others working within the orchestral institution was part of the orientation towards professional life. There were several musicians from symphony orchestras who regularly visited the Sibelius Academy class, mainly, from the Helsinki Philharmonic, whose conductor Panula was during the years 1965–1972. Their views and advice were needed, for example, when discussing balance in the string section, when a leader from a professional symphony orchestra played along with the students, or how different instruments, say four horns – the usual number in an orchestra – sound together.

Besides musicians, other people representing the large cooperative network of an orchestral institution were important guests, familiarising students with the routines of the daily work of an orchestra. Almost as important as knowing the music and the working practices is knowing the general manager, the orchestral assistant, the road and stage managers, and the people working in the music library.²⁴⁴

The students benefitted not only musically, but also psychologically and even physically from these visits, since physical exercise and pantomime were included in teaching. The purpose of physical exercise was to concentrate on the visual aspects of conducting while standing on the podium and on the expressivity of movements. The purpose of pantomime was to release tensions and work on possible feelings of anxiety and nervousness on stage.²⁴⁵ At some points during Panula’s class, physical exercise was something the conductors did on a regular basis. As a part of this, the students also learned to analyse their own psychological approach to being on stage; sometimes walking from the stage door to the podium could be the most difficult part of a performance. This was not only

²⁴⁵ Discussion with Atso Almila, 10.3.2005.
a psychological, but also a physical, matter and a problem that could be solved by considering it as such.²⁴⁶

There were also visiting teachers who usually came to taught the class while its professor toured as a conductor himself. Mostly, these visitors were the guest conductors of the Helsinki Philharmonic, the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, or the orchestra of the Finnish National Opera. More often than not, they were guests of the Helsinki Philharmonic: it was customary for visiting maestros to work for two weeks with the orchestra, conducting two different concert programs, and it was practical to arrange a master class for the students during the weekend between the two working periods. Since the students could follow the orchestra’s rehearsals and listen to the concerts in addition to taking part in the class, they benefitted from these visits in more than one way.

In addition to these contacts and the advice coming from guests, Jorma Panula emphasised the role of collegial “advance training” between the professor and the students. This meant preparing the students to face the sometimes unexpected situations of working life. Since quite many of the students were already working with orchestras, they were able to share their experience among themselves. The advance training had two aspects: psychological and practical. Panula believes the role of psychological training is very important, and during his period he taught the students how to face the inevitable setbacks. If something negative happened, the best thing to do was to get over it as quickly as possible and concentrate on the music.

The score was the most important thing, since it acted as a “common ground” in those situations. Most of the problems discussed in the class had to do with the orchestras the students were going to work with, simply because there were about a hundred new people in every orchestra. Most problems were minor and more or less routine; the really dramatic

Conflicts happened only rarely. These every-day situations were also most demanding – they required the conductors to put to use all their skills simultaneously.

Concerts were an altogether different matter, with anything being possible. A conductor had to be prepared for all kinds of problems: a score, a music stand, or even a musician from the orchestra could be missing, or the concert hall might be different from the one the rehearsals had taken place in. For an outdoors event one had to remember to take clothes pegs to prevent the pages of the score flapping around if it was windy, or a sun hat, if it was very sunny, to prevent a sunstroke. In childrens’ concerts one had to be prepared for everything, even outlandish costumes – Esa-Pekka Salonen once conducted wearing a penguin suit.

Putting together a concert program was also part of the practical training in the class. It was discussed during the lessons while going through repertoire. It was necessary for the conductors to know what kinds of themes and combinations it was advisable to use. In addition to a conductor’s own preferences it was necessary to take into account ensemble size; there were often chamber-sized ensembles in most of the smaller places one visited, and the music had to be chosen accordingly. It was also very important to know what additional instruments might be needed. Over the years, Panula has collected a list of Finnish orchestral works of different types for his students.247

All of these activities and the all-round education were geared towards versatile musicianship. There arose around the conducting class a collaborative network that made the differences among the students – composers, conductors, and instrumentalists – less significant. The student generation of this time – 1970s to early 1990s – took to this idealism, and put it into action in many unconventional projects, most of which have become institutionalised during

---

the last twenty years, without losing the basic principles they were taught. In general, Esa-Pekka Salonen sees this kind of versatility as a distinct feature of a small musical culture. With only one university of music in the country, all young musicians, regardless of their main subject or instrument, are accustomed to studying and spending time together as well as working together later. Contacts and cooperation springing from student years in the Sibelius Academy often result in cooperation and certain “circulation” later in professional life.

Salonen says:

> The general cultural atmosphere in Finland has affected musical education. There is only the Sibelius Academy in which to “grow up” musically, so the differences between, say, studying jazz, composition, music theory or conducting are not that significant. Everyone is working and spending time together from the very beginning. There are phenomena like the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, and the differences among musical styles have become less marked. I believe this is a cultural thing – everyone is used to doing everything. It has been quite natural here to have conductors and instrumentalists who also compose, for example.

As Salonen says, making a career based on versatile musicianship has “never been unfamiliar to musicians in Finland”. In his opinion Panula’s class has played a profound role here.

*The musically versatile generation of Korvat Auki, Avanti!, and Toimii!*

These ideas that have been discussed above were put into effect by Esa-Pekka Salonen and his fellow students in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For example, Jouni Kaipainen, Eero Hämeeniemi, Jukka Tiensuu, Olli Kortekangas, Kaija Saariaho, Magnus Lindberg, Tapani Länsiö, and Jukka-Pekka Saraste all contributed significantly to the shaping Finnish musical life such as it is today. The idea of musical versatility is clearly not new. There is a historical

---

248 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
250 Ibid.
line of for example conductor-musicianship, for example, to be detected in Finland, and therefore one cannot see conductor-musicianship as something “invented” or “created”.251

However, in a way one could also say that in Finland the idea of versatile musicianship as something defining professional identity in music was born during the above-mentioned time. The generation of the Korvat Auki group, the Avanti! chamber orchestra, and the ensemble Toimii!252 had a profound role in the context of institutionalisation. These ensembles acted as moving spirits, so to speak, for the beginning of an important development in Finnish musical life.

Korvat Auki (Ears Open), the association of contemporary composers, was founded in 1977. The founding members were composer Eero Hämeenniemi, who also became the first chairman, composers Jouni Kaipainen, Olli Kortekangas, Magnus Lindberg, Kaija Saariaho, and Tapani Länsiö, and composer-conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen. The Korvat Auki group of young people took an active part in speaking out against the “general conservativeness” of “national self-sufficiency” or even “egoism”, as Mikko Heiniö puts it.253 Resistance of this kind has been an essential part of the ideology of modernism, he points out, these opinions prevailing – again – among the younger generation at the turn of the 1970s and 1980s. The young were oriented towards internationalism in the development of music. The sharpest critique was aimed towards symphony and opera as compositional genres and especially towards the two “mainstream” composers of Finnish opera, Aulis Sallinen and Joonas Kokkonen. The younger generation fought against established structures, both musical and institutional.

251 The term conductor-musicianship is mine, to differentiate the so-called “great conductors” of the twentieth century who conducted and worked with symphony orchestras, from conductors who work with ensembles as their leaders, conduct while at the same time performing as soloists, and work with symphony orchestras. Interviews with John Storgårds, 21.12.1999, and 1.9.2003.

252 The Finnish word “toimii” roughly means “to act” or “to operate”.

According to Mikko Heiniö, *Korvat Auki* had two main purposes. The first one was to spread concert life from Helsinki to the provinces; the second was to re-invigorate the old-established institutions by writing articles and arranging concerts. The association also organised discussions and seminars. As Mikko Heiniö points out, what made these activities possible was that there was quite an exceptional amount of talent available: the size of the group of young talented people was probably the source of the ideological strength, and in Heiniö’s opinion, “as such the ideas probably rather supported the young musicians themselves, even if the activities did allow them to exercise their verbal talents.”

However, the ideology was carried on and brought to the public in the form of the chamber orchestra Avanti!, and later in the annual summer music festival Suvisoitto in Porvoo.

Mats Liljeroos describes both the first steps and the influence of Korvat Auki:

A vital factor in the modernistic revolution was the energy field that emanated from the young and ‘angry’ composers of the *Korvat Auki* group… which reacted against the stagnation supposedly prevailing at the time in Finnish art music. These talented and rebellious composers born in the 1950’s were, at least partly, to set the pace for Finnish art music’s international success in the eighties. And, as so often before in the history of music, the successors of this self-confident and style-conscious generation could only find themselves overshadowed by their predecessors. Not surprisingly, Magnus Lindberg, Kaija Saariaho and their colleagues became rather like icons for the younger composers…

Along with Jorma Panula’s philosophy of teaching and the educational changes and liberalism that followed, the idea – even the ideology – of “everyone doing everything” also had its roots in the activities and radicalism of the Korvat Auki generation. In a way the purpose of Panula’s system was to build networks using both the contacts and the musical identity springing from the ideas of professional versatility.

---

254 Ibid., pages 433–435.  
As Howard S. Becker would put it, the institutionalisation of a certain artistic activity requires a cooperatively functioning network; this activity in turn requires and produces common rules. Whether the artistic activity happens along with the conventions or is a rebellious attempt to defy them is of secondary importance, both options in this particular case leading to the same conclusion. According to this theoretical line of thought, the artistic activity is then succeeded by social terms by which the society accepts or recognises the said activities as art. The art, whether controversial (even marginal) or conventional, must somehow merge into the structures of the society and its musical life as a functional entity. This merging is necessary if the artistic activity is to continue and lead – if the artistic activity goes on – to its establishment in organisations and finally to its institutionalisation.

This is what happened with the Korvat Auki group. Beginning as a “protest movement” against Finland’s established cultural institutions, the group found ways of putting its musical ideology into practice. Its activities and projects – the above-mentioned chamber orchestra Avanti! and the Toimii! ensemble that followed the Korvat Auki group – were first recognised, then reacted to, and finally became not only accepted, but strongly institutionalised.

I would like to argue that Panula’s class had a profound effect on the networking that lead to the institutionalisation of the projects started off by the young, “angry” generation. Both Esa-Pekka Salonen and Jukka-Pekka Saraste studied in the conducting class at the time Korvat Auki and Avanti! were founded, and a number of conductors since have studied with Panula and taken active part in carrying on these projects initiated by the generation of Salonen and Saraste. The idea has spread: most contemporary Finnish instrumentalists, conductors and composers in succeeding generations have worked in these projects.

The Avanti! chamber orchestra was founded in 1983, with flautist Olli Pohjola, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Jukka-Pekka Saraste taking the first steps. In 1986 the orchestra acquired a supporters’ association. One could say that if Korvat Auki established the idea and the ideology for what is called here “the new music project”, Avanti! and Toimii!, which had been founded in 1980, realised it in practice. These ensembles became a forum for bringing out new Finnish music, developing into the forum for contemporary music in Finland, and beginning the conscious discussion of subjects related both to composing music and to performing it.

Based in Kaapelitehdas in Helsinki since 1993, Avanti! as a musical institution has to play an undisputed leading role, thanks especially to its music festival Suvisoitto (Summer Sounds). With Suvisoitto, Avanti! has gained organisational stability as well as a regular audience. The festival has been held yearly since 1986. The core of the Avanti! is a chamber ensemble of forty musicians and can be expanded to a symphony orchestra having as many as sixty members. Conversely, the orchestra can be divided into smaller chamber groups. It also has two popular music ensembles, HumppAvanti! and SwingAvanti!257

The chamber orchestra, working seasonally and in its own festival, has served and still serves as “common ground” for Finnish musicians. Its ideology – the projects and the music played – is entirely tied to the size and make-up of its ensembles. The idea of “everybody-doing-everything” that involves open minds and commitment is still one of the central principles along which these above-mentioned institutions operate.

One chapter in the history of Korvat Auki is the ensemble Toimii!, founded in 1980 for the purposes of the “electronic and improvisatoric experiments” of the composers playing in it, as Mikko Heiniö explains.258 The composers and instrumentalists most actively involved were Esa-Pekka Salonen (sound, percussion), Magnus Lindberg (keyboards), Kari Kriikku

257 See also www.avantimusic.fi.
(clarinet), Anssi Karttunen (cello), Otto Romanowski (keyboards, electronics), Lassi Erkkilä (percussion), and Juhani Liimatainen (electronics). The group has worked with quite esoteric projects, but also with pieces of music that have almost become institutions themselves. *Kraft* by Magnus Lindberg is one of these, a key work both for the history of Toimii! and for the whole ideology of the “new music project”. *Kraft* was composed during the years 1983–1985, commissioned by the Helsinki Festival. The first performance was in September 1985 with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Toimii! ensemble, conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. *Kraft* is approximately a 27-minute-long work for solo ensemble and a symphony orchestra. All soloists, including the conductor, play percussive objects. The soloists are scattered around the concert hall, with the musicians – originally dressed in white overalls, with letters spelling out “Toimii” on their backs – running around the hall from one set of instruments to another. Mikko Heiniö has analysed *Kraft*:

*Kraft* was the first work by Magnus Lindberg in which the composer made use of the possibilities of a computer. The computer program he invented helped to calculate the values that brought into effect the transitions between different rhythmic, harmonic, and textural situations, the interpolations… the instrumentalists of the soloistic ensemble – the Toimii! ensemble – alternate with the sound masses. The players not only use their own instruments (clarinet, cello, percussion, live electronics), but also different percussion instruments and wander around the concert hall.

There is also an annual contemporary music festival Musica nova Helsinki, which has gained internationally recognised status and invites guest composers. The festival began with the name Helsinki Biennale in 1981 and was organised every other year until 1997. Since 1998 it has been held annually, under the name Musica Nova Helsinki. Among the artistic directors of the festival have been Jukka Tiensuu, Magnus Lindberg, Kaija Saariaho, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Jouni Kaipainen, and Eero Hämeenniemi.

---

259 Heiniö, ibid., page 474.
260 Musicologist Merja Hottinen is currently working on a doctoral thesis on the Helsinki Biennale/Musica Nova festival at the University of Helsinki.
With the generation of Salonen and his colleagues and continuing thereafter, the tendency towards active making and participating as well as being experimental and cross-over orientated has increased considerably. In fact, it has become the normal state of affairs in Finland’s musical life and defines the focus of Finnish music at this point in time. Mikko Heiniö mentions that emphasising recent history is characteristic of the history writing of Finnish music – as well as music history writing in general.\(^\text{261}\)

As a younger member of the generation of Salonen and Saraste, John Storgårds is of the same mind as Salonen concerning professional versatility in both studying and making music.\(^\text{262}\) Storgårds himself is making a career both as a soloist and a conductor. He also composes, plays chamber music, and has worked as an artistic director for the Korsholm Music Festival. Storgårds has been the leader of Avanti! from its early years and has been active in making its festival, Suvisoitto, what it is today. The same goes for almost all conductors whom I have identified as the younger generation, especially those who have studied with Panula. Since almost all Finnish conductors from the generation of Salonen and Saraste onwards have studied with Panula, one could almost make a generalisation here.

When discussing the influence of Korvat Auki, Avanti!, and Toimii!, one could also study more thoroughly the carrying on of the ideology, the goals of these projects, and the effects they have had on cultural politics. In addition to conductors who take active parts in performing music, another interesting question would be the positions and roles of the composers of the group today, in relation to the next generation of composers currently studying and building careers. Since these subjects are strongly composition-biased and would take the original focus of this chapter far afield, I have intentionally kept only to the questions directly concerning the main subject. My goal has been to discuss the purposes and activities of the “angry” generation, to study the process of institutionalisation of their

\(^\text{261}\) Heiniö 1995. On writing the history of Finnish music, see page 18.

\(^\text{262}\) Interview with John Storgårds. Quoted in English in Konttinen 2004, page 18.
projects as well as their effects on Finnish music life in general, and to consider what role Panula’s class has had in creating this “new” professional identity, based on versatile musicianship and the idea of “everyone-doing-everything”.

**Memorandum**

Panula formulated the principles of orchestral work in *huoneentaulu*, a memorandum for his conducting students. It was already in use when Esa-Pekka Salonen studied in the class in the late 1970s. In Salonen’s opinion the memorandum, in addition to being an amusing document of Panula’s style of expressing himself as well as of what was going on in the class in the early years, contains very beneficial advice for young conductors. Short, straightforward and precise comments advice the students to be aware of all the different aspects involved in working with an orchestra.

The memorandum guided conductors in both psychological and practical aspects of orchestral work. It taught that making contacts with the network of people within an orchestral institution was as important as the contact with the musicians in rehearsal. The choice of repertoire and the acoustics of the hall were factors as important as how one spent the breaks during the day.

The memorandum mapped out the duties of a conductor, from making sure that all the parts were ready in the concert or rehearsal hall, to dealing with musicians who either had something work-related to ask or something to complain about. The conductor should also plan the progress of a rehearsal carefully, from the works requiring the bigger ensemble to the ones needing fewer players, so that the right musicians were present while the ones who had nothing more to do could leave for the day.

---

263 See Appendix 2.
Even timing a coffee break was not insignificant in Panula’s memorandum, but a requiring psychological instinct. During breaks, usually twenty minutes, the conductor had to decide whether to use the time making contacts, concentrating on the work at hand, or “talking rubbish” with someone. The question was also about dividing one’s strength, and not to getting worn out in something secondary at the expense of important tasks. It was necessary to learn when to rest and how to prepare for a concert. The last remark on the memorandum was related to the conductor personally:

Are you uncertain – why? It will disappear if you don’t try to do more than you are able to cope with, or if you don’t try to be more than what you are. Remember, personality radiates. People will see through.

One of the larger issues to be read between the lines of the memorandum was the role of the score – the music – as the focal point of every working situation, both practically and psychologically. If a conductor was nervous, or the level of concentration fell, the score was the answer. Concentrating strictly on the music made it easier for the conductor to keep his own thoughts and those of the orchestra focused.

Most problems could be solved with the score, even before the rehearsal: studying scores made it easier to pinpoint those passages and points in the music where problems were likely to occur. The most important information needed in a musical situation with an orchestra was written in the score; Panula told his students to forget themselves and think about the music. In his opinion, the duty of a conductor was to bring out the ideas of the composer, not the conductor’s own personality in the expense of the musical work. He also encouraged the students to think about the audience in a concert situation, for the people in the audience were the ones for whom the music was made and performed.

The purpose of the memorandum was to encourage students eventually to break free and find their own way of doing things through experience. Esa-Pekka Salonen says, that this
process is about “finding inner peace and self-confidence, so that one is able to appear in front of an orchestra just as one is, not needing to think about any kind of strategies.”

1.7 “Then and now”

The history of Panula’s conducting class has continued through the work of those former students who in turn have started to teach. The situation is a good example idea of an educational continuum carrying on ways of teaching and working – the educational and working gestures – as well as the tradition and conventions, all of which will be the subject of Chapter 2, Educational continuum.

The professor to succeed Panula was Eri Klas who taught the class from 1993 to 1997, followed in turn by Leif Segerstam, who is currently in the post and sharing the teaching duties with Atso Almila. One of the very first conductors to complete his studies in the Panula’s class, Almila started to teach the class after earning his diploma. He worked along with Panula and during his own pedagogical career has been able to observe how the teaching has changed.

In order to study transmission of information and its changes, I planned two case studies that were organised in the Sibelius Academy conducting class. My goal was to study the effects Jorma Panula has had, and still has, on conductors studying in the class, and how the practices used then differ from the practices used today. I followed both Panula’s and Atso Almila’s lessons in the conducting class and took notes on two things: first, on the teaching practices introduced by Panula, and secondly, on the communicative educational gestures in each situation. My intention was to find out whether the practices that became such a prominent

---

265 Ibid.
266 The emergence of a new tradition and the conventions that form and become established through time will also be discussed in Chapter 2.
part of conductors’ education during Panula’s period are still in use, and if so, how they have affected the situation. In short, I wanted to learn whether system of educational gestures was still valid and how it has changed.

Panula’s two lessons took place on 12.11. and 19.11.2004 in the Sibelius Academy Concert hall, in each case the first day of his two-day teaching period on successive weekends. These situations were orchestral sessions with the rehearsal orchestra, and they were also video-taped for the analysing sessions that followed the orchestra rehearsals. I chose to document two lessons, one on each weekend, since Panula’s teaching was planned to form a two-weekend period with some of the students joining the class during the first weekend, some during the next. The students conducted works of Mozart, Bruckner, Sibelius, and Bartók.

Almila’s lesson took place on 13.12.2004. The lesson was a so-called preparatory lesson in a classroom with two pianos. This means that the students were familiarising themselves with the music and beat patterns, going through the score and preparing for the orchestra rehearsal. I am aware of the different nature of these two teaching situations, but as my previous research in similar situations shows, there are no great differences in the way teachers act when teaching conductors, regardless of the circumstances. Having also followed Panula’s preparatory lessons, I am convinced that the core of one’s teaching is always there, no matter what the outward conditions are. The only difference I have noticed is that, during the preparatory lessons, Panula likes to play an instrument with the students, whether it be a violin, a viola or a piano. His desire to be part of the musical situation as one of the musicians conducted by his students is telling, and it can also be seen in his habit of taking a place by or in the middle of the orchestra.

On the other hand, it should be noted that in Almila’s lesson choirmasters were present, practice today being to combine choral and instrumental conducting classes, depending on the
project. This time the two classes were combined for the benefit of both, the music being Johannes Brahms’s *Ein Deutsches Requiem* and Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*. This joint session actually serves the idea Panula introduced into his classes: conductors had practice working with choral works as well as orchestral ones, while the choral conductors had the benefit of an orchestra being present. This is important for learning how to show entries for both “instruments”, the choir *reflecting* the body language and gestures of a conductor, the orchestra *reacting* to them. Choral works also require the conductor to breathe and mime along with the singing in strategic places.²⁶⁷

A situation with both an orchestra and a choir present also divides attention and makes working even more demanding for conductors. For a choir a choirmaster is like a mirror, the nature of the communication being more direct in that the singers reflect instantly and concretely the physical expressivity of the person leading them.²⁶⁸ I will not go further into these differences here, but this would be an interesting subject for further study.

This collaborative situation changed the routines in the class slightly. While during the preparatory lessons the conductors usually play, this time they also sang in all four parts, to get the idea of both orchestra and choir being present. Since this kind of collaboration is actively and regularly organised in the class, I decided to consider the lesson as an example of the teaching practices and activities in the current conducting class.²⁶⁹ I also found it important not to use my previously documented material from Panula’s lessons, even if there was material from his preparatory lessons that would perhaps have been even more suitable for comparison with Almila’s preparatory lesson. However, Panula rarely teaches the class since his retirement, and these sessions are usually conducted with the rehearsal orchestra.

²⁶⁷ These facts are gathered not only during this case study, but are also the result of many unofficial discussions with choir singers and choirmasters as well as personal experiences of making music with both orchestras and choirs. A very detailed article on the subject from the choral conductor’s point of view can be found in *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting*, by Vance George. See George 2003.

²⁶⁸ This subject came up in discussion with choirmaster Mikael Maasalo, 15.8.2004.

²⁶⁹ The observations and the interview with Atso Almila took place already in 2004, but they quite accurately represent the current situation at the time of writing and publishing of this thesis.
Also it was important to try and document the teaching by Panula and Almila so that the sessions would be taking place quite close each other in time so that most of the students taking part would be in both lessons.

The method of documenting the teaching sessions was very simple, the project consisting of observing and taking notes. There was also an interview with Atso Almila, who had not been interviewed for this study before. Panula was not interviewed, because of a previous extensive, three-interview project that concentrated mainly on the conducting class, his way of teaching, and his teaching practices. In the following section I will describe both sessions, the practices used, and the core of the learning situation. As a conclusion I will summarise the results, especially taking notice of the points where the system of training conductors may have changed.

Jorma Panula’s orchestral sessions progressed very much according to what has been explained in the previous sections, his way of teaching and the basic principles not having changed in essentials since his period of full-time teaching. He sat by the orchestra so that the musicians could not see him giving instructions to the conductor. His mostly non-verbal instructions were given while the musical situation – “musical flow” in Mikko Franck’s words – was going on, the intention being to interrupt the music as little as possible. The success of this depended on the level of experience of the student conductor – his or her ability to keep on eye on both the orchestra and Panula’s gesticulations at the same time.

Being able to observe several musical events simultaneously as well as oneself conducting and the effects one has on the sound of the orchestra is an ability that develops with time and experience. Panula’s intention by giving instructions while the students conduct

---

270 Interview with Mikko Franck in the documentary Kulttuuridokumentti: Mikko Franck, matkalla [Culture documentary: Mikko Franck, on a journey], edited by Jarmo Papinniemi. Yleisradio, TV1 Kulttuurihjelmat, 1999.
is to train this ability: if a conductor is able to change the way of gesticulating and give new information while the musical situation is going on, the effects will be instant and can be heard immediately as a change in the orchestra’s sound.

The sessions with the rehearsal orchestra were video-taped. The lesson began at 10 a.m. and went on until 1 p.m. The afternoon was reserved for the video analysis. This is also the current practice in the class. Depending on how many conductors were present, the time available for each student to conduct the rehearsal orchestra ranged from twenty minutes to half an hour. The students took care of the video-taping and timed the twenty-minute period for each fellow student. Most of the students also played in the rehearsal orchestra themselves, taking their instruments and joining in when their conducting time was up. Those not playing spread their scores on the grand piano and studied while the others rehearsed, or sat by Panula to get personal advice and follow the score he had in front of him.

The students were encouraged to rehearse instead of just going through the music with the orchestra. This is a significant feature of Panula’s teaching: the focus is on how to work with an orchestra. The approach is very practical and concentrates on day-to-day work with an orchestra, with concrete advice on musical and technical matters arising from the music itself.

Questions directly related to the concrete aspects of conducting such as gesticulation, and the practical advice and “tricks” needed when working with an orchestra were, in my opinion, also the pedagogical core of Panula’s teaching. Giving practical advice on how to deal with everyday problems, musical and also psychological, is a very important part of the educational continuum, which I will be discussing more thoroughly in Chapter 2. A practical trick of the kind discussed here could be how to give a preparatory beat to players in

---

271 During Jorma Panula’s period advance training of this kind was a part of the training. Conversations and passing on practical experience to colleagues on topics such as being nervous before a performance, whether to conduct with or without a score, or how to deal with a certain orchestra, was preparation for professional life, where everyone would be working more or less alone.
a certain composition or how to help them with entries in a difficult passage and how to sustain pace and unity in a certain passage with tempo changes. These tricks and advice usually came from the teacher’s practical experience as a conductor.

In the context of this study I find the term continuum to mean exactly this kind of practical advice and experience passed on by an older conductor to a younger one, the hidden knowledge that is unknown to most people not directly involved, but which is necessary training for conductors, preparing them for the everyday work with orchestras. More generally, it means the social obligation to pass on the conducting culture in a collegial way, which has become a characteristic feature of conductorship in Finland.

In practice these “tricks”, as Panula himself calls them, are more important than one might think. As already mentioned in Chapter 1.1, as a student of Leo Funtek, Panula studied Herman Scherchen’s exercise books for conductors, with advice on tricky passages or on selected difficult bars from the central works of orchestral literature. Scherchen’s *Lehrbuch des Dirigierens* can still be found in the Sibelius Academy library. Its repertoire is broad, stretching from Cherubini, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mahler, and Bruckner to Busoni, Honegger, Hindemith, Stravinsky, and Schönberg.

Later Panula collected and wrote down useful tricks for his students, after observing that this kind of a practice was not known elsewhere. His tricks have come from hands-on experience, many of them discovered and tested while working. Giving helpful tips is a central theme in the technical guidebooks written for conductors, such as Schuller’s *The Compleat Conductor*, but judging from Panula’s comments, it is not, or at least has not been, as commonly used in practice. As well as a list of tricks, Panula has collected a list of central works in order to give to his students a sort of a “list of readings”.

---

272 Panula uses a Finnish word “trikki”.
273 Scherchen 1929.
During Atso Almila’s lesson the communicative situation was also very much built on collegiality, but even more between the students themselves. The students took turns conducting with the pianos just as they do during the orchestra sessions, Almila letting them work by themselves, and stepping in when it was necessary to help or advise. The information given at these points was very thorough, with concrete advice given on such matters as posture, on technical matters such as time-beating, and even to some extent, the expressiveness of the movements when seeking a particular effect from the “orchestra”. Sometimes Almila took the baton himself to show how to work on certain practical matters. His advice was very practical and could at some points be described, to borrow Gunther Schuller’s term, as “philosophical”. The comments could be things as “a conductor’s lack of trust towards an orchestra can be seen from his or her back”, or “having a good posture means trusting the orchestra”. Almila’s kind of practical “trick” for the students could be, for example, how to beat staccato rhythms without the left hand, the purpose being for students to realise that many things can be allowed to come from within the music.

What was interesting was that, along with sharing his practical tricks with the students as well as some of Panula’s, Almila also encouraged them to develop useful practices and tricks of their own, and, in turn, to share these with their colleagues. In a way, Almila is not only passing on what he has learned from Panula, he has also started to verbalise the non-verbal:

Jorma has this principle that a conductor should show what one intends to do next by gesticulating it. I have taken these practical examples of Jorma’s and passed them on to my students, but have also given these ideas some more thought, and analysed them further.

---

274 I am here adapting Schuller 1997, who has entitled the chapter concerning more general aspects of being a conductor “The Philosophy of Conducting”.
Almila has also passed on to the students the responsibility for taking part in the continuum in a collegial way. The interaction in the class seemed to be built on initiatives coming from the students, who were then encouraged to develop further. The fact that the students were trained individually in the musical situation made the teaching at times outwardly more “traditional”, so to speak, with the roles of both the teacher and the students quite clearly defined. On the reverse side this traditional role was also completely avoided during the actual conducting sessions with the other students acting as an orchestra and a choir giving feedback to the conductor, commenting his or her gesturing, asking questions, and taking notes and writing on their own scores when something useful came up.

It seems that this shared responsibility of developing an awareness of one’s conducting in the musical situation and the skill to think for oneself is the educational core of Atso Almila’s teaching. Like Panula’s teaching, it has a strong link to the idea of a continuum and the desire to pass on both practical advice and the conducting culture – basically, ideas of conductorship as a profession and conducting as work. Both teaching sessions also supported the idea of educational gestures being processed into working gestures, only with slightly different emphases. In my opinion, Panula’s teaching is more work oriented, while Almila’s emphasises the process of learning, including the learning of selfreflection. By this I mean the students’ responsibility to teach themselves as a part of the process. With Panula, feedback, discussion, and the exchange of ideas have always been major parts of training, but these activities have taken place during the video analysis with all students present.

This was seen during Panula’s preparatory lessons in the classroom, making it justifiable to compare them with Almila’s preparatory lesson. I am aware that the situation changes when the orchestra is present, preventing such as direct participation on the part of the other students as took place during Almila’s lesson. However, I find that more important than concentrating on these outward circumstances is detecting the core that is characteristic
of each teacher and contemplating the factors – both similarities and differences – that have affected the progression of the educational continuum.

Applying these core attributes of the educational practices to the theory of social conducting gestures that I have been sketching in this study, it could be said that the process from training towards what I call the *working gestures* in professional life is more in focus when Panula is teaching, while the structures defining the *educational gestures* during the teaching situations are more prominent with Almila. Both ways of teaching are based on educational gestures and aimed towards the conducting students applying them to their future work with professional orchestras, but they have slightly different emphases.

Panula’s practical and concrete approach has made the transitional period between study and work almost non-existent in many cases and produced conductors ready to integrate into the very orchestras in which they often have started their careers as orchestral musicians. During Almila’s period in the class, the student body has changed quite dramatically, Finnish students now being in the minority. Almila even remembers a time when there were no Finnish students in the class at all, although this situation has since changed.

In some ways all this affects the way conductors are taught, with students leaving the class to study abroad more and more often and earlier than before. What they look for is not anymore a trajectory from the first lessons to a diploma and professional life. Students tend to finish their studies earlier, thus alleviating the teachers of the responsibility to see the students from students to professionals. During Panula’s period it was more common to complete one’s studies abroad or take part in a master class or a summer course. This meant that the period of study in Panula’s class was very intense, being based on more or less regular participating in class activities and encompassing almost all aspects of the profession from technique to psychology. An all-round education was also considered necessary for a

---

conductor. Such a system resulted, in Panula’s case, in a close professional community of the professor and his students – of whom Atso Almila was one. This quite exceptional phenomenon will be considered more thoroughly in the Conclusion to this study.

On the other hand, as conductor Eva Ollikainen says, a strong sense of community has now evolved among the students, who either already work professionally or are just about to leave the class. Ollikainen mentions that a kind of a collegial community does exist, even if it no longer has any common activities. The way of sharing professional experience gained while working is now to be seen, for example, in sharing job opportunities with colleagues. In short, the rapid internationalisation during the last ten or fifteen years has changed both the educational and the student structure, changes that most likely affect the teaching as well.

What has hardly changed at all are the ways and practices of conducting. The most important ‘methods’, as one still sometimes hears them called, are the use of the video and the rehearsal orchestra. Panula himself denies ever having had a method of any kind, but these practices have been carried on both by his former students who have started to teach and the professor currently holding the post, Leif Segerstam. There are a few filmed documents from which one can see that outwardly the training situations are much the same as they became during the twenty years of Jorma Panula’s professorship, with the exception of the personal differences in the teachers passing on the educational culture – in other words, the educational gestures prepare the students for using them as working gestures. The conclusions presented here and the interpretation I have given the educational matters in light of my adaptation of social gestures are, of course, just one possible interpretation, based on somewhat subjective perceptions of the case study. But in light of the documented material, these are the aspects that seemed most clearly to emerge.

---

277 Interview with Eva Ollikainen, 15.1.2005. See also Konttinen 2005.
278 Two TV-documentaries by Anna-Kaarina Kiviniemi.
In relation to the current education of conductors in the Sibelius Academy, it is interesting that there has been no inclination towards doctoral studies in conducting. A very much increased, one might even say popular, tendency towards intensive further study has spread from the other academic fields to music during the last ten years. The reason for the absence of, or interest in, doctoral studies in conducting may be very simple: conductors have usually been integrated into musical life already while studying and have so many work opportunities that continuing their studies just is not an option – practically or otherwise. It may also be a question of status.

On the other hand, there are many performing artists who have later dedicated parts of their careers to writing about what they do and working, for example, on performing editions – or writing guidebooks for other conductors.

2. Educational continuum

Jorma Panula’s period (1973–1993) in the Sibelius-Academy conducting class has in many ways been a turning point in the history of conducting in Finland. The most important and direct effects can be seen in the education of conductors, and therefore one is tempted to generalise that the history of conducting in Finland has largely been the history of educating conductors. This is partly true because of the collective responsibility to help younger conductors which has always been a dominant feature of the Finnish conductorship. Closely related to this matter is how this “social obligation”, as Esa-Pekka Salonen calls it, has led to the practically functioning educational continuum.279

In the context of the sociological art world theories I have used in this study, the system of educating conductors that developed during Panula’s time and spread since then does not seem to fit into the debate on individuality opposing to the idea of shared communication.

279 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
conventions. In his article “Art and Artists on the Margins” Larry Gross comments on Blanche Jefferson’s book *Teaching Art to Children*, in which Jefferson “explicitly and insistently connects the individuality and uniqueness she associates with adult artists to the approach she advocates for art education in primary schools”. 280 Here the question is about teaching children, but the problem is still the same: whether to encourage individualism in the education of artists, thus potentially working against the communication. Gross continues:

This emphasis on individuality creates a serious problem for those who believe that arts are media of communication through which members of a culture create and share knowledge, belief, and feeling. Namely, the very essence of communication is that it is grounded in *shared* ways of articulating – conventions and codes – and cannot easily cope with radical innovation. 281

Gross sees Jefferson’s view as problematic and seems to interpret it as working against the basic principles of shared communication inside an art world. Even if she has somewhat oversimplified matters, what Jefferson is asking is that every child – or student – should learn art by working differently from the others. This is, however, the basic principle on which the educational system in conducting by Panula has been built. What has to be noted is that, in musical education, the model in which the student spends most of the time practicing alone after a private lesson with the teacher is common. This, in fact, is the basic concept of the Western system of educating instrumentalists. The more traditional teacher-student concept has also been applied to conducting, and as such it indeed follows the lines of Jefferson’s idea of individual art-making at the educational level – which is how Gross interprets it. 282

During Jorma Panula’s time this pattern was broken, giving way to active participation of a group of students and to practicality – but also to a highly individual, personal way of working. In fact, his philosophy of teaching which I have introduced above, as well as the

281 Ibid.
282 The title Gross has given his Jefferson-analysis is *Teaching art as noncommunication.*
practical ways of teaching and working to execute it – the educational and working gestures – are the shared conventions of conductorship. In Gross’ words, these conventions are actually the “media of communication through which members of a culture create and share knowledge” – the ways of passing on the conducting culture along the educational continuum. In my opinion the idea of an educational continuum that passes on the educational and working gestures does in fact represent what Gross means by saying that “the very essence of communication is that it is grounded in shared ways of articulating – conventions and codes”.284

Howard S. Becker’s theory, on the other hand, has no such problems, because he understands this position in both learning and making art as a question of work: more important than where or how is what one does in the art world – that is, what kind of role one has in the field of work. Teaching art, like any other artistic activity, is about division of labour, as is learning it. This means that, as a natural part of the social network that makes an art world, the divisions into different kinds of artistic positionings (including the extremities) such as working collaboratively or separately, are all a necessary part of the system. What is important is that all these “art-workers” are in some way or another dependent on each other. This makes the question of what the communication in an art world is based on irrelevant. Or rather it shows that with Becker, Gross’s concerns about collaboratively and separately done artistic work are not necessarily communication issues – or at the very least they are not exclusive.

Becker’s focus is not directly on whether the artist works in the centre or on the margins, even if the above-mentioned ideas imply it. Rather his practical view is that “situations of art making lie somewhere between the extremes of one person doing everything

---

284 Ibid.
285 See Gross 1995b. On marginality, see Part II, Chapter 1.5 of this study.
and every smallest activity being done by a separate person”. In his opinion “nothing in the technology of any art makes one division of tasks more “natural” than another, although some divisions are so traditional that we often regard them as given in the nature of the medium”.

In my opinion, the same goes for artistic education. In fact, what Gross seems to ignore completely is that in practice, there is always a process of division of labour going on in artistic education: not all students become “artists”, as this concept is understood here; many end up working in supporting roles, even if they share exactly the same education as the artists. Especially in music, we are so used to dealing with the Western concept of an artist that we do not see how it is actually one of those Beckerian divisions of tasks that has become so natural, almost a tradition, that it practically defines the medium.

In practice, I am thinking here about those conducting students who studied (or are studying, since this is still a valid question) in the conducting class, but do not end up as professional conductors. With their expertise and knowledge, they do have an important role to play in the profession by supporting it and helping to provide the proper working conditions for others. They may work, for example, in the cultural administration, or within orchestra and concert organisations – or have a pedagogical career. Becker, speaking of American art students in the 1980s, says:

…enormous numbers of people study the arts seriously and semiseriously, taking courses, practicing difficult disciplines, devoting large amounts of time and other resources, often making substantial sacrifices… Few of them ever become full-time professional artists.

There are, of course, several reasons why few became full-time, professional artists, but it does not seem relevant to discuss them here. On the other hand, what I find relevant is that Becker sees these non-professional artists who are professionally trained as an important part

---

of the public – the people who, by consuming art, support it. In his opinion “those who have received training and now do something else may be an additional, substantial portion of the public for any art form.”

When discussing musical life as an art world, I view Becker’s “additional, substantial portion” of professionals used as an equivalent for the highly educated group of professionals in music, who support the highly specific activites of the “core” people of the profession. The knowledge they have is important for the structures of the profession. In Finland it is usual that those people working in musical organisations have practical training in some area of music, in many cases, as instrumentalists or composers. They work in the same field as that minority of people who work in the profession – here conducting – full time, and are the substantial Beckerian portion of people working for the musical institutions that are highly dependent on each other.

The same goes for conductors, all of whom do not end up working as professional conductors. They have the same education and knowledge, but have a role in organising and creating the conditions under which it is possible for conductors to work. They are usually very active socially, having a great impact sociologically and, for example, pedagogically, making sure that the cooperative patterns work in practice and keep going in practice. This seems to be a very good example of Becker’s social, cooperative networking.

2.1 Passing on the culture in practice

The idea of the educational continuum leading to the practice of passing on the conducting culture was the result of an interview with conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, who completed his studies with Panula in 1980. Like Atso Almila, Salonen belongs to the first generation of

---

288 Ibid., page 53.
conductors to earn a diploma from Panula’s class.\(^\text{289}\) Like Almila, Salonen has also begun to teach. His first master class was arranged during the Chamber Orchestra Avanti!’s annual summer festival Suvisoitto in Porvoo in the summer of 2000. Juha Suomalainen documented the master class for television in a six-part series, broadcast on the channel Teema (the culture channel of the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE).\(^\text{290}\) The conductors taking part in the master class were mostly students from the Sibelius Academy conducting class and had also studied with Panula.

The rehearsal orchestra came from the Sibelius Academy, put together especially for the conducting course. Along with the use of a “real” orchestra, the sessions were video-taped and analysed afterwards with all the students present, following the practices introduced by Panula. When I interviewed Esa-Pekka Salonen on the subject, what was notable was the fact that even if the way Salonen teaches differs from that of Panula’s, he admitted there to be a clear idea of an educational continuum.\(^\text{291}\) The first link in this practical continuum was Leo Funtek, Jorma Panula’s teacher, from whom came the idea of conducting as work and the practices of teaching and working. Panula himself does not care in which way his “doctrines” or methods are passed on, since, in his opinion, there are no methods. However, he admits there is some kind of a continuum, starting with Funtek. “I guess there is one – at least the advice I got from Funtek was very good”, he says.\(^\text{292}\)

What is particularly interesting is that there seems to be not only a practical continuum, but also an ideological one. The idea of a continuum has stretched from ways of teaching and

\(^{289}\) Panula’s class has become a way of referring to the Sibelius Academy conducting class during the years 1973–1993, the period of Jorma Panula’s professorship. It was the name of the first television documentary of Panula’s conducting class by Anna-Kaarina Kiviniemi, and it also became the title of my book. Now it can be seen used in music writing in general.


\(^{291}\) Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001. This interview took place between the master class (the summer of 2000), and the broadcasting of the documentary (2002).

\(^{292}\) Interview with Jorma Panula 27.11.2001.
working to the teacher’s attitude towards his students. Esa-Pekka Salonen supports Panula’s idea of “raising curiosity, and encouraging the students to ask questions, instead of explaining dogma”. He also appreciates Panula’s way of “treating his students as colleagues, not approaching them as a guru of some kind”. Salonen also feels that he has “inherited” something from Panula. He says, that “all people are different, with different characters and emphasis. I guess my method of teaching is very different from Jorma’s, but there are certain basic values and criteria that are the same, I’m absolutely sure of it”.

Both the teacher and his former student like to work with young people. In Salonen’s opinion, at its best teaching can challenge one to reconsider one’s own views on music and work:

Sometimes one gets such questions or comments from young people that set off a process of re-evaluating certain things. One, for example, realises having done things in a certain way for twenty years, and begins to think whether it would be a good idea to question if this actually is the way it should be done. And this makes it so much fun, because the greatest danger in this profession – in almost any profession, I think – is to get stuck on a formula of a kind, and to think that if I have done things this way before, then why not now. And this, of course, is a completely unfamiliar thought when thinking about the essence and the spirit of art...

In Salonen’s opinion teaching is a challenge also because it requires constant renewal as a conductor. It makes one verbalise things one has perhaps not spoken about in years and gives reason to re-assess certain things concerning the work itself and one’s ways of working.

The theoretical idea of an educational continuum introduced in Part I, Chapter 3 of this study, included the possibility of the continuum substituting for both historical and technical tradition in conducting in Finland. However, when observing the continuum, especially from Leo Funtek onwards, there are certain practical features that are not only characteristic but

---

293 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen 3.5.2001.
294 Ibid.
that have occurred increasingly often during the succeeding generations of conductors. These features are shared by a majority of conductors and have attained such a significant role that they have begun to form a practical, tradition-like pattern.

The practicality of the system introduced in the previous chapters is the core of the Finnish conductorship both educational- and work-wise as well as ideologically. Because these are also the aspects that have been quite systematically passed on from one generation to another, there are grounds for saying that the beginning of a tradition – a practical tradition – can be seen.

I see the beginnings of this tradition in the Panula’s class. The effects of Leo Funtek’s teaching and his pioneer work with teaching practices were crucial, but they probably would not have developed the way they did without Panula’s class as a turning point. There are other reasons to call this new tradition a “tradition”: more than one of the Finnish conductors interviewed for this study used the word to describe the impact Panula has had on the education and work of Finnish conductors. The most frequently mentioned aspect was orchestral musicianship as a professional background for conductors. Jukka-Pekka Saraste actually used the term “tradition” when speaking of the instrumental background that Jorma Panula’s conducting students were expected to have.295

2.2 Positioning: In the context of Central European and American traditions

Finnish conductorship has its roots in the Central European tradition,296 but the Finnish way of educating conductors does not. Or rather, its education has developed in opposition to the Central European tradition in more than one respect. First, there is the question of a

296 This concept was defined earlier in the text; see Part II. The conductors interviewed for this study in general saw that there was a some kind of a link to the Central European tradition, which affected the way they understood the concept of Finnish conductorship. The only exception was John Storgård, who sees himself as a part of a tradition I have called conductor-musicianship in this study.
conducting tradition, or its absence, there being no technical tradition in Finland as mentioned above.

One should not be confused by the concepts of the tradition and history of Western music with its strong focus on Central Europe, and the Central European tradition of conducting. In the time span mentioned in the title of this study, most of the Finnish classical musicians, conductors included, who have been trained in their profession during that time, belong to the Western tradition. On the other hand, most of the Finnish conductors trained during that period of time do not belong to the Central European conducting tradition.

The idea I have here is whether belonging to some tradition should be taken as given. With Finnish conductorship, this means that the influences have not been directly taken in, for example, as a set of conventions that are adopted because they are part of the culture. Instead, the Western tradition has been something for Finns to make contact with rather than just take in as a given – a situation in which the conductors have hypothetically been able to observe and reflect more critically on the possible defects of such things as very strict schools in conducting technique. As conductor Hannu Lintu remarks, there are such strictly followed traditions and schools like the famous one in Vienna, where every beat pattern has been taught exactly the same way to every conductor. As a result, there is often a strong resemblance between the way conductors gesticulate – the way they look. This example is, of course, a generalisation, but it does serve as a good example of an educational system that is different from the system in Finland. This seems to be a positive aspect of living on the fringe of Europe, somewhat outside direct influences.

297 *The Cambridge Companion to Conducting* divides conducting traditions differently, the Central European tradition being only one of many. There are, for example, “the French tradition”, “the Italian tradition”, and “the American tradition”, but, again, these are historical, not technical or educational divisions, even if the latter may be taken into account when talking about conductors’ careers. In these divisions, too, the point of view is historical, not pedagogical.

298 Interview with Hannu Lintu, 10.2.2000.
Secondly, there is the question of teaching practices that differ significantly from those used in the Central Europe. In my opinion the contrast between the way conductors are trained in Finland and the system of educating conductors in those countries belonging in the so-called Central European tradition comes clearly to the surface when comparing their different teaching practices. The latter have relied more on “traditional” teaching methods, such as conducting one or two pianos during the lessons, or making the students more familiar with the theoretical aspects and historical background about the music at hand than with the actual working situations with an orchestra.

This is a matter that emerged very clearly with the conductors who were interviewed for this study: most of them saw the Finnish educational system as exceptional compared to education elsewhere, apart from St Petersburg, as already mentioned. They had emphasised that an orchestra is very rarely used in training conductors, and that in Panula’s class, the actual conducting started with no preparations – as Panula himself says, the students “are thrown into water and expected to swim, and grabbed by the scruff of the neck if about to drown”.

As a part of his studies, Jukka-Pekka Sarastespent some time observing the conducting class of the Royal College of Music in London. The class there spent much time getting to know the facts behind the music, whereas in Finland the conducting students were expected to have all the historical and theoretical knowledge already on beginning their studies in the class. In Panula’s class conductors did all the preparatory work by themselves, concentrating on aspects such as articulation, phrasing, and sound while actually rehearsing an orchestra during the lessons.

299 Interview with Jorma Panula, 29.11.1999.
300 Interview with Jukka-Pekka Saraste, 29.8.1998.
Case: The Tanglewood connection

The idea of an educational continuum, based on social obligation and collective commitment, seems to be a significant feature of Finnish conductorship, but is not found to the same extent and continuity elsewhere in the Central European tradition as discussed above. There is, however, one other line of historical and educational development that could be seen as belonging to the tradition and that forms a continuum: the summer conducting courses at the Tanglewood Music Center.\(^{301}\) There is also a link to Finnish conductors, again through Jorma Panula.\(^{302}\)

The idea of a continuum is both historical and sociological. What is being passed on is the technical skill, ways of working, ideologies and traditions behind certain schools, and – as has been the case in Finland – ideas about conductorship and professionalism. How these matters are emphasised depends on historical, cultural, personal and social matters. In other words, the society and the educational context define the way. What is also needed for a tradition is influential, pedagogically-minded personalities. Usually, there is a teacher-student relationship that is “inherited” and passed on from one conductor to another, as is the need to pass on a certain tradition and culture. As Esa-Pekka Salonen has said, the older generation has a social duty to help the younger generation.\(^{303}\) This is also necessary, if the continuity is to be preserved. In Finland this continuum could be described as collegial.

The history of Tanglewood and the Boston Symphony Orchestra\(^{304}\) started in 1934 with a series of outdoor summer concerts in the Berkshires, in western Massachusetts, given by the members of New York Philharmonic, and directed by Henry Hadley. The Festival Committee invited conductor Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra to join the festival.

\(^{301}\) There may be other similar patterns, but this is the one I want to emphasise as most significant in the context of this study.

\(^{302}\) What has not been done here is to discuss the so-called American tradition as such. Instead, this short chapter is merely an example of the similarities there may be between the educational structures in two different historical traditions.

\(^{303}\) Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen 3.5.2001.

\(^{304}\) On the early history of Tanglewood, see www.bso.org (accessed 4.4.2006).
the following year. Koussevitzky’s role became central, especially when the current
Tanglewood Music Center was founded in 1940, first under the name of the Berkshire Music
Center, the initiative being Koussevitzky’s. From the summer of 1940 onwards Koussevitzky
started an educational program, with a conducting course, a student orchestra, an opera class,
and teaching in every orchestral instrument. One of Koussevitzky’s most brilliant pupils,
Leonard Bernstein, studied Tanglewood, and was later appointed Koussevitzky’s assistant.
Bernstein had a life-long relationship with Tanglewood.  

Conductor André Previn attended Bernstein’s recording sessions in the 1950s, and later taught at Tanglewood, sharing duties with Jorma Panula. In the interviews with Panula, no mention was made of whether the experience of teaching in Tanglewood affected him in some way. It is telling that his former teachers and studies abroad have affected him but did not essentially change his personal or professional identity. This integrity is something he has, in turn, passed on to his own students.

As a comparison, a similar kind of a summer music institution in Holland could be mentioned: Hilversum, where conductors were educated with a slightly different system from that used in Tanglewood. Panula attended the Hilversum courses as a student in the summers of 1958 and 1959, when the courses were taught by conductors Franco Ferrara and Albert Wolf, from Italy and France respectively. The courses in Hilversum were very popular among young conductors, not least because the students spent most of the six weeks conducting. Each week they proceeded from a smaller ensemble to a bigger one, until finally they were conducting a full-size symphony orchestra.

Panula’s former student Tuomas Ollila completed his training at the Tanglewood course for conductors in the summer of 1993. He was the first Finnish conductor to be accepted as a

---

305 Burton 1994, pages 73-83 and pages 92-100.
306 Ibid., page 237.
307 Interview with Jorma Panula, 5.11.2002.
I applied to the course, because I thought that if one wants to study further very efficiently, this is the place to go. A two-month course was a rewarding experience that added to my previous training, but it also showed that things are done very well here in Finland when it comes to educating conductors.308

In the article it turns out that there was not much more practical to be learned, anything that he would not have already learned in Panula’s class in Finland. However, Tanglewood itself and the opportunities to make contacts made the course interesting and inspiring.

There were three hundred applicants for the course at Tanglewood in the summer of 1993, of whom five were chosen. In the article Ollila mentions that the conductors were able to conduct the famous Tanglewood student orchestra only “experimentally”, most of the teaching taking place with a piano. Ollila did not mind that the students “didn’t do much orchestra conducting during the summer”, since he had already got “to conduct orchestras during the season” in Helsinki.309 At the time of the interview Ollila was about to start as a conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic and found it important and interesting to be able to meet such conductors as Simon Rattle and Seiji Ozawa during the course, and, in addition to the actual conducting, to discuss work and make contacts. He found this to be the most rewarding aspect of Tanglewood:

The greatest advantage of the Tanglewood course is the chance to spontaneously have coffee together with the other students, the teachers, and the musicians from the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It is a very natural way to make contacts.310

309 Ibid.
310 Ibid.
As has been seen above, there are some connections between the educational continuum of the Finnish conductorship and the Tanglewood via teaching. Whether one has affected the other is an interesting question, but will not be considered further here.

British composer and conductor Oliver Knussen has been very involved with Tanglewood, and was interviewed on the subject for this study. He has mostly worked with the contemporary music and the courses for composers, but also expressed an opinion about how conducting has been taught in Tanglewood. In his view Tanglewood as a summer music institution in general is not a “school” in itself, especially not in composition, with which Knussen has been working both as a student and a teacher.

The exception to this is the Tanglewood conducting course, which, Knussen says, could be seen to have had some pedagogical continuity. There has been a line of teachers starting with Koussevitzky and Bernstein, with a distinctive way of doing things. In his opinion, it is important for the students to have influences and contacts, and to work in this kind of an environment at this particular stage and age. Until very recently, some of the teachers of the “old school” – from the “Kouss-Berstein-time” – were still involved with the institution, some of them having been in Tanglewood when Knussen studied there. He also emphasises the role of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which has been the backbone of Tanglewood since 1936.

It could be said that in some respects Hilversum was a little bit like European version of Tanglewood. However, even if the students in Tanglewood were allowed to conduct the Boston Symphony, the course was much more about the conductor personalities who taught there, with a very strong idea of how the tradition – the continuum – should be carried on.

311 Interview with Oliver Knussen, 11.11.2004. All references here are to this interview.
Both Ferrara and Wolf were very pedagogically oriented, Ferrara giving up his career as a conductor because of illness.

One of the questions that is interesting in the context of Central European and American tradition but that does not quite fit into the concept of Finnish conductorship is the question of type. To illustrate, different conductor types will be briefly examined in the next section.

2.3 Conductor types

The concept of type is problematic, not least because it has a strongly generalising and evaluative nature. It is a problematic term both to use and to define. A conductor type is almost a phenomenon, something that appears in the writing about music, but that has been studied very little. Different conductor types are frequently mentioned and are in general use, but have not made it to the more theoretical writing.

The term “type” can be used in connection with historical conductors, especially when the so-called “great” conductors of the twentieth century, even if not always with all the necessary criticism the usage would require. At the same time it is a term whose process of construction might need an entirely new definition: a conductor does not become a type just by himself/herself, but sociologically, and by representing a tradition or doing something quite controversial. Understood this way, type is not only a theoretical but also a very practical term. In some respects this practical level can even be seen as the dominant one. This way the concept of type, in its complexity, can be seen to have some relevance, too.

My intention here is not to analyse how conductor types are constructed, but simply to introduce the idea that has been prominent in the history of Western conductorship. Basically, there are two types that are most often referred to: a subjective and an objective conductor type. An example of an objective conductor is most often Arturo Toscanini, while Wilhelm
Furtwängler represents the subjective type. The idea of Toscanini as an objective type is based on the modern concept of a conductor that is not a colleague, but a “medium” for realising someone else’s music. Furtwängler is an example of a composing conductor, whose approach to the music was that of a “fellow” composer.\footnote{Isopuro 1991, pages 14-17. The article is based on an interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen. In this otherwise very interesting interview, the tradition of Western music, and the tradition of conducting – generally called the “Central European” tradition, which, of course, is not geographically tied – are mixed. This is quite a common occurrence and a question that has not been given much analytical thought.}

With such phenomena as the *Maestro Myth* and the concept of legendary conductors, there has been a tendency for cults to develop around certain personalities.\footnote{Lebrecht 1991.} This caused the more historically- and practically-based definitions of a type to give way to the more individually-based types. One of the best examples is Herbert von Karajan, who is said to have combined both Furtwängler’s subjective and Toscanini’s objective styles in conducting. At this point the possibility of making generalisations is somewhat reduced; instead of “subjective” and “objective”, one can speak of a “Karajan-type”, or a “Bernstein-type” as an opposite to it. A Karajan type is a strict authoritarian whose orchestra must balance between fear and superb and uplifting musicality – genius, it has been said of Karajan. On the other hand, a Bernstein-type would, in his own words, demand that his orchestra “sing their heart out”, a goal emphasised with the whole of Bernstein’s energetic, sparkling personality – as a result of which he often nearly fell off the podium.

The descriptions of “objective” and “subjective” are also somewhat misleading: while Toscanini, for example, would be an objective type when he wanted to keep the authoritative distance between himself and his orchestra, his outbursts of rage, which can be seen in historical material filmed from his orchestra rehearsals, are nothing but subjective.

The basic idea behind the concept of a type is identification and more or less “looking-alike”. Also more or less negatively understood concepts like comparing oneself with someone else, being influenced and imitation are closely attached to these ideas. With
conductors, part of identification is also “sounding-alike”. Most characteristic conductor types can be recognised by the mere sound of the orchestra on a recording – or, in turn, their influence can be traced in the specific sound of a certain orchestra for years after their departure. Making one’s own sound audible is also a question of identity, both personally and socially.\textsuperscript{314}

Here an artistic genius, as Larry Gross sociologically defines it, can be seen at work.\textsuperscript{315} The “great” conductors mentioned in the Introduction to this study, who have been the examples behind the above-described types, have not only been the models for these now-theoretical types, but have also influenced these ideas themselves. Norman Lebrecht describes them as follows:

In addition to sagacity and an inexplicable skill, conductors were alleged to possess the key to eternal life and vigour. Pierre Monteux, at eighty, sought a 25-year contract from the London Symphony orchestra, renewable by mutual consent. Stokowski, at 91, signed a ten-year exclusive recording deal with RCA. Toscanini and Otto Klemperer kept on into their mid-eighties.\textsuperscript{316}

In Lebrecht’s opinion this has not, however, been taking place in isolation – or on the margins, if we keep to the terminology of this study – but is the result of the world the conductors have been living in:

The crisis in conducting is twofold. There is a dearth of fresh talent, and an alarming superficiality in the state of symphonic interpretation. Brahms, Bruckner and Mahler are performed more than ever before, with far less penetration. The crisis does not exist in isolation but originates in the societies that bred the maestro and his myth. The conductor is no more than a magnifying mirror of the world in which he lives, \textit{homo sapiens} writ large. As such, his development reveals more about the nature of the twentieth-century society and morality than it does about twentieth-century music.\textsuperscript{317}

\textsuperscript{314} See Lepistö 1992.
\textsuperscript{315} Gross 1995b.
\textsuperscript{316} Lecrecht 1991, pages 3-4.
\textsuperscript{317} Ibid., page 5.
Many of the great conductors behind the above discussed “types” also taught – no matter how pedagogical they were. In general, as Esa-Pekka Salonen says, teaching and passing on the things one has learned and the ideas of conducting are “biological” things. Some of the legendary conductors of the twentieth century were pedagogically very, while others were not.

*Case study: von Karajan and the sociology of modern conductor types*

A good example of a legendary conductor-type who also taught the art is Herbert von Karajan. He represented the so-called “old school”. Panula observed Karajan’s rehearsals during the music festival in Vienna while still a student.\(^\text{318}\) Karajan taught his own conducting course in Salzburg, which had an excellent reputation among the young conductors of the time. However, his presence was minimal, and Panula remembers that the maestro had the habit of arriving, giving an hour-long speech, and hurrying away again.\(^\text{319}\)

Karajan does not seem to have been a particular "teacher-type", especially as he obviously was not very pedagogically oriented. As a conductor, he was brilliant and legendary already in his lifetime. Panula describes his style of rehearsing as quick and strict, with very little talk involved. However, Panula also remembers that it was by no means self-evident to be able to follow Karajan’s rehearsals. It was a privilege, but also a tough experience because of the strict discipline. The maestro enjoyed the situation; he waited in the wings and arrived for the rehearsal only when the concert hall was completely silent.

There is one incident that is very telling – and serves as a good example of what Panula’s system of teaching has never been. In a surviving old black-and-white film, Karajan first describes his years of study in Vienna.\(^\text{320}\) He mentions that teaching had become an

---

\(^\text{318}\) There were no specific years given here.

\(^\text{319}\) Interview with Jorma Panula 27.11.2001.

important means for him to help young conductors at the beginning of their careers. This comment is followed by a flash onto his own conducting course, where one of the students is conducting an orchestra.

The camera follows the situation closely, although it concentrates mainly on the teacher, who sits in a chair next to the podium. Karajan is filmed up close, and the dramatic effect is intentional, with the black and white picture adding to the drama. Strauss’s Till Eulenspiegel is interrupted every few minutes by the maestro yelling instructions and mimicking how everything should be done. Suddenly, the situation culminates with Karajan leaping up from his chair, snatching the baton from the student, and continuing to conduct himself. The effects of this sudden change can be heard in the sound of the orchestra – and can be seen in the expression on the student’s face.

Such behaviour is directly opposite to the principles used by Jorma Panula, whose students were never shown examples by the teacher in practice, as described in the previous chapters. Instead, supported by the use of video, students had only the image of themselves from which to learn – technique, posture, and musical effects.

The question of types has also to do with musical versatility, which has brought a greater style-orientation than before. Not as much in Finland but elsewhere in Europe conductors have largely specialised in, for example, working with period-instrument ensembles or with contemporary music. Also different ways of conducting have made a come-back: conducting from the keyboard, as a first violinist, or as a soloist. A chamber music-like orientation has also grown up in the bigger orchestras, with the conductor taking part more often than before. In a way these style- and technique-oriented conductors form a new category of conductor types.
However, the new tendency has its disadvantages. Conducting has become a “trend”, the new idea of versatility having changed the definition of conductorship. The profession has become less and less about who has the “right” to call themselves a conductor or whether one actually has an education for the profession. I am talking about those highly-trained solo performers who decide to broaden their musicianship by taking up conducting. There are, of course, exceptions, but in general one could say that the attitude seems to be that professionalism in one area of music equals expertise in another.\textsuperscript{321} The professional versatility that comes from all-round musical education and that has become a significant feature of musicianship and conductorship in Finland is not very common elsewhere. In an interview Storgårds says:

Unlike fifteen or twenty years ago, it is now common for an instrumentalist to take up conducting. But these instrumentalists don’t take their conducting seriously enough. It was different in my day. After working as a violinist and a chamber musician for a long time, I started right from the beginning again, so to speak, and received a rigorous training in the Sibelius Academy conducting class. I learned the technique of conducting a symphony orchestra in all kinds of musical situations, relying not only on my experience as a musician, but also on the conducting skills I had acquired through my professional training.\textsuperscript{322}

I found that the sociological identity theories seemed to be the best approach different conductor types. Vappu Lepistö says, that in the current world of art, several artist types have been developed to substitute for the nineteenth century types of “an academic”, “a dandy”, and “a bohemian”.\textsuperscript{323}

Lepistö refers here to two the work of two sociologists, Totti Tuhkanen and Sari Karttunen.\textsuperscript{324} Tuhkanen has divided the artists into types: “a technical expert”, “a teacher”, “a politician”, “a reformer”, “an influential person”, and “a critic”. These types have not been

\textsuperscript{321} This theme was explored with conductor John Storgårds in an interview that became an article “In quest of a tradition”, published in \textit{Finnish Music Quarterly}. See Konttinen, 2004.
\textsuperscript{322} Ibid. The following quote in English in the article.
\textsuperscript{323} Lepistö 1991, page 19.
\textsuperscript{324} Tuhkanen 1988 and Karttunen 1988). Translations of the terms A.K.
thoroughly analysed, but the terms give some idea of the qualities of each. Applied to conducting, for example, a teacher type could equal a pedagogue, whose identity would be socially constructed in an educational context. This identification most likely also defines the way his or her personal identity as a conductor has been constructed, the professionality supposedly being more emphasised in education than in performance. Similarly, a reformer could be seen as someone working actively to promote musical life, such as the young conductors of the Korvat Auki-generation, while an influential person could equal such a character as Esa-Pekka Salonen, who has a lot of musical, cultural and even political influence in the society in which he lives and works.

This division into types could be directly applied to the conductors, there being equivalents for all of these types among both historical and contemporary conductors. In fact, a practical example is to be found in an interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, who compared himself as a conductor, and his role in musical life, to a turn-of-the-twentieth-century type. Those conductors were much involved with the cultural decision-making, as well as with culture and music politics – “politicians” and “reformers”. Salonen likewise has a significant amount of power and the ability to influence the cultural and musical life of his current hometown, Los Angeles, via his post as the Music Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. He says that today’s tendency is towards the earlier cultural and social situation, when conductors were influential and powerful social figures.

Salonen compares himself to Robert Kajanus, who had a similar position in Finland for decades, as an active musical, cultural, and political force in building the national musical life and the orchestral and concert life of Helsinki. The important thing, Salonen says, is to use all this power wisely to promote the things one finds important.

325 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 22.9.1998.
Other types introduced by Totti Tuhkanen are also relevant here: there are certainly “technical expert” types and “influential persons” among the conductors of the past, as well as today. Von Karajan could be viewed as a highly “influential” conductor in a social sense, and Bernstein in a musical sense, while, for example, Seiji Ozawa is generally known as a technical “miracle”. In the history of Finnish conductorship there is a continuum of “teacher” types, culminating in Jorma Panula’s pedagogical career. In Panula’s opinion that I have called “types” here are closely tied to the conductors’ education and the teacher-student relationship. When I asked Panula whether he thinks that the significant differences between the Central European tradition and the Finnish way of teaching affect the conductors’ ideas about being a conductor, he said:

> Yes, the students take the ideas from their teachers, and pass them on in turn. If they are relying on the dictator-kind of authority of, for example, Nikisch and Karajan, the musicians get scared and can’t give their best. Being a conductor is about making music together with the orchestra, with a chamber music-like orientation. This is what should be carried on.

In short, the conductor types – or at least some of the ideas attached to them – are also tied to the historical and social continuum of a developing conductorship. As such, they are a strongly sociological matter.

In her study Vappu Lepistö uses terms as artistic “identity”, “myth”, and “type” to analyse how the concept of an artist is built and maintained by the society and by the artists themselves. She especially concentrates on the myth of a romantic artist as part of an artistic identity and how the way in which artists have been and are being written about affects the artists themselves and the art world in shaping identity. Lepistö says:

---

326 Interview with Jorma Panula, 5.11.2002.
327 Ibid.
Behind the manner of writing about artists is the non-analytical and mythical conception of an artist that has been considered self-evident. An art world as an institution with its manner of writing about artists and its cultural manner of representation protects the myths of art, functioning as a basis for the formation of the artistic identity.\textsuperscript{329}

As discussed in Part I of this study, Lepistö, following the model of Erwin Goffman, operates within the division of artistic identity whose two sides are \textit{social} and \textit{personal}.\textsuperscript{330} Social identity is based on the ideas that the artist expects the outside world – for example an art world, or a work community – to direct towards his or her being as an artist. Personal identity, on the other hand, is based on how the artist understands his or her own uniqueness in relation to other people. Both the social and personal aspects of the professional identity that are constantly under negotiation in the process of defining one’s own idea of conductorship seem also to be the concepts that affect the process of a certain conductor type taking shape. In addition to these concepts, there is the term \textit{role} that, in my opinion, seems to be strongly tied to the somewhat socially-biased idea of a certain type. The idea of an artist working “publicly in his or her role as an artist in a way that is expected of him or her by the art world, or consciously against it”\textsuperscript{331} is the same idea as a conductor being an actor. Lepistö continues, “there is an idea of theatre hidden behind the concept of role; life is acted on a stage, according to an ‘agreement’ of a kind.”\textsuperscript{332}

For a conductor, adopting the role tied to a certain type could be an agreement between one’s identity and the social context (a concert life or a public) or between oneself and the work community (an orchestra). For a conductor, assuming a role could be, in Lepistö’s words, about acting out what is expected of him or her or, as I have discussed in Part I, Chapter 1.4.2., acting “consciously against”. In my opinion there is a stage, and a hidden component of theatre here, that is built on the idea of more or less conscious role-taking.

\textsuperscript{329} Ibid. All the following quotes translated by A.K.
\textsuperscript{330} Ibid., pages 34-35.
\textsuperscript{331} Ibid., page 34.
\textsuperscript{332} Ibid.
With conductors there seems to be, however, a need for a further division of the concept of type: such above mentioned types as “politicians”, “reformers”, or “pedagogues” are what I have decided to call social types, the subjective and objective types with their analogies to the “great conductors” of the past being more about technical and practical music-making aspects. Again, traces of these aspects cannot be found in Finnish conductorship, which is not based on something that is “taken as given” – even if there is always the possibility of purposefully absorbed influences and adopted roles.

In Part III of this study the conductors’ working practices, developed from the education in “Panula’s class”, will be analysed using the theory that was introduced in Part I. More specifically, a case study showing the concert process from the first rehearsal to the concert, will be examined from one conductor’s point of view. The purpose is to illustrate the theory with practical examples and to test whether the chosen theoretical points of view are applicable to the practices of work. What is interesting to know is, whether the theories can bring out something new and relevant in the process.

The theoretical points of view used in the analysis are the theory of musical gesture, semiotics, sociology of conducting, and the study of musical performance.
III ANALYSIS

1. From theory to practice

There has been a tendency in current musicological literature towards expanding the definitions for the term *analysis*. Depending on the subject matter and a study’s purpose, analysis and its criteria are specified by the researcher himself or herself. This analysis, too, is not analysis in the traditional sense. Part III of the study is devoted to examining the chosen theoretical aspects in practice, but since the process and the approach to the subject matter – the research intention – have been analytical, the term analysis feels justified here. As for the subject matter itself, the term *analysis* perhaps comes closer to the traditional forms of analysis, especially in talking about analysis and specific “conductor analysis” as a part of a conductor’s working process. These terms will be defined and explained later in the text.

The task of a researcher who is analysing living musical situations and trying to identify certain gestural patterns and establish theoretical classifications is very demanding. Marjaana Virtanen has accurately analysed this problem:

> First, gestures occur in a flow of movements; it is difficult to say where one gesture ends and another begins. Isolating gestures from the flow of gestures in rehearsal/performance situations is an ambiguous task. Second, the amount of information in gestural negotiation is immense, and the limitation of any available method of analyzing gestures is the need for simplification. Third, although certain gestures may possess generally known functions, these can never be taken for granted…

As mentioned earlier, gestures are usually considered indisputable parts of the skill of conducting. On closer examination, as shown in Part I, *conducting gestures* turned out to be a much more complex and many-sided concept than the word “gesture” might suggest. Not only is the communicativeness of a conducting gesture constantly under negotiation, but the

---

333 Virtanen 2007, 29.
very gesture itself as a physical and motoric function is complex and far from being a self-evident matter.

There is a lot of variation, change, and even obscurity in the process of conducting, if seen from a gestural point of view. Also, conducting gestures are neither just movements of hands, nor do they seem to be restricted to mere conducting. This is the case with the *social gestures* – educational and working gestures – as they have been called in this study. Conducting gestures not only have a visual form, but also an idea that precedes each gesture. This idea, through (usually non-verbal) communication, develops into sounding form that hopefully is near to conductor’s – and composers – intention.

The whole process,\(^{334}\) of going from rehearsals to performance, seen as differently functioning gestures, is in a way negotiation between the idea mediated through visual gestures and the sounding result.\(^{335}\) Basically, the nearer these two aspects get each other during the process from rehearsals to performance, the better. How close one actually gets to one’s ideas about the way the music should sound depends on communicational, psychological, and physical matters as well as on the musical situation, which may affect and even change the ideas and the course of the musical process. Not only are there musical, gestical, and social gestures to be identified, but also several successive and overlapping gestural levels, which makes it difficult to apply the theoretical patterns to practical examples.

So far I have studied all these questions only theoretically. To tie them more organically to the practices of conducting, this analysis, and the case study it is based on, were included to illustrate this complex transition from theory to practice. The case study – an extensive interview with conductor John Storgårds, including an observation of a concert process – was also an attempt to sketch the basics of the gestural development and “repertoire of gestures”. Because my project is based on an extensive interviews with a number of contemporary

\(^{334}\) See Appendix III.
\(^{335}\) Hatten 2004.
conductors, their voices will also be heard in this part. To contextualise the subject and introduce the central analytical terminology, I will use short sections to introduce the evolution and physical aspects of conducting gestures as well as the practical and theoretical “tools”, that I will use.

Since gestures are not only theoretical but also a highly personally constructed matter involving aspects of interpretation and flexibility, analysis of them can never be entirely free from subjectivity. As conductor John Storgårds – the “subject” of the case study – mentioned in an interview, score analysis needs to be left open musically until one is in the actual working situation with an orchestra, with the sounding response to work with. The process resulting in the sound should also be allowed to change from the rehearsals to the concert. I feel that to some extent the same goes with the analysis: when working on a very concrete level, observing a conductor and an orchestra at work, there is a chance that the whole project may turn out quite differently from what was expected.

The process of analysing a musical situation could even change its course along the way. The sounding picture of the music constantly changes, not one rehearsal or even a take being the same as the next. This, actually, is in a way the purpose of the whole process. The situations are bound to change, the musicians object, or sometimes even the concert hall changes between the rehearsals and the concert – as the case has often been in Helsinki. The final musical outcome in a concert is likely to differ from the one heard in a rehearsal a day before. The conductor, too, may decide to change things during the rehearsals, and even during the performance. Not only technical and expressive elements, but also the individual

---

336 The reason why the case study was organised with John Storgårds was very practical: it was possible for him to let a researcher work with him for a week-long period while in Helsinki. The timing and repertoire also suited the particular phase of this research process at that time.

337 Interview with John Storgårds 4.6.2004 as part of a week-long project that took place in 31.5.–4.6. 2004, at the Finlandia Hall in Helsinki. The analysis is primarily based on this extensive interview, as well as an analysing session and the process itself from rehearsals to concert.
and human elements are an essential part of the process. The countless possibilities for variability in the process mean, that my analysis can only describe one possible outcome.

I will explore the nature of a conducting gesture as it appears in this analysis in the next short introductory sections 1.1 and 1.2. The sections survey the ‘evolution’ of a conducting gesture, as well as bodily communication and physical limitations. Because the whole theoretical and practical construction in the real-life situation that has been sketched here is naturally based on the physical and visual aspects of gestures, an introduction of this kind seems necessary to define the general context within which the analysis will terminologically operate.

1.1 Evolution of conducting gestures
The historical development of conducting can roughly be divided into two periods according to which way different-sized orchestras have been directed. The division I’m referring to here is by Elliott W. Galkin, presented in his *A History of Orchestral Conducting in Theory and Practice*. Galkin defines the two periods accordingly:

> With brief recognition of earlier times, the historical study is divided into two parts: from the beginning of the seventeenth century until the mid-nineteenth – a period during which diverse methods of musical leadership eventually relinquished in favor of baton conducting – and from then to the present. More specifically, 1855 has been chosen as the year of demarcation. In that year Berlioz published his *L’Art du chef d’orchestre*…

Galkin’s view seems to dominate many, one could even say most, of the texts written on conducting. The question is either technical, or about the means of conducting, from a violin bow or a roll of sheet music to different kind of sticks and finally to the baton. Raymond Holden, in his chapter “The Technique of Conducting” in *The Cambridge Companion to*

---

338 Galkin, Elliott W. 1988, xxxviii. Berlioz’ text is to be found in English in Bamberger 1965.
Conducting, includes historical details, but even if the subject is gesticulation, the question is not about the development of conducting gestures from a communication point of view.\footnote{Holden 2003.}

Both the way of gesturing and the communication to an orchestra through conductor’s gestures have gone through considerable changes. Surprisingly, the evolution of conducting gestures has not proceeded from “simpler” forms of gestural communication, such as gesturing with hands alone, towards such “aids” – or “tools”, as Raymond Holden\footnote{Ibid., page 3.} calls them – as a baton. On the contrary, the development has progressed from very complicated and even imaginative practices towards a baton and towards the current tendency of batonless conducting.\footnote{On different conducting practices see Galkin 1988.}

Identity-wise, the different practices of conducting an orchestra stretch from the early forms of leading an instrumental ensemble by playing an instrument, to the “great conductors” of the early twentieth century who stood on a podium with a baton. Even if there have been significant changes between these two extremes, the current situation seems to be the one with the greatest variety. Today, there are conductors who lead ensembles either as a soloist or a leader, and conductors who conducting on the podium, some with a baton, some without. There are those whose expertise is tied to a certain musical style that demands knowledge of historical performance practices. At the same time there are others who work exclusively with full-size symphony orchestras, conducting only from the podium. Many conductors work in both these areas, some trained by practice, some having received formal education in all these areas of expertise.

The discussion also closely touches on the questions related to the traditions of Western conductorship and the “conductor-musicianship”, both of which are included here. There was a division of practices at the turn of the twentieth century, with “conductor-musicianship”, as
I have called it, being continued by what was then a minority of conductors. Currently, conductor-musicianship is in the process of becoming more and more important in the field of musical professionalism.

On the other hand, the “Toscanini-Karajan tradition”, starting in the early 1900s, became so prominent during the twentieth century that it has often been considered the model for an orchestra conductor. However, while the tradition of conductor-musicianship has strengthened, the age of mythical “great” conductors has lost much of its sociological status and the image has been drained of lot of its power.

The dominating role of baton-conducting has overshadowed many other methods of time-beating that should perhaps be seen in the context of the music that one is conducting: there have always been for example key-board players and violinists conducting an ensemble either as a soloist or a leader when working with music of certain period of time or style – Leonard Bernstein is a good example, while Pinchas Zuckerman represents the younger generation. These two and many other conductor-musicians are included in Galkin’s book, but are not generally considered as descendants of the so-called “conductor-musicianship”. They are merely “exceptions” from the second one of Galkin’s divisions.

From John Storgård’s point of view the tradition of “conductor-musicianship” has never ceased. In fact, he sees the question being about the music more than about gesticulation, the role of gestures being tied to the role of the conductor:

Working without a violin in very demanding performances has very little to do with the role of an ensemble-leader. If, for example, I’m conducting a classical work, maybe a symphony by Mozart, where the orchestra isn’t very big, the emphasis is no longer on gesticulation. It’s then more like being a leader of an ensemble. But it depends on the context. Conducting, say, an opera or complex music for large orchestra is an entirely different matter.

342 This description is Storgård’s, but these names are often the ones used to describe and define the conducting tradition of the twentieth century.
The practical nature of Finnish conductors’ education seems to support the point – even if most of the conductors interviewed for this study acknowledged their conductorship as being linked with the Central European tradition, Galkin’s second period.\textsuperscript{345}

In this light it appears not to be as straightforward to draw a line between the two different traditions in practice as it might seem from the writing of history. Even if some compositional forms, musical identities, and performance practices have changed over time, there has always been a great variety of musical activity, the emphasis depending on social matters as well as musical.

From my point of view, what has gone through the most significant changes is the functionality of a gesture, its contents and purpose, so to speak, with which the physical gesture – movement of the hands – is “filled”. In the context of the theory of conducting gestures introduced in Part I of this study, this “filling” could be placed somewhere in between the technical gesture and the functional gesture – where the motoric, technical movement of the hand turns into an expressive, “speaking” movement. Again, as mentioned in Part I, Chapter 3, the technical gesture is tied to the conventions of a certain historical, tradition-bound, or professional context.

This context too is the Western tradition of conducting – “Western” used here again specifically to include both traditions, the Central European and the conductor-musicianship in the discussion. This division into technical and expressive gesture is what could be called the \textit{role} of a conducting gesture. Not only has the role of the conductor changed, but also the role of gestures, from merely keeping the musicians together to more and more subtle forms

\textsuperscript{345} This is a general view but there are exceptions. Several of the conductors saw their profession and career in the context of the Central European tradition of the “baton-conductors” (whether they actually conduct with it or not). On the other hand, John Storgård strictly dissociates himself from this view of conducting as a profession.
of musical dialogue between the conductor and orchestra. The evolution of beat patterns is a matter that I have not gone into, because a general examination on the subject shows that the actual patterns have changed little, if at all.

Baton or no baton?

When you ask someone what a conductor looks like, they usually describe a person standing before an orchestra, baton in hand. In fact, the use of the “modern” baton is far from a self-evident matter, either historically or with today. From what is known of the very beginning of the history of conducting, there seems always to have been something to conduct with – in fact, in the histories the role of the hands seems to be overshadowed by rolls of sheet music, bows, sticks, and batons of all kinds.

The history of these practical tools is quite fascinating. The different ways of conducting could include as many as three assistant conductors – all on duty at the same time, directing a performance of as many as 525 players and singers. Some of the historical examples of the early forms of time-beating are quite comical. Among many chronologically-presented writers and musicians Galkin quotes Johann Bähr, “an extraordinary musician – composer, singer, violinist, keyboard player, theorist and essayist,” who in 1719 “offered a sarcastic description” of the different forms of time-beating:

In some places when the organists conduct they have a frame which has on it a wooden arm which they can push up and down with the foot, which made me nearly sick from laughing. Others tap their foot against the floor so that it bangs and resounds loudly through the entire church, in a very annoying manner... Others beat time with their head... Others take some rolled paper in their fists and thus make themselves like those war-generals who command their squadrons with the regimental stick. Some beat with one hand, some with both hands... Others use a long stick or a branch... 347

346 Galkin 1988, 450.
To mention another example, in 1777 writer Angé Goudar, again quoted by Galkin, complained about “this fashion of interrupting the music with the noise”. He described how “these repeated blows by the man placed before the orchestra with the batôn deafen the audience” without creating any order. Here the function of a conductor’s time-beating was apparently more metrical than interpretative.

The culmination point mentioned by Galkin was the year 1855, when Hector Berlioz published his *L’Art du chef d’orchestre*. As Galkin says, “with this work the conductor’s new status in the age of ‘personal ego and individuality’ was dramatically epitomized.” Berlioz’ writing was undoubtedly a turning point in new status of a conductor. But the focus seems again to be on the development of how an orchestra has been conducted, not on the evolution of communication between a conductor and an orchestra.

Galkin’s treatise is critical and thorough as well as to giving an exceptionally careful picture of the historical conditions and the techniques of conducting. However, the statement that the period of baton conducting, beginning with Berlioz, has reached “from then to the present”, is in my opinion too general, and, in the context of the conducting situation today, also slightly misleading. Keeping in mind the view of John Storgårds that the tradition of “conductor-musicianship” has never really ceased, Galkin’s comment that “the violin-director was destined only to be a transitional figure in the development of conducting” seems to reveal only half of the story.

Of course, part of Galkin’s discussion is directed by the practical fact that a violin bow has greater air resistance than the thinner baton, and therefore may cause the tempo to slow down slightly. The introduction of the baton at this point of the historical development of conducting would naturally result in an eagerness to try out the novelty. But it does not

---

349 Galkin, page xxxviii.
350 Ibid., page 479.
necessarily follow that the tradition of violin bow conducting, or any other instrumental leading technique, would automatically be replaced and disappear. Even if Galkin here is talking about the practical aspects of violin conducting, the context is still what has been the role of the person directing an orchestral ensemble. In my view, the question is not just about violin conducting, but about the whole tradition of instrumental leadership as a parallel line in the history of conductorship. In fact, despite his theory of all the previous roles of a director being combined in the conductor with a baton, Galkin gives numerous examples of violin bow conductors who, if arranged in chronological order, would actually form an unbroken line, from the earliest examples in the eighteenth century to the late twentieth century.

Towards batonless conducting

It was mentioned that the use of a baton cannot be considered as given, even with contemporary conductors. There has been a strong tendency towards batonless conducting. It may not have been a drastic change from using a baton to having no baton at all, but the focus has clearly shifted from baton conducting towards more batonless conducting, a practice that has become more and more common. As Jorma Panula says, there are well-known conductors who have abandoned the baton entirely, and more and more often conductors of the younger generation have started to conduct without the baton. Panula himself has never used a baton.351 There are also many conductors who do both. For John Storgårds, the question of whether to conduct with a baton is about the nature of the music being performed, its the nuances, and the different aspects of sound:

I conduct Mozart and Haydn without a baton, it just feels wrong to use it, I simply don’t need it for anything. But when it comes to the music of the later periods, it becomes more a question of the character of the music. I may conduct one movement with a baton and the next one without, if I’m looking for a certain character, and feel

351 Interview with Jorma Panula 27.11.2001.
that I can achieve it more easily with just soft movements of the hands. The basic purpose of a baton is to sharpen the movement, not to soften it. You can help the orchestra with sharp, clear gestures by using a baton, but if what you’re looking for is to bring out finer details, it may be better not to use it at all.\textsuperscript{352}

In the context of the present study the learned gestures are the \textit{technical gestures}, and similarly the “soft” and “sharp” gestures belong to the category of the \textit{expressive gestures}: movements of hands that contain the expressive aspect and are intentional as well as motoric. It is also possible to see the expressive gestures forming different hierarchies among themselves: there are, for example, expressive gestures that have to do with the aspects of sound, nuances and phrasing, and others that have a function in bringing out colours and characteristics of the music.

The question of the baton is two-fold. The baton can be of great help: to make the beat clearer and more focused, and to ensure that the beat is visible to every musician in the orchestra, where distances between the conductor and those musicians situated at the back of the stage can be considerable. On the other hand, using a baton can cause problems, and even disturb the communication. Jorma Panula mentioned that it is quite common for young conductors misunderstand the functionality of the baton. Whether to use it or not is a personal matter, but, as he says, if one decides to use it, one must also know why and how to make the most of it.\textsuperscript{353} A baton should be only a mediator, an aid with which to convey information to the orchestra, a ”tool”, as Raymond Holden calls it.\textsuperscript{354}

Jorma Panula says that, there are basically three fingers of the – usually – right hand tied involved in holding the baton, leaving only two fingers moving.\textsuperscript{355} To master the correct, tensionless way to hold the baton is important. The wrong way not only creates tensions, but also can cause major problems by making the entire hand stiff and inflexible. This, in turn,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{352} Interview with John Storgårds 1.9.2003.
  \item \textsuperscript{353} Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
  \item \textsuperscript{354} Holden 2003, 3.
  \item \textsuperscript{355} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
can lead to the conductor trailing behind the orchestra, having difficulty maintaining the
tempo. And the stiffer the hand, the more difficult it is for the orchestra to “read” the beat – to
interpret the gestures. According to Panula, the baton is an “extension of the brain”, the
information travelling along one’s arm from the head to the tip of the “stick”, as he and his
students informally call it.356

In Panula’s class, everyone made a personal decision about whether to conduct with or
without a baton. Those who used the baton, searched for the right kind, with the right
material, weight, length and balance for them. What was important was that the baton suited
the conductor, felt right in the hand, and was comfortable to hold. It was as acceptable to
conduct without a baton as with one, if being without felt more natural. For someone who was
in the middle of deciding which way felt the most natural, conducting without a baton could
be very helpful. Sometimes conducting without was a good way to find the right movements
and to achieve balance between two hands which serve different functions.

The students were expected to clarify for themselves why they used a baton, if they had
decided to do so. It was a conductor’s “aid” in a process, not the main purpose of the process,
and if a baton was being used, it was necessary to have something logical to do with it. In
Panula’s opinion not very many conductors know how to use a baton, because they do not
realise what its function really is.357 In general, using or not using a baton is a matter that
should not be given too much thought. It should be a natural part of what one does. Panula
thinks it is telling that more and more conductors have decided to conduct without a baton.

The historical development of the baton, therefore, seems to have moved from different
“tools” and inventions towards smaller and less striking-looking batons, until it has reached
the point where there may be none. It could thus be said that the development has also been
from the tool or the aid towards the gesture – towards the idea itself, or the core.

356 Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
357 Ibid.
In general, as Panula’s former pupil John Storgårds says, the hands – whether with a baton or without one – should automatically execute what one intends to communicate through them, with the conductor not making any plans or choreographies beforehand. In his book on conducting Gunter Schuller discusses conductors who make a more or less strict gestural choreography, which they then follow through the rehearsals and the performance, never changing anything, nor leaving any interpretative freedom to direct the performance – no “surprises”.

In the book Der Tacktstock Eckhard Roelcke has collected views about using a baton from thirty-nine contemporary conductors. In these interviews conductors either contemplate their relationship with their baton, or describe, some in graphic detail, the qualities and even the characteristics of it, analyse its function – or contemplate its “magic”. Curiously, most of the attributes connected with the mental picture of the social habitus of a conductor are also present here. However, from this book one can see how individual a matter is using a baton.

To mention just one example, conductor Kent Nagano, in his interview, used the metaphor of baton being like a telephone: if you have a telephone at your ear but you don’t speak, the telephone has absolutely no meaning at all; similarly, if you have a baton in your hand but nothing to say, the baton is useless. Nagano’s example is similar to Jorma Panula’s opinion when he says that if you have a baton, you must have something to do with it.

As will be seen in the case study with John Storgårds, using as well as not using a baton is, in fact, about conducting gestures – whether one can emphasise or bring out something with a baton that makes the technical movement either clearer or more expressive. The most important thing is the musical idea.

---

359 Schuller 1997, 17.
360 Roelcke 2000.
361 Social here as opposed to personal; see Part I Chapter, 1.4, Identities.
1.2 The physique of conducting gestures

Mastering the beat patterns and the required motoric, technical movements – the conventions shared by conductors belonging to the same tradition – with both hands simultaneously may not come naturally, but is more or less a technical skill that is possible to acquire with training. It is a skill that some say should be acquired through training, and a skill one has to have to be able to work as a professional conductor. But, as Gunther Schuller points out

a beautiful baton technique can achieve little if the mind that activates the baton doesn’t know what there is to know in the work and what, in fact, its notation expresses. The clean baton technique of a conductor who, for example, does not hear well harmonically or whose mind and ear cannot keep a steady tempo may still be a beautiful thing to watch, but from a strictly musical point of view it is a useless skill.\textsuperscript{362}

According to Schuller, good technical skills are essential for communication, but purely technical gestures are only an “exterior manifestation of what we know and feel about the music (the score)”\textsuperscript{363}. This supports the idea presented in Chapter 3, namely, that such a thing as a technical gesture does exist at least hypothetically. Schuller continues by saying that a representation of the score should involve the intellectual and emotional “knowledge of what to represent”. This knowledge, according to Jorma Panula, should be readable through the conductor’s hands, and through the meaningful, clear and “speaking” gestures that express it, gestures that should also be personal and characteristic, not just technical. In Panula’s words, mere time-beating is like “wood-chopping”, not something to be practiced in front of an orchestra.

As the idea of gestural types presented in Part I of this study shows, the movements of hands that make the beat patterns and the basic metrical information visible represent the technical gestures. I mention this because there is an analogy here between what Schuller

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Schuller 1997, 9-10.
\item Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
refers to as “the clean baton technique” (whether one actually conducts with a baton or not is, as I understand it, not important here), and the term technical as I have used it in this study. To become expressive gestures, technical gestures should include the musical gestures that are found on reading a score and that lead to the ideas that are musically executed.

Together analytical and technical gestures, thorough study and an understanding of the score hopefully turn into expressive gestures that in turn make up a specific, personal interpretation. The purpose of the expressive gestures, again, is to realise and interpret what has been written in the score by the composer, using the technical gestures as a medium.

In practice this argument might become clearer with a general example, again envisioning a conductor at work: if there has been too little time to study the score thoroughly, the only option in the actual working situation gesture-wise is to rely on one’s technique – perhaps leaving the sounding result not so very interesting. These are also the situations in which a conductor might rely more on what an orchestra has to ‘offer’ than on those cases where he or she has a clear sounding vision of what is looked for.

Some of the conductors interviewed for this study also mentioned that this is what sometimes happens with an orchestra, though rarely, if an agreement cannot be found and the cooperation ends in some kind of conflict. In such a situation one tries to create as technically accurate and good a performance as possible, accepting that the expressive part of the process is not going to happen.

1.3 Communicating with the body and dealing with physical limitations

Different aspects related to body language and physical expressiveness have mostly been part of the field of performance studies. The central texts referred to here to are Jane Davidson’s “Communicating with the body in performance” and Eric Clarke’s “Understanding the psychology of performance”, both published in the collection of articles entitled Musical
Performance, edited by John Rink.\textsuperscript{364} Besides representing the latest\textsuperscript{365} research on the subject, these two texts seem to be the most useful for the particular questions discussed here.

Jane Davidson, whose case study "Viewing the performer" included in the above-mentioned article, will be examined more thoroughly later in the text, says:

\begin{quote}
\ldots musical performance is a highly expressive and abstracted activity which emanates from a grounded bodily origin. For the performer, a careful balance is needed between control and abandon, between obeying some rules and rebelling against others. Performance assumes a profound knowledge of music, the instrument and the self in the music.\textsuperscript{366}
\end{quote}

With orchestral conductors the instrument is the orchestra which may consist of as many as ne hundred musicians. Otherwise the role of Davidson’s performer and conductor is the same.

Whether one sees oneself as an “ensemble-musician” or a “soloist” is a personal matter.

In addition to making decisions about what Davidson describes “control and abandon, between obeying some rules and rebelling against others” (the Beckerian “acting-against”), there is a set of purely physical matters one needs to balance.\textsuperscript{367} As one of the codes (or conventions) that regulate what happens on stage, Davidson mentions “direction of gaze and the physical gestures made when playing”.\textsuperscript{368} Eye-control with orchestral musicians as well as one’s physical pose, have also been important factors in Jorma Panula’s system of educating conductors – and are, in fact, gestures, too. If classified, they would be somewhere between the technical and expressive, part of the former and necessary for the latter.

The “purely” physical and technical aspects of a performance are, indeed, much easier to study and to formulate. With expressiveness one is confronted by complex questions that draw the line between the physical and the interpretative. In his article “Understanding the

\textsuperscript{364} Rink 2002.
\textsuperscript{365} At the time this study is being written.
\textsuperscript{366} Davidson 2002, 150.
\textsuperscript{367} Ibid., 144.
\textsuperscript{368} Ibid., 150.
psychology of performance” Eric Clarke concentrates more on the role of expression in a performance, especially in the section titled “Expression in performance”. Clarke’s article does touch on questions related to physical performance skills, but is referred to here mainly because it shows how difficult it is to tell the difference between technical execution and expressive interpretation.

The ideas of the present study are similar to Clarke’s, and the problem of whether expressiveness and interpretation are a conscious or unconscious result of the technical execution and of whether it is possible to produce a gesture that is not expressive is emphasised. What is also questioned is the role of the score as a source for the expressivity of a performance. Clarke says:

Expression can be understood as the inevitable and insuppressible consequence of understanding musical structure, yet it is also a conscious and deliberate attempt by performers to make their interpretations audible. As evidence for its unconscious and inevitable presence in performance, some authors have shown that when performers are explicitly asked to play without expression, the degree of tempo and dynamic variation is reduced but never eliminated… This aspect of performance expression can be seen as a consequence of the performer’s spontaneous and unconscious grasp of the basic elements of musical structure…

Clarke is referring to cases in which the performers who already have already mastered the necessary technique and who share the conventional “wisdom” but have been asked to forget everything. By contrast, in this study it is expected that there is such a thing as a “purely” technical, learned execution without expressive content – something that has been called “mere time-beating”. Clarke continues:

However, it is obvious that performers also consciously and deliberately shape expression in their performances in order to achieve particular structural and stylistic results. This is one function of practice (along with overcoming purely technical

---

369 Clarke 2002.
370 Ibid., 65.
problems), and it involves changes in the performer’s understanding of the music and the use of it, and balance between, different expressive devices.371

There is an implication in Clarke’s words that seems to support one of the main theoretical ideas in the present study: “expression can be understood as the inevitable and insuppressible consequence of understanding musical structure” (italics mine). In other words, without understanding there is no expression – leaving a performance purely technical. This view also questions the statement that every performative gesture is inevitably expressive.

The more one examines the differences between technical and expressive gestures in the light of performance, the more indistinct the line seems to become between the two. In the context of the present study would seem more and more reasonable to say, as already stated in Part I, Chapter 3, that the technical and expressive are two ways of emphasising gestures, when considered theoretically and analytically.

Physical limitations

According to Gunther Schuller, most conductors have to deal with physical limitations. As Schuller says, almost all conductors “have more or less serious limitations as to what we can do with our hands, our arms, our shoulders, our head, our eyes – in short our body equipment. Almost all of us are to some extent or another variously inept in one area or another”.372 These limitations or even physical problems are very likely to affect the accuracy of our physical movements. Technical accuracy is a skill that even the best-known conductors have to struggle with, Schuller says. It could be said that there is a “realistic” view on gesture, and an “idealistic” view of what can be achieved with gestures. The “idealistic” is what is expected and the “realistic” is what is actually possible. Schuller continues:

---

371 Ibid.
Most of us are not free enough in our arms and torso to control fully the minutiae of movements which so crucially affect the musical/acoustic results emanating from an orchestra; and most of us are too habituated to certain physical movements to be free at the precise moment to alter or control them.\textsuperscript{373}

As Schuller implies, physical limitations may also make it impossible to be absolutely precise in one’s gestures and may lengthen the reaction time in the musical situation. There is a reaction time between what one intends to say and how it is physically executed, a reaction time between the conductor gesturing and the orchestra responding, and another between the gesture and the concrete sound. The goal is to get past the physical problems as much as possible and bring action and response closer together to reduce the reaction time.

John Storgårds says that the reaction time is something that can be worked on during the week of orchestra rehearsals, and can be developed into something more “direct”.\textsuperscript{374} Basically, the question is about communication and the response a conductor gets immediately from an orchestra. The reaction time between conductor and orchestra should evolve during the concert period towards the direction of the sounding result, coming closer and closer to conductor’s ideas.

In most cases, it is possible to diminish, if not eliminate entirely, physical obstacles. According to Gunther Schuller, “much can be achieved in this realm with good training” and there are also “many tricks and methods by which one can learn effectively to re-train and discipline one’s body, one’s physical equipment, as it were.”\textsuperscript{375} With some people the physical problems cannot be entirely solved:

\begin{quote}
…for most conductors there are ultimately some physical limitations or idiosyncrasies which, no matter how one tries to overcome them, cannot be entirely outgrown. What we are thus left with is the goal of developing our physical, manual, gestural skills – one of the essentials of our conducting craft – to their highest possible potential, so that we
\end{quote}

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{373} Ibid, page 10.
\textsuperscript{374} Interview with John Storgårds, 4.6.2004.
\textsuperscript{375} Ibid, page 10.
\end{flushleft}
may accurately reflect and transmit to the orchestra (and thence to the audience) that which the music requires us to express.\textsuperscript{376}

If conductors were to be interviewed on the subject of physical limitations, those who have no problems at all would probably be in the minority. Conducting being very physically demanding by nature, there is bound to be something, at least at times, that limits or makes moving and keeping one’s posture challenging.\textsuperscript{377} It is very tempting to say that physical limitations are the rule, rather than than exception – and in the history of conducting there are many examples of conductors who worked far into an old age, despite diminishing physical powers, for example, Otto Klemperer and Eugen Jochum.

In addition to physique, Schuller also mentions “gestural skills”, by which he obviously does not mean only the physical ability to conduct. His is a practical view of gestures as a mediating, transmitting element in the process of conducting, subordinate to the ideas behind the gesture more than a physical, technical skill. The intention is to “express” the requirements of the music. To this I have added analytical gestures, to emphasise the nature of musical gestures in the score and to try to demonstrate how they actually seem to form a continuous and coherent gestural process from analysis to visualising the gestures, to rehearsals, and finally to the actual performance, where the individual interpretation is transmitted to the audience through the expressive gestures.

In John Storgårds’ opinion, the basic requirement for working on physical limitations is proper education in conducting.\textsuperscript{378} Mastering such technical skills is a long process and requires experience in conducting gained by training with an orchestra to the point that one is

\textsuperscript{376} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{377} Unlike in Marjaana Virtanen’s study, posture has been seen here as part of the gestures of a conductor. During the field work for this study, it became clear that the over-all being of a conductor on a podium affects – more or less – his or her gestures. See Virtanen 2007, 163.
\textsuperscript{378} Ibid.
able to forget technique and concentrate on all the other aspects and finer details. Storgårds emphasises the kind of conductors’ education available in Finland, thanks to Jorma Panula.

2. Conducting gestures: Analysis

What has been sought in this analysis\textsuperscript{379} is one possible example of how gestures become communicative and expressive as well as perceivable both by an orchestra and an audience. The main question is, how do the different types or functions of gestures become apparent, and how do they work hierarchically. With the process of conducting, the intention usually is that the communication through gestures shapes and creates a unique performance. When seen as a hierarchical system, it is possible to take this “shaping” a step further\textsuperscript{380} – towards personal interpretation or realisation.

The idea of a repertoire of gestures will be studied and considered here as a system for organising and analysing gestural hierarchies. In addition, the point of the analysis is to make observations about how educational gestures are transferred into working gestures, and during which parts of the working process this can be seen. In other words, what is analysed is how the theoretical ideas concerning gestures might become apparent in practice.

There were two main reasons for giving the analysis so much space in the text. Firstly, the practice of conducting has a major role in the study, and therefore it seemed important, even imperative, to arrange an extensive case study and to undertake fieldwork on which to base an analysis. Secondly, there are not very many previous cases to refer to, and therefore, it seemed important to arrange one to strengthen the arguments. Also, while the theory of gestures in itself seemed quite complex and even abstract at points, illustrating and clarifying it with practical examples seemed justified.

\textsuperscript{379} See the definition of the term analysis at the beginning of Part III.
\textsuperscript{380} See Hatten 2004.
What needs to be mentioned are all the benefits for the research process that are gained from the opportunity to work with one of the conductors, and to observe closely how the week progressed from the first rehearsal to the concert. This experience inevitably deepened and broadened the perspective on conducting.

Even if the heart of this case study is the extensive interview and analytical score session with conductor John Storgårds, there was also an opportunity to observe the process of preparing for the concert, to take notes during the week from the first rehearsal to the concert, to study the week as a process, and to “test” the theoretical ideas of a repertoire of gestures in practice. The observation was documented using the score but the score has not been considered as an equally valid source material. Nevertheless, it seemed interesting to add practical observations to the subject matter while constructing an otherwise rather theoretical model and important to strengthen the arguments by actually following one practical conducting situation in practice during the time of writing.

There were four hypotheses whose theoretical accuracy and practical realisation were studied more specifically in this analysis. The first hypothesis was that the different types or aspects of a conducting gesture – musical, technical, and expressive – become apparent respectively in the process of conducting, ideally making one’s own personal interpretation (or realisation) possible.

The second hypothesis is that these gestures form a learned repertoire, which conductors then vary and apply to their working situations. The third hypothesis had to do with hierarchies: the assumption here was that the gestures form hierarchies and function hierarchically. The fourth hypothesis was that the ways of passing on the gestures through education – the educational gestures – become the so-called working gestures when
conductors begin to work professionally. Where this transference takes place in the process does can be hypothetically defined, and these “places” (at least according to one example of this kind of a situation) can be identified in the process of working.

As mentioned above, to avoid one-sided observations of these subjects, the case study involved working in cooperation with a conductor – John Storgård conducting the Helsinki Philharmonic – and observing the full process, from choosing the music and analysing the score to rehearsing the work and finally to the performance. An analytical session, as well as an interview were included, in addition to the documented rehearsals and the concert at the end of the working period.  

Since the communication situation involving a score, a conductor and an orchestra was in focus as well as the communicational space where an audience is present, following the model of the Prague school, video-taping was purposely not included. In other words, the actual musical action that took place was not central and the theoretical model was. The purpose of the observation was to try to find practical examples to support the model. This seemed a thorough enough approach, because the study was not an attempt to create an application, but to sketch a theoretical model, and to give one example of the many possible ways of studying the gestures of a conductor.

Interpretation/realisation

Reference has been made in this text to a dilemma between interpretation and realisation. Essentially, this dilemma is about a relationship between a conductor and a score, or in other words, about whether a conductor is realising or interpreting a score, taking into account the intentions of the composer. This is a discussion that in Finland has revolved around Gunther

---

381 The concert was recorded by the sound technicians of the Helsinki Philharmonic, but the tape was accidentally erased.
382 See Quinn 2005.
Schuller’s *The Compleat Conductor*,383 which Jorma Panula has recommended to his students. In the book Schuller quotes Maurice Ravel: “Il ne faut pas interpréter ma musique, il faut la réaliser”.384

This has been a basis for both Schuller’s and, in turn, Panula’s ideas about a conductor working with a score. In Panula’s opinion a score contains the most important guidelines for a conductor both for the music and for its execution with an orchestra. He has advised his students to “try as it has been written first, then adding your own tricks, if necessary – usually it isn’t”.385

In general Panula is against interpreting scores, here meaning someone making changes to the music written in the score just to make it sound different from other interpreters. Sometimes the music just does not sound the way it is supposed to, owing to acoustic or other reasons, and then some changes naturally have to be made386. However, in general, one’s personal interpretation does not come from “re-writing” the score, but rather from conducting it with one’s personal way of gesticulating and being in front of an orchestra. This is why Panula himself has preferred Ravel’s term *realisation*.

On the other hand, John Storgårds remarked in an interview that actually realisation can be seen to be included in interpretation.387 In the context of the theory and terminology of this study, one way to understand the difference might be to see realisation as being nearer the more technically emphasised gestures, while interpretation – meaning one’s personal contribution to the performance – would be nearer to the expressive gestures. I want to stress again here that ‘technical’ is not a negative term, but a term needed to specify the different aspects of a conducting gesture and define the process of conducting.

384 Ibid., page 8.
385 Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
386 Interview with Jorma Panula, 5.11.2002.
2.1 Theoretical tools: conductor analysis and decoding of gestures

The term *conductor analysis* does not exist as such, but it is nevertheless a concept that describes quite accurately the contents of a method of analysing scores, a method that can be detected from the different guides to conducting and analytical studies pertaining to score-reading. The term has been used here to describe both the type of analysis hypothetically used by conductors, compared with other forms of music analysis, and the whole analytical process of examining and performing scores.

The definition used in this study is adapted from Gunther Schuller, who claims that there is a specific way to analyse a score, which consists of two phases: first the analysis and detailed theoretical study of the score, which is then executed in sounding form through rehearsing and performing.

For Schuller conductor analysis is a working method and he concentrates on this type of analysis in his book *The Compleat Conductor*:

As a working method in the process of revealing the score to the orchestra and thence to the listener, the specifics of how all the elements of music (the composer’s tools) are used – harmony, melody (or theme or motive), rhythm, dynamics, timbre (orchestration), form and structure – must be separately and then collectively explored and understood. In general, we call this analyzing the score. But ‘analysis’ can have different meanings for different constituents: musicologists, composers, conductors, for example. I will therefore be very precise and speak of analysis as particularly applicable to conducting.

In addition to the question of whether one is conducting with a baton or without it, there is also the question of other working “tools”. There are several cases in the history of orchestral conducting where a very specific and analytical method of analysing a score has been taken as a basis for the study of a score. For example, Wilhelm Furtwängler was known to use

---

388 Here see Rink 2002 on “performer’s analysis”, and Virtanen 2007, page 46.
389 The methods of analysing a score vary greatly; not all conductors study guidebooks and most create their own methods.
390 Schuller 1997, 12.
391 Ibid.
Schenkerian analysis, while Finnish conductor Jussi Jalas used the model by Ilmari Krohn. Since conductors often are composers, and have been in the past, relying on specific analytical seems quite natural.

In the chapter “A Philosophy of Conducting” of his book *The Compleat Conductor* Schuller explains how all the different elements of music “must be separately and collectively explored and understood”. In general, he says, “we call this analyzing a score”. 392

In relation to the two-level score analysis, Schuller uses the term *realisation*: the concrete execution of the musical work – first analysed, then performed. To study a score is, in practice, a highly personal matter, and such patterns as the one explained above can only be referential. To illustrate this, a quick look will be taken into the *working methods* of the conductors interviewed for this study. The following comments are from the interviews made during the years 1998–2001 and represent the current situation and the opinions of the conductors at that time.

Conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen explains that he has created his own method of analysing a score. For him, the first stages in the process have to do with a formal analysis of the musical composition. Then comes the reading of the score in tempo, followed by the study of the score divided into smaller parts. For him, studying a score and taking it in is a multi-level process. 393

Tuomas Ollila, on the other hand, lets the music influence his work:

I think it varies depending on the composition in question. I read a score in tempo, and focus especially on phrase analysis. Hopefully, I’ll also have time to read all the instruments one by one. The rest is more like a stream of consciousness, one ‘lives’ with

392 Ibid.
393 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 22.9.1998.
the score, so to speak, and then something in the music starts to draw attention to itself. It is not an entirely mechanical process.\textsuperscript{394}

Jukka-Pekka Saraste suspects that “everyone has his own method”, and emphasises the individual nature of the analytical process. He says:

Mine is to try to find the bigger processes in the score and the important lines of the composition during the first reading. After that I add the details. This stage of the analysis requires an enormous amount of work, it takes almost three weeks of intensive score reading before everything starts to fit, and one begins to hear the music in one’s mind. I find the early hours during the morning the best time for reading scores.\textsuperscript{395}

Sakari Oramo, a violinist as well as a conductor, considers his instrumental background a significant advantage. “The violin is the only instrument I could read the score with, as the concrete physical contact with the sound is so important to maintain”, he says, “I always think music through violin playing”. Still a performing violinist as well as a conductor, he says:

I look at the overall structure of the composition for bigger lines, where it starts and ends, and what is in the middle, gradually proceeding from larger entities to smaller ones. For me it is easier to understand all the details when having got the general view of the work, and knowing how one thing leads to another. The most elaborate analysis of the details belongs to the last part of the process. Then one has to draw everything together once more, and see if the first impression of the work was right –in fact it very often turns out to have been completely wrong!\textsuperscript{396}

Mikko Franck, in turn, starts “reading the score little by little, to see what is there. Gradually the eye starts to get used to the visual appearance of the score”.\textsuperscript{397} When the work gets more detailed, then

\textsuperscript{394} Interview with Tuomas Ollila (Hannikainen), 25.8.1998.
\textsuperscript{395} Interview with Jukka-Pekka Saraste, 29.8.1998.
\textsuperscript{396} Interview with Sakari Oramo, 17.9.1998.
\textsuperscript{397} Interview with Mikko Franck, 12.6.1998.
…one has to learn to pinpoint what is important and “dig out”, so to speak, all the markings written in the score by the composer. As a result of this, the score starts to sound. The next step is to sketch an overall picture of the composition. I often use the piano to study scores; it can be very useful in bringing out the harmonies. 398

Although he uses the piano for score analysis, Franck, a violinist like Sakari Oramo, also finds it important to maintain contact with one’s own instrument – the “roots” of music making. He has not, however, continued as a performing violinist.

Violinist-conductor John Storgårds, with two professional careers, does not use his own instrument while studying a score:

I do not bring my own instrument into it, but sometimes listen to recordings. Especially if I’m not familiar with the piece of music I’m working on. If you are self-confident in a good, healthy way, it is clear that you start reading the score as if it were a clean sheet, building your own interpretation based on what you read and on your perception of the musical work. 399

Of all the conductors interviewed, Hannu Lintu had the most detailed method. In his opinion “to learn the score properly you should have a period of time for it that is long enough”. 400

He continues:

Usually the process begins with reading the score through; it is a bit like leafing through the pictures of a book to see what is there. You want to have a general idea of the orchestration, and to see whether the piece of music is difficult, either for you to conduct, or for the orchestra to play. When I have a great number of scores to read at the same time, I often make a plan about the time required for studying a certain piece of music, marking it in my calendar to make sure I truly have all the time I want. After deciding how much time the composition I’m working with requires, I start going through the score part by part. I try to divide the music into parts as small as possible. This is the part of the process where I sometimes use the piano, especially to get an idea of the harmonies. Then I locate all the entries of the different instruments, usually at this stage also marking in all the things needed in the conducting process that will follow. After all this, I try to put the score away for a while. When I finally take it up again and start to read it after a break, I am able to combine all the smaller parts to

398 Ibid.
400 Interview with Hannu Lintu, 10.2.2000.
create a whole idea of the score. Then comes deciding on the tempo. The process, of course, depends on the music, and is much easier with a piece of music that you already know well, even if it is something you haven’t done yourself before.\textsuperscript{401}

In John Storgård’s words, conductor, having studied the score, waits to hear what the orchestra has to offer musically, before beginning to shape the sound to match his or her own ideas of interpretation or realisation.\textsuperscript{402} What the conductor needs to do is to convince the orchestra right at the beginning that the conductor’s interpretation is musically and interpretatively justified. As Storgård says, if one does not get the response one would like, one should work on the situation during the rehearsal period and try and make the conditions such that he or she can get the best possible response from the musicians.

As seen above, even if the conductor analysis is based on the idea of a two-level analysis, the \textit{musical gestures} are more emphasised than the technical and expressive gestures. In Hannu Lintu’s interview, quoted above, Lintu mentioned “marking in all the things needed in the following conducting process”. This, however, seems to be a highly individual matter too: in an interview with John Storgård I tried to question him whether the visual, concrete gestures actually have an origin already in the process of analysing, which he strictly denied by saying that he insists on hearing what the orchestra has to offer first before making any decisions about such things as beat patterns or interpretation.\textsuperscript{403}

\textit{Decoding gestures}

Since the process of analysing a score – here seen through one possible method, the conductor analysis – is about working with musical gestures, the technical and expressive gestures needed another theoretical tool with which to operate. Behind the theoretical method used in this study is an idea very similar to that which Jane Davidson introduces in her article

\textsuperscript{401} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{402} Interview with John Storgård, 21.12. 1999, on how to approach an orchestra with a piece of music that one has never conducted before, but which the orchestra has performed on several previous occasions.
\textsuperscript{403} Interview for the case study, 4.6.2004.
“Communicating with the body in performance”, referred to earlier. The term decode is hers.

Davidson’s article includes a section entitled “Viewing the performer”. In it she reports a lengthy case study, in which she has observed and analysed a pianist’s gestures. Davidson was looking for similarities and variations in expressivity as well as gestural corresponding in the movements of a performing artist as observed by a researcher. Although Davidson’s questions are somewhat different from the ones here, the methodological premise she introduced seemed fully applicable here – especially given that “research on physical expression is scant”, as she observes.

In her case study Davidson “attempted to decode the movements used in performance and determine what information these movements might be transmitting from the performer to the audience”. She says:

One-to-one correspondences were sought between the gestures used by the pianist and specific moments in the musical structure, but it was discovered that these gestures were employed in a fairly flexible way… However, it was also discovered that such gestures always appeared at the same points in the music, suggesting a strong link between the physical production of expression and its correlated expressive sound effect. For instance, there would always be a gesture at a phrase boundary or climax, though it would vary from performance to performance.

This quotation includes several observations that are very similar to the ideas explored in this study and in the case study with John Storgårds. First, the method of observing and taking notes was very similar, the analysis being based on attending several rehearsals and a concert in order to gather enough material to make comparisons. Secondly, my hypothesis has been that there is a certain repertoire of conducting gestures that in general follows a certain

404 Davidson 2002.
405 Ibid., 147.
406 Ibid., 146.
407 Ibid., 146-147.
pattern, but within this pattern, varies from one rehearsal or performance to another. Davidson can to similar conclusions.

Also, interestingly, Davidson noted that there seems to be a strong link between the physical production of expression and its expressive sound effect. Applied to the theoretical model that has been developed in this study and using the terminology introduced here, it might be said that Davidson’s findings also support the idea that there is a physical execution of a gesture (here the technical gesture) and its expressive, sounding form (here the expressive gesture).

How these ideas became apparent in the context of another case study involving the working process of a conductor will be the subject of the following sections.

2.2. Case study: John Storgård’s work with the Helsinki Philharmonic

The observation of conductor John Storgård was arranged between the 31st of May and the 4th of June 2004 at Finlandia Hall in Helsinki. The study period consisted of the above-mentioned analytical session to examine the score followed by three orchestra rehearsals and a concert with the Helsinki Philharmonic, whose principal guest conductor Storgård then was. The concert was followed by an extensive interview that was recorded, of which a transcription was made.

In order to consider the working processes – a conductor analysing the score and transforming it into sounding form, and the development that takes place from rehearsals to a concert performance – I planned to attend every stage of the process. The score analysis session was arranged and documented before the first rehearsal, and the interview was made

---

408 The orchestra had two concerts during the same week, first in Kotka and then in Helsinki. It was not possible for me to travel with the orchestra, but since the purpose was to demonstrate in general the role of the gestures that take place at different points of the process in practice, one concert, plus the rehearsals seemed to provide enough material.
the day after the concert. The reasons for this were practical: the purpose of the analysis was to define a starting point for the case study and to create a context for the case in question.

Also, it was important to analyse the score with the conductor to see what musical gestures he had chosen as a starting point, and in what way they created the basis for his interpretation – and for the hypothetical repertoire of gestures. The goal was also to mark the specific points and musical/gestical factors that the conductor was going to give attention to during the rehearsals. I would then decide according to these factors which would be the main points of interest during the observation.

The recording of the interview on the day after the concert, not after the last rehearsal, was also intentional, since it was to be expected that the conductor might make spontaneous, unexpected changes during the performance that affected not only the musical outcome, but also the whole process. The timing was his particular wish as well: Storgård felt that right after the rehearsal he would still be too close to the process and would need to have some space to be able to discuss what had taken place.

I looked for three things while analysing the score, interviewing, and observing the conductor and the orchestra at work during the period. Firstly, I wanted to identify the transitions from the gestures analysed in the score to the concrete visual gestures (technical and expressive gestures, including the movements of hands and other expressive means of musical communication, such as posture and facial expressions). The important questions were 1) how could these transitions be identified and described, and 2) at what practical points did they take place during the process. Secondly, I wanted to study what kinds of gestures the different phases of the process included, how they became visible in action, and what was their role in the entire conducting process. Thirdly, I planned to identify the *repertoire* of gestures used by the conductor and to sketch a general framework and “rules”, if such could be found, for compiling the different types of gestures.
A further goal was to do some basic research on the practical aspects of conductors’ work. It felt necessary to document some of the working practices of contemporary conductors’, by collecting material in working situations to which everyone does not have access.

When working in a constantly evolving situation such as an orchestral rehearsal, the possibility of the unexpected must be taken into account. In this case there turned out to be some interesting subjects for study that had not been prepared for. The first was the influence of the orchestra on the conductor, that is, the effect the communication and the interaction between the conductor and the orchestra had on the conductor’s gestures. In practice, this meant comments – sometimes quite direct – from the orchestral musicians that lead to a negotiation. What was important was to see the orchestra both as a single instrument and as several instrumental sections playing together.

Also, in addition to combining live, visual images with the reading of the score, what was needed was the ability to listen to the sound of the whole orchestra, and to hear what happens with each section and how do they interact. The orientation in perception is different: one needs the ability to listen to the sound as a whole and to hear analytically what constitutes it. This is a skill that needs practice and for with which previous experience proved invaluable.

Simply taking notes while listening to the events and reading the score seemed to be the least complex way of documenting how the gestures became apparent in the process. Also, by taking notes, it was possible to write down quickly the different musical, gestical and interpretative changes during the rehearsals and the concert. Combining other things such as visual perception and physical activity with score reading is, in fact, a basic skill needed by
every conductor. In this case study the score also provided a useful medium for the observer, a point of departure for reflecting on constant musical and interpretative changes.

In addition to the original plan, during the week there were discussions with the conductor that helped to clarify the process form a performer’s viewpoint.

*Uuno Klami: Kalevala Suite Op. 23*

The composition with which the gestures as process were studied was the first movement *Maan synty* (The Creation of the Earth) from Uuno Klami’s *Kalevala-sarja* (The Kalevala Suite), Op. 23. The music was chosen by John Storgårds after the general idea and structure of the case study had been discussed with him. One of the reasons for this choice was that he had not previously conducted the piece, making the starting point of the case study neutral.

The Finnish national epic *Kalevala*, a collection of oral poetry in printed form, has been much used by Finnish composers. It became an important source in all fields of art from the beginning of the nationalistic period in Finland, just before the turn to the twentieth century. The *Kalevala* has provided many musical works with a programme, of which *The Lemminkäinen Suite*, Op. 22 by Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) is one of the best-known examples. Finnish composer Uuno Klami (1900–1961) based his *Kalevala Suite, Five Tone Pictures for Large Orchestra* on five scenes from the *Kalevala*. The compositional process in its entirety took Klami more than ten years, from 1932 to 1943.

The five parts of the suite are named for different scenes in the Kalevala from the creation of the earth to the early signs of Christianity. The text was originally recited in verse form. The score I used was published in 1981 and describes *Maan synty* as being based on the first poem of the Kalevala, “which describes the formation of the earth out of chaotic
In the second movement *The Sprout of Spring* “the legendary hero Väinämöinen sows a seed, which sprouts from the earth and grows blossoms”. The third movement, *Terhenniemi*, was added to the suite later, forming a symphonic structure for the work as whole. According to the score, in *Terhenniemi* “a mythical atmosphere is created by frolicsome dance rhythms”. The fourth movement is *A Cradle Song for Lemminkäinen*, where “the amorous hero’s mother sings this mournful song to her son, whom she has rescued from the river of Tuonela (Styx) and brought him back to life by magic”. In the last movement, *The Forging of the Sampo*, “the smith Ilmarinen forges the Sampo, a marvelous magical instrument, the exact nature of which continues to mystify scholars. It was a fabulous national treasure to the ancient Finnish folk of the Kalevala”.

The first performance of the *Kalevala Suite* took place on 1st December 1933 in Helsinki with the Helsinki Philharmonic, conducted by Georg Schnéevoigt. The suite was performed in its entirety, with *Terhenniemi*, in 1943. The duration of the whole composition is approximately 27 minutes.

What is of consequence to this particular project is the fact that John Storgård had not conducted this work before. Therefore, Klami’s work will not be analysed here, but rather the focus will be on the working process.

2.3 Musical gestures: Transitions from score to sound

The case study began with a session of analysing the score with John Storgård. What was unexpected was that instead of the researcher asking questions of the conductor, the conductor wanted the researcher to analyse the passages that were of specific interest and relevance for this particular case study. He then commented upon these and analysed them further according

---
409 The score published in 1981 by Edition Fazer, Helsinki. Texts and titles in English are from the score. As the analyse relates to the concert project documented using the score, the score will be referred to as a manuscript in the text.
to his personal viewpoints. This proved to be a very good decision, because it was possible to
analyse the score quickly but efficiently, with a high level of concentration during the
rehearsal that followed, which the conductor thoughtfully began with the piece in question.

The musical gestures chosen by Storgårds for me to study mainly concerned tempo,
phrasing, nuances, and such structural matters as transitional passages. They were pinpointed
and marked in the score to serve as guidelines for the conductor. The overall picture of the
piece and its musical characteristics had an important role, and the musical, sounding aspects
were already present. However, as mentioned above, Storgårds refused to settle on anything
either gesturally or musically, before hearing what the orchestra had to offer, even if he
already had ideas before the first rehearsal and expected to convert them into visual gestures.

The first question in the first orchestra rehearsal was the “place” where musical gestures
became visual, the moment the sound of an orchestra is added to the conductor’s first
technically emphasised gestical contribution, and the communicational interaction begins. In
practice, these transitional places in the process seemed easier to hear and observe in a living
situation than to explain them analytically on the paper. In general, this is what makes writing
about what actually happens in the process of conducting very difficult. However, knowing
the points marked in the score by the conductor beforehand made it easier to observe how
they came into being in a musical situation. They were the key points that were then studied
during the rehearsals: what kind of gestural movements where used, how they evolved, and
how they went from technical to more and more expressive. Because it would have been, if
not impossible, then at least very difficult actually to prove these matters, I decided to draw
some conclusions based on more general observations.

Theoretically, the transition from score to sound – what happens between reading the
music and making it sound – represents the ‘middle ground’ element of the Peircean
triangular pattern in the gestural process as it is understood in this study. Transitions from
musical gestures to technical and from technical to expressive are also the ‘places’ where the origin of a visual gesture might be seem to be. This is also the social environment where the differently hierarchical gestures and gestural communication, with the orchestra being familiar with the rules, decoding the signs (here gestures), and interpreting them, might be seen to take place.\footnote{Veivo 1999, 41.}

In practice, for the conductor, the middle ground or a transition seems to be the moment where the thoughts are collected and the following concrete gestures prepared. What makes observing it difficult in practice is that all this needs to happen so quickly that in time it becomes something the conductor perhaps does not even register. On the other hand, these places or transitions became more and more clear during the rehearsals, with the opportunity to fine-tune the sound and reactions to produce a sounding result closer and closer to the original idea of the conductor – and the composer. It also turned out in discussion with John Storgård\textquotesingle s afterwards, that sometimes the conductor’s original idea changes, when affected by the musical potential and even the opinions of the orchestra.

In this study the most important aspect of the term “transition” is the idea of process and of something moving forward or developing from one point to another – in other words, the “in-between”. As Harri Veivo says:

\begin{quote}
The pragmatic idea of a sign emphasises activity, the processual aspects of the sign. A sign is always something that represents and can be interpreted. On the other hand, the pragmatic idea of a sign also emphasises the function of the sign in its temporal and localised context. According to Peirce, interpretation of a sign requires as a precondition a parallel perception of the situation where the sign exists. A sign-vehicle has to be adapted to its context and the principles that affect the way the sign functions.\footnote{Ibid., 41-42. Translation A.K.} \end{quote}

In the course of the case study it seemed more and more necessary to find this kind of theoretical mediating element to deal with something very abstract – what happens when
music turns into visible and audible gestures. What I sought were the transitions as *culmination points* of the gestural process.

In Harri Veivo’s representation of the pragmatic theory of the sign, the sign itself is the uniting, mediating element. In this application, too, the transitional ground is the gesture as a communicative entity, bringing together, as Veivo says, the object, the sign-vehicle and the interpretation. The sign-vehicle is the concrete gesture communicatively carrying the information forward. The interpretation is made here by the orchestra, in the context of the conventions regulating all the different aspects of the situation, for example, performance practices and social and musical codes that define the work – in a way, the “context and the principles that affect the way the sign functions”, as Harri Veivo’s text has it.

As already mentioned in Part I, Chapter 3 of this study, the terms borrowed from semiotics would mean the different aspects of the conducting gesture: the musical, the technical, and the expressive. The object would be the score, from which the gestural process begins. Here the musical gestures “exist” – the gestures written in a score before they sound. These gestures become objects for analysis and are *chosen* for further study. This is significant, suggesting a possibility that the repertoire of gestures that is expected to be found is not only limited to the visual gestures, but have their beginnings already in the analysis.

The idea of the process of conducting making the score sound is partly based on Gunther Schuller’s two-level conductor analysis introduced above. The basic assumption is that the process of analysing a score continues in a sounding form, which implies that the whole process of producing an interpretation or realisation, as in Schuller’s case, is not possible if one of the two – analysis or its sounding form – is not included.

---

412 Ibid., 41.
In his article “From score to sound” Peter Hill discusses more thoroughly the role of the score in producing (interpretative) sound. He says:

Many performers refer to scores as ‘the music’. This is wrong, of course. Scores set down musical information, some of it exact, some of it approximate, together with indications of how this information may be interpreted. But the music itself is something imagined, first by the composer, then in partnership with the performer, and ultimately communicated in sound.

This is similar to the idea of the music being the aspect of the process that can be expected to be there, in most cases without a question, as was the case in the application of the pragmatic communicative model presented in Part I of this study. There, the musical parameters can be expected to be and to some extent, are taken as given. Accordingly, as Hill says, the score is the source of information (here to a conductor and the musicians), and the source of the ways of communicating.

In the case study, however, it seemed that even if the score is the source of the ideas that will be actualised as gestures and sound, it is not necessarily the source of the actual, concrete gestures of a conductor. In other words, a conductor can make plans concerning the visualisation of the gestures of the score while reading it, but this is not necessarily the case in practice. As John Storgårds said in his interview, planning beforehand is not part of his individual working process.

In his article, Peter Hill analyses Gerald Moore’s ideas of making music sound; Hill writes that Moore is “emphasising that technique is not simply a matter of accurately reproducing the score” but “one of bringing the score to life in sound”. Putting aside the self-evident fact that technique is needed to be able to perform in the first place, what Hill

---

413 Hill 2002.
414 Ibid., page 129.
416 Hill 2002, 129.
seems to suggest is that technique is the prerequisite for making the score sound — and in the context of this study, the prerequisite for turning the technical gestures into expressive ones.

Here the subject matter seems to touch on the discussion of “untrained” conductors, who do not necessarily have the same technical skills as those who share the conventions and may therefore be readier to break out and make individual interpretations. Peter Hill’s comment, quoted above, suggests that an individual interpretation would not be possible without the convention-bound technical background from which to break free. At least it would place a conductor in a marginal position, outside the conventions — and outside the focus of this study. On the other hand, understanding technique as the principle on which the whole interpretative process is built, would also strengthen the theoretical argument presented in this study.

2.3 From technical to expressive gestures

Peter Hill also has a viewpoint on minimising the role of technique in performance that seems applicable to the conducting process, from the technical gestures to the expressive ones. Hill is again discussing Gerald Moore’s ideas on the subject and the difficulty of finding a balance between “an extreme care and patience” on the one hand “and the fierce desire to make music”. 417 Similarly, the balance must be found between “dull” and “creative”, when preparing for a performance. Hill says:

This, then, is the central dilemma of the performing musician. How can we work and work, without losing enthusiasm or the open-mindedness that enables our ideas to develop? How, indeed, can we perform at all – in the sense of creating a unique event, with insights which arise from the inspiration of the moment? Clearly if repetition is at the heart of the problem, we need to find a way of working which minimises its role, or at least build into our method a means of mitigating its disadvantages. 418

417 Ibid., 130.
418 Ibid., 131.
Hill’s ideas are similar to the ones in this study concerning the need eventually to “work against” the conventional ways – either personal or general – of making music, at least to some extent, and to create a personal interpretation. Whether an instrumentalist or a conductor, the musical and gestural processes from the first rehearsal to the performance all seem to be about finding a way to cut loose from how things have always been done to express one’s own insights and personal interpretation.

It is important not to forget here that for a conductor, the instrument and the medium for creating personal interpretations is an orchestra, with as many as one hundred musicians. In a previous interview, John Storgårds emphasised this specific nature:

There should never be a situation where you conduct along with an orchestra. If you are the conductor, the interpretation and the impulse must come from you. All things that happen during the performance should happen so that the orchestra searches from you what you have to give them. They start to interact because they become inspired by you, and what you give to them they give you back – that is when you are playing the orchestra as an instrument.\(^{419}\)

The biggest analytical problem I hoped to solve with this case study had to do with the above-mentioned transitions: whether the transitions from score to sound could be identified and defined. As the previous chapter showed, there are ways to observe the places where the origin of the visual gesture probably is. The hypothesis was that the transitions were possible to identify in the communicative process between the conductor and the orchestra. The transitional ‘ground’ would then be placed between the analysis and the musical situation. It turned out that this may be true, except that the actual transition is the musical situation itself, where the idea, in Storgårds’ words, quite naturally produces the gesture and the musical gestures begin to sound.\(^{420}\)

\(^{419}\) Interview with John Storgårds, 1.9.2003.

\(^{420}\) Interview for the case study with John Storgårds, 4.6.2004.
The transition from technical to expressive gestures turned out to be a very complex matter. The fact that technical and expressive/interpretational aspects are very difficult to separate from one another in the first place is always present. It seems that individual choices and views, a conductor’s personal gesticulation, the response from an orchestra, and the different modes of acting and being in front of an orchestra – both intentional and unconscious – affect how the gestures are emphasised. The question is about negotiation and the communicational space, which includes the conductor and the orchestra. In practice, it also turned out that in a performance the space where the audience is also present may also have an effect. In a way, the origin of the expressive gestures would then be in the situation of the changing and living working process during a rehearsal or a performance.

As already mentioned, the role of the audience and the communicative space including the conductor, the orchestra, the music produced through gestures with a referential role, and the audience, affect the way the performance is shaped – that is, what kind of a negotiation is needed for the sounding result to be as near to what the conductor intended as possible.

In a previous interview John Storgårds said that the concentration level of the audience affects the communicative situation – here the space – having either a lifting or a disruptive effect on the musical intensity.421 In general, one should never underestimate an audience. On the other hand, he says:

It doesn’t matter how the audience sees and experiences what you do. But from the point of view of the orchestra players it is important to be very intensively part of the process and keep what you do controlled, at the same time keeping the size of the gestures reduced to the minimum. It requires years of experience to be courageous enough to restrain oneself gestically and still believe that it will happen the way you intended it, because of your own personal expressivity and intensity.422

---

421 Interview with John Storgårds, 1.9.2003.
422 Ibid.
As well as being a factor in a complex communication and theoretical situation with a specific nature, in the end, quite simply put, the concerts are being prepared and performed for an audience.

**Baton and technical/expressive gestures**

Whether a conductor’s gesture is more technical or more expressive also has partly to do with the question of whether he uses a baton and in what situations. To emphasise this I quote again John Strogårds:

> In my opinion it has to do with the tones of music, you use a baton when you feel like it. Sometimes one conducts with it, sometimes without. It depends on what kind of music you conduct… The basic function of a baton is to make the beat more pointed, not soften it, and you can clarify and sharpen up your beat patterns when using it, thus helping the orchestra. On the other hand, if you conduct music where you need to work on very subtle things to do with the sound, and express things with finesse, you do better conducting without a baton.\(^{423}\)

Sometimes the hands alone can express something better than with a baton:

> Yes, sometimes it is, and in any case it is part of the professionalism you have to pursue, to really master the skill so that the hand holding the baton – usually the right – is the source of the clarity, while the left hand has a lot of activity producing all different kinds of things in a way that even the orchestra does not realise where it came from. This is where many instrumentalists who just decide to start conducting have problems, they talk too much and explain verbally what they want, but cannot express it gestically at all.\(^{424}\)

Sometimes a baton can actually be more trouble than it is worth and a disruption for conveying information. In Storgårds opinion “using a baton can be to one’s disadvantage. The danger could also lie in getting far enough along to indicate rhythmic things accurately with

\(^{423}\) Ibid.  
\(^{424}\) Ibid.
the baton and imagining that to be enough. It goes hand-in-hand with talking too much.\footnote{425} In a concert situation the conductor can no longer talk “and you have to, no matter how much you have practiced and talked during a rehearsal, be able to produce everything you want to express here and now.”\footnote{426} He continues:

You have to do it with your presence in front of the orchestra, and if you at that point do not master the whole of yourself technically in the situation, then your gesticulation becomes more or less stiff and it just does not work. Even if you know exactly what you want to say and understand everything, it is not enough. In my opinion this is a thing that many conductors who work mostly as instrumentalists unfortunately do not give enough thought.\footnote{427}

Storgårds says that he, too, sometimes feels that he does “not know how to use the baton, then I leave it and conduct without.”\footnote{428} This, however, depends on the composition being performed. “If it starts to feel that it is difficult to keep the baton naturally, it is better to put it away and try conducting without.” On the other hand, in some pieces “it feels impossible to conduct without one, or at least not to conduct as well”.\footnote{429}

In the Uuno Klami piece chosen for the case study, Storgårds conducted sometimes with the baton and sometimes without. This seemed to be a decision tied mostly to the characteristics of the different movements of the piece, the slow movement being the one conducted without the baton. On the other hand, the movement of the whole body became even more important than the baton at some points, especially in the first and last movements where large, pointed gestures accentuated the music.
Size and shape in technical and expressive gestures

In addition to the question of conducting with or without a baton, the question of size and shape of a gesture and the size of the movements also turned out to have to do with the expressivity of the conductor’s hands. These ideas are similar to Robert Hatten’s “shaping”, “direction” and “goal”, already mentioned in Part I, Chapter 3. Understanding the movements of the hands as a combination of two parallel levels, technical and expressive, is related to the idea presented by John Storgårds about of the size and origin of the movement a conductor makes with the hands. It is a common misapprehension that there is a direct correlation between the markings in the score and the size of the gesture: for example to produce a forceful crescendo the movements do not necessarily have to be large. In practice, this also seemed to depend on the musical situation and the response from the orchestra.

The question of the size of the movement – of the gesture – is more important than it might seem. What one intends to communicate to the orchestra may be easier to convey with smaller, concentrated movements of the hands. As a practical example, Storgårds mentioned conductors such as Paavo Berglund, whose impressive economy and concentration prove that controlled small gestures, when they come from long experience and clear musical vision, can produce enormous musical effects.

However, as John Storgårds himself mentioned, this is a matter that takes time to develop – for the conductor to be courageous and self-confident enough to rely purely on his own vision, capability and qualities that come from within and are conveyed through the gestures to the orchestra and on to the audience. He says:

It is in the fundamentals of the technique of conducting that when beating a voluminous climax in music, the expression has to come from somewhere much deeper than just from the wave of the hand. If not, it does not sound good, and the sound that comes out

---

is usually too late. The power has to be there even before the sound is heard, the movement of the hand securing it. The function of the movement is to make everything happen precisely at the right moment, not to overdo it.\textsuperscript{432}

On a complex level the size of the movements has to do with a conductor’s contact with an orchestra: communication, unity, and the whole musical outcome. As a whole, the structure of the communication, on which the interaction is built, between a conductor and an orchestra is very subtle. On a basic level, however, one could simply say that the more concentrated and economic the movements of the conductor, the better the orchestra’s response and concentration. This is one of Jorma Panula’s principles: economising one’s gesticulation that in turn affects the size – and here the shape – of the movement. According to Panula, economising one’s gestures is, however, only the basis from which to begin to build one’s own expressive repertoire over time.\textsuperscript{433}

In the opinions of some, this ability cannot be taught but develops only through experience; the characteristics are thus expected of older conductors. On the other hand, there are some – mostly educational – views that emphasise the importance of practical experience in the process of learning how to economise, at the same time claiming that the skill can and should be taught from the very beginning.

2.4 Repertoire of gestures and hierarchies in conducting

The hypothesis concerning the \textit{repertoire} of gestures was that there would be a set of gestures apparent during conducting. This repertoire was expected to have been developed as a result of study – that is, of becoming familiar with the technical conventions and historical practices that conductors in this study share. In other words, what was expected was that the repertoire was learned. The basic idea of a repertoire was that it is a system or a compilation of gestures

\textsuperscript{432} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{433} Interview with Jorma Panula 27.11.2001.
that a conductor then varies, “filling” the gestures with personal expression and meaning while working with an orchestra.

It turned out that actually every conductor has his or her own repertoire which differs from the repertoire of colleagues. What is learned is the technique – the beat patterns – on which the conductors then base their personal repertoire of gestures. A very practical and simple metaphor comes to mind: every conductor has his or her own gestural “handwriting”, a personal “look” of the language that may even be recognised by watching his or her hands. The repertoire also seemed to contain the origin of the technical gesture: for example, the gestures that were seen and heard during the first rehearsal with John Storgårds – which represented a certain repertoire based on the ideas about the music – were the ones he then worked on during the rehearsals in preparation for the concert.

The repertoire also seems to vary with the conductor’s own processes, from one working period to another. The reason for this is that the making of the repertoire begins during the analysis, when the conductor chooses the gestures to be used. In the case study John Storgårds was working with the Klami piece for the first time, and it remains to be seen if and how his personal repertoire changes compared to this first “version”. There is also the question of whether the conductor has already conducted the piece with the same orchestra, which would mean that knowledge of the sound would be greater and the interpretation already in progress. On the other hand the conductor might want to try to find something completely new and therefore use an entirely different repertoire of gestures.

There are naturally certain things expected from a certain piece of music, but with a personal view and an emphasis on certain musical gestures, the conductor makes his or her own basic repertoire vary with each new piece of music. In other words, a repertoire is not given but created.
In addition, in Finland conducting students have been expected to make a personal contribution to their gestical expression from the very beginning, without any outside example to follow, supporting the idea of a self-created gestical repertoire.

As it turned out, the gestures do follow a certain pattern during the process of conducting. When preparing a musical work for a particular concert the performers are aware that the next performance may be very different from the previous one. The idea Jane Davidson expresses in her article “Communicating with the body in performance”, that “there would always be a gesture at a phrase boundary or climax, though it would vary from performance to performance”, although made about a pianist, turned out to be applicable to conducting as well.

Observing John Storgård at work I recognised that a very logical process was going on with the musical gestures that were identified at the beginning of the process, and transferred on to the performance, even if their sounding form varied along the way. One of the hypotheses of this study was that the technical/expressive gestures do in the end lead to the execution and interpretation of the musical gestures in a way that was intended by the composer and by the conductor on analysing the score. The purpose of the process seemed to be, by negotiation, to bring the ideas and their physical execution as close as possible.

Here I have intentionally, been discussing only the non-verbal communication with gestures. In fact, extending verbal communication into visual during the process of rehearsing is not uncommon among conductors, even if one of Jorma Panula’s most important principles has been to let the hands speak. Although an image of a conductor explaining something to an orchestra, waving hands while speaking is almost stereotypical, what makes it interesting is the change in the means of expressing oneself while conducting. An interesting question is

---

434 Davidson 2002.
what is left unsaid, or rather, what is being replaced by non-verbal communication – or rather whether everything one wants to say can be replaced by non-verbal communication. With someone concentrating on expressing himself mainly through the hands throughout an entire career, this must happen unconsciously. Ultimately, as Esa-Pekka Salonen has humorously said, in a concert one must be quiet anyway, or at least that is what any normal person would do. He has also mentioned that the most interesting things can, in fact, be relayed by non-verbal communication.

Hierarchies

What has been meant here by a hierarchy is that the differently (either technically or expressively) emphasised gestures come to the surface differently emphasised during the process of conducting. As Umberto Eco suggests in *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, such concepts as correlational codes, code book and dictionary could be used to illustrate the hierarchical relationship between the different aspects of a certain code language – here speech. There is an idea that seems applicable to gestures: here gestures could be seen as codes and the repertoire consisting of them, which becomes apparent while conducting a score, would be a code book of a kind. The basic collection of a conductor’s gestures could be seen to form a dictionary.

The hierarchy of gestures seems to change between conductors. During the case study and the interview with John Storgårds, was clear that at times the gestures written in the score came more pointedly to the foreground, while at other times expressive, interpretative ideas become more important. Sometimes it is necessary to sharpen the technical edge of the gesture to make something clearer to the orchestral musician; sometimes it is possible to get

---

435 Eco 1984, referred to in Part I of this study (Theory of gestures). See also Nöth 1985, pages 194-195 and 198 on Eco.
436 Interview with John Strogårds 4.6.2004, and the practical observation.
the ‘extra bit’ out of them by throwing oneself into the musical flow in a little less controlled or intentional way. In a way, the question is about “layering”: the gestures function in layers, so to speak. This also shows that the hierarchy is tied to the politics of the situation and the modes of being in front of an orchestra – and in the situation when the audience is present.

Hierarchy, therefore, is not something fixed, or a permanent state of things, but something that changes and varies. Some gestures have a hierarchically lesser role at certain points, dictated by the music and the nature of the process – or vice versa – and according to the musical situation. The choice is the conductor’s.

2.5 Educational and working gestures in analysis

At one gestural level, the so-called social gestures can also be included in the analysis. There are factors in the process of preparing for a concert that derive from the educational background and are the result of the learned gestures. These educational gestures are transformed into working gestures that, for example, regulate the negotiation between the technical and expressive. In an interview for the case study John Storgård said:

…the prerequisite for everything you do is a proper education in conducting. Before you have gone through it, you can’t really discuss these things. Not thinking about the technical matters and just automatically conducting what comes with the music isn’t something you can do before you have gone through a thorough training, and gained a lot of experience in working with an orchestra. The journey from training – the video taped lessons, seeing oneself conducting, and getting practice in the skill – to the first concerts takes time, more with some people than others. After that you begin to be on the level where you don’t have to think about what you do technically.

In the context of the theory of this study, the expressive gestures cannot exist without the constant consciousness of the differences and the negotiation that is needed to balance between technical and expressive. First with training, then with time and experience, the technical gestures are learned and mastered during the period of study. They are essential for
the development towards more expressive, more ‘musical’ or more interpretative gestures, with the technique gradually shifting to the background.

In practice, there are certain learned “tricks” and practical advice that help gestical communicativity to progress and are carried into the professional life with orchestras. At another level these educational gestures include passing on the ideas about conductorship that affect the working culture, work communities, and communication. These social gestures tie together the practical and sociological aspects of conducting gestures.

In *Art Worlds* Howard S. Becker treats the social structure of an art world – for example, a work community or a musical institution, either practical or social – as a sort of a triangular construct. The bottom side that makes the basis of the pattern is the basic level of practical and social activity – the praxis of the art as work. Applied to conducting, this is the practical level on which the everyday work, the main subject of this study, takes place. In addition to the concrete visual gestures, here exists the variety of learned and personally applied working gestures that are both concrete and social – the so-called *social gestures*. On top of this basic level are gathered different levels of analytical thought, about conducting as a sociological phenomenon and communication that happens through technical and expressive gestures. The levels progress from general and concrete towards more and more specific and abstract. The top of the whole pattern is the conducting gesture, the most specific aspect studied here.

The idea of the triangular pattern suits the over-all theoretical idea of the study. It appears at different points in the text, illustrating the different communicational spaces or *modes* of conducting. It ties together the different types of gestures and the social aspects of conducting and shows that, in fact, one could not exist without the other. These aspects will be summarised in the Conclusions.

---

CONCLUSIONS

1. Starting point, theory and results

The starting point for this study was myth of the great conductors and the goal was to find its practical opposite – the core of the conducting profession. The study focused on Finnish conductors, their education during the time when professor Jorma Panula taught the conducting class at the Sibelius Academy 1973–1993, and the development of conducting as an institution in Finland. What was hoped was to find an idea of the theoretical and practical core of the profession, which would give one example of how and of which aspects might the historical, practical and sociological term conductorship be constructed.

The temporal parameters were defined by studying the Finnish conductors who have attended Professor Jorma Panula’s conducting class in the Sibelius Academy in the years 1973–1993. The main focus of the study was to be on the praxis of the education and work: the current educational and working practices that are the result of the system introduced by Panula during his professorship, and carried on by his former students. This has been in focus throughout the whole study.

The general framework of the study was sociological, provided by different art world theories and their applications. What makes the institution of conducting unique as an art world is its dependence on orchestras. There are, in fact, two interactive institutions. This idea proved to go very well with the idea of two communicational spaces or modes examined in the study: the communicational space that includes a conductor and an orchestra, within of the space where an audience is present. These spaces are both concrete and agreed upon, because they are ruled by conventions. This suggested that an art world as a theoretical concept is adaptable to conducting and to the idea of conducting gestures.
If musical life had been studied more specifically as an art world in this research, it would have been possible to include such influential matters as the recording industry, producers, agents, media, and commercialism. These are concrete and relevant factors when it comes to the promotion of orchestras, conductors, and soloists. This is also an interesting area of musical professionalism, but because it is such a large subject, it was eliminated from this study and still remains to be investigated.

The specific theoretical tool was a *gesture*, which was analysed using theories of a musical gesture. Two theoretical conclusions were the most important. First came a realisation that the practical core of a conductor’s work is comprised of different levels of gestural communication – from musical gestures in a score to physical gesticulation before an orchestra, and from socially-biased “educational gestures” such as passing on the practices of working and ideas about conductorship, to “working gestures”, where all that has been learned and adopted is turned into personal ways of working and being in front of an orchestra.

The second realisation was that actually all the different types of *conducting gestures* that became apparent during the process of conducting are *both* theoretical and sociological in nature. Because the main purpose of all conducting gestures become apparent in a social situation – an orchestra rehearsal, a concert with an audience present, a teaching session in a conducting class, even when acting in a role in music or cultural politics – the communicational situation includes both the gestural level of functionality and the social context. Therefore, defining a sociological framework for the study within which to operate with the concept of gesture, seems to have been the right decision. It turned out to be fruitful for the argumentation of the study, bringing out a rich variety of gestural levels. The theoretical choices also appeared to be the right ones because the material and cases seemed
to support and illustrate the main theoretical questions proposed at the beginning of the process.

Naturally, some of the questions require a more complex and insightful theoretical construction in order to explore them thoroughly, but it could also be considered a positive thing to identify questions needing further research.

By widening the concept of gesture to include conductorial activities other than gesticulating in front of an orchestra, activities such as teaching, managing the other responsibilities of a conductor working in an orchestral community, or working in a “supporting” role, it was possible to study many different levels of activity that make up the concept of conductorship. These levels included rehearsing and performing, negotiation and psychology, cooperation within an orchestral institution, personal and social identity, and place in the working community, social roles and a relationship with history, educational continuity, and the working culture. These levels were bound together by the combination of the theory of gestures and sociology.

With the concept of gesture, it was possible to extend the theory towards semiotics, which have also informed this study. Semiotic models – even if it was referred to quite a basic level of theoretical concepts – made it possible to include the concepts of mode and communicational space in the discussion. Two modes of being in a communicational space were specified. The first included a score, a conductor analysing and musicians executing the score, and an orchestra interpreting the gestures of a conductor. The second mode included a conductor and an orchestra producing (executing) the gestures, a referential outcome of the process understandable for an audience, and an audience responding and reflecting. With these modes it was possible to analyse more thoroughly the context in which the different types of gestures take place.
The structure of the whole study was planned so that the first part would introduce the sociological framework and the theory of gestures as well as the gestural types that were to be the core. The second part was the practical portion, in which the educational and institutional context of Finnish conductorship was discussed. Here the theoretical aspects were applied to the central material – an extensive interview project with the Finnish conductors who had studied in the Sibelius Academy conducting class during the “Panula years”, 1973–1993. The third part of the study concentrated on analysis, combining the theoretical application of conducting gestures and the practice of conducting, “filtered” from the material in the previous part, Practice of conducting. The analysis included a lengthy case study with conductor John Storgårds. Here the aim was to bring to the surface the theoretical core through practical examples and try to find a practical link between gestures and sociology. In the end, the link was found.

1.1 Gestural types reconsidered

The main theoretical construction was created with an idea of there being differently emphasised conducting gestures, or aspects, which have been called types here. These types were introduced in Part I, Chapter 3, and discussed analytically in a practical context in Part III, Analysis. The most important theoretical source was Robert Hatten’s theory of a musical gesture, and the definitions of a musical gesture included there. This theory provided an invaluable background for the present research, since the theory of a musical gesture had not been applied to conducting this way before.

The theoretical idea was to divide the process of conducting – from analysing the score to rehearsals and a concert – into different gestural phases, that is, to show how a conductor’s gestures are differently emphasised during the process. The aim was to try to identify these

\[\text{Hatten 2004.}\]
different phases or aspects, to see where they became apparent, and to try to identify the points where the emphasis changed from one type to another. On a more complex level the aim was to find the origin of a conducting gesture – or whether it would be possible to identify the origin at all. In addition, such aspects of a musical gesture as shape, in the context of conducting, were considered. In the analysis the role the education and working practices and their effects were also considered as one gestural level. As mentioned already in the Introduction, this method offered naturally just one possible model for studying conducting gestures.

Three gestural types were identified in the concrete process of conducting, based on a theoretical structure proposed by Professor Hatten. Terms were specially invented to describe these particular types, and their definitions changed during the different stages of the research process. At the time the text was being written for the second time, the terms had become established as *musical*, *technical* and *expressive* gestures.

Musical gestures were identified as the ones written in a score by the composer and chosen and analysed by a conductor. These gestures turned out to be not only the beginning of the process, but also the purpose of it, the factor towards which the whole process aspired. What was being processed during the rehearsal period culminating in a concert was to bring the composer’s original idea, the conductor’s ideas, and the final outcome as near to each other as possible. The musical gestures were also the beginning of a *repertoire of gestures*, which came into being during the actual musical situation.

The hypothesis was that the *origin* of a visualised conducting gesture would be found in the course of the process, but it turned out that this is not necessary so: in an interview with John Storgårds he said, that he personally never considers the musical gestures in the score as concrete gestures, nor does he settle on anything before he hears what the orchestra has to
offer. He also said that the ideas one gotten from reading the score are the most important thing; if these are clear enough, then the movements of the conductor’s hands naturally and automatically execute them.

It is possible, however, that in some cases the origin of the gesture that becomes apparent in a musical situation is already present during the analysis. Conductor and pedagogue Gunther Schuller used the term *choreographical*, which implies that there may be a view of analysis that includes the consideration of the actual movements later put into practice. This was confirmed by conductor Hannu Lintu, in an interview for this study, who mentioned that “marking in all the things needed in the following conducting process” was part of his work in analysing a score.

The technical gestures then were the point where the musical gestures became visual and acquired a sounding form. I was looking for an idea that there is a certain technical stage when the gesture is “purely” technical, as far as this is possible. This is a part of the theory that has been criticised during the research process; some of those who have personal experience in conducting have argued that a gesture without an expressive content is an impossibility. This is Erik Clarke’s line of thought, referred to in this study. However, there are technical guidebooks for conductors that imply a technical level that can be taught and learned. This was confirmed by John Storgårds, who in the interview for the case study mentioned two things important for the theory of this study. First, there is the point in the process when the conductor has analysed the score but waits to hear the orchestra an action that implies a point of negotiation at the very beginning of the process where it is practically impossible to bring out one’s ideas expressively, simply because it is not yet clear how the

---

440 Schuller 1997, page 9 and 17.
441 Interview with Hannu Lintu, 10.2.2000.
442 Clarke 2002.
situation is going to unfold and what the musical starting point of the rehearsing process will be like.

Secondly, Storgårds emphasised the special nature of the process of becoming an experienced conductor; the self-confidence and musical vision from within and the courage to rely entirely on one’s own gestural, facial and other bodily expressivity only develop with time. In other words, as he said, one has to master the technical side first to be able even to talk about the personal expressivity of one’s work.

In conclusion, emphasising technical and expressive aspects of gestures is a personal matter, differing among individuals and dependent on the situation during each working process with a different orchestra and musical work.

The line between the technical and the expressive gestures turned out to be, as seen above, the most difficult part of the process to identify and define in practice. In theory it was suggested that the technical gesture, which is already communicative but necessarily not yet expressive, is at least hypothetically “filled” during the process according to the conductor’s personal qualities. As Peter Hill put it, one must find a balance between “dull” and “creative”, in preparing for a performance.\footnote{Hill 2002, 129.}

As John Storgårds mentioned, the process of rehearsing is also about working on the situation itself, changing one’s way of doing things and moulding the communication with the orchestra to be nearer to what one expects and wants.\footnote{Interview for the case study with John Storgårds 4.6.2004.} In reality, as it turned out during the observation, a conductor’s “instrument” is a living work community of as many as one hundred orchestral musicians who might have musical suggestions themselves and whose personal ways of playing need to be combined into a consistent and meaningful entity.

As mentioned, the purpose of the expressive gestures is to execute the musical gestures and ideas of the composer and the conductor in the best possible way. What became obvious
during the case study was that while the concert was the place where the final musical outcome was performed, heard and responded to, it was possible for the conductor to make changes there too. John Storgårds mentioned that, in his opinion it is very important to be free and confident enough to throw oneself into the situation.\footnote{Ibid.} This is the place in the process where it is also possible to “take risks”, to show one’s own will to bring out the best, and to inspire the orchestra to make an extra effort.

Hierarchical repertoire

Another hypothesis was that there is a special repertoire of gestures that is learned during the years of study and then varied while working. It turned out to be a valid pre-supposition, but the whole construction and the idea behind it proved to be quite different from what was expected. The repertoire seemed to contain the origin of the technical gesture: for example, the gestures that were seen and heard during the first rehearsal with John Storgårds – which represented his repertoire of gestures, based on the ideas about the music – were the ones he then worked on during the rehearsals.

It turned out that the technical basis is learned during the study years in conducting class, but each conductor develops the repertoire for himself or herself. This repertoire usually “looks” and “sounds” like the conductor, but there is variation that becomes apparent during the working process and may differ from one musical work to another. Here Jane Davidson’s\footnote{Davidson 2002.} case study was used, which was based on an idea similar to the one sketched and examined in this study. One of Davidson’s conclusions was that during several successive rehearsals or performances, there are certain gestures that take place at certain musical points, but their practical and expressive execution may differ from one “take” to another.
A system of classifying the gestures that emerged in the repertoire became necessary. An idea of categorisation was contemplated, but it soon became clear that the gestures in a conducting process are all equally important, only differently emphasised. It could be said that some gestures such as musical gestures are more important than technical or expressive gestures because the musical gestures are the goal towards which the process is heading. However, the core of the gesture is always the same, meaning that the gesture becomes apparent first as a musical gesture, then technically emphasised, and hypothetically turned into an expressive gesture. Therefore, it seemed more useful to use the term hierarchy here, a somewhat less evaluative concept, all the gestures being present in the repertoire at the same time.

A hierarchy brings out gestures that are emphasised or leaved in the background, according to what the musical situation requires and the conductor needs. Here the theoretical ideas of the present study closely touched the idea of new categorisation by Umberto Eco. 448

1.2 Social gestures in practice
All the above-mentioned theoretical arguments were considered again in Part III, Analysis. They were illustrated through a case study, in which the process of conducting from a practical and more detailed point of view was discussed. As already mentioned, it turned out that the social gestures were essentially intertwined with the theory of gestures; bringing in the sociological framework seemed only to add layers to the theoretical construction.

As a starting point was the pre-supposition that the ways of passing on the culture, the ideas of conductorship, and practical advice during the educational phase as well as the ways the students transfer these ideas into working practice are also gestures. The levels being

448 Eco 1984.
operated on are different, but the context and the mechanisms according to which gestural processes work are the same.

These social gestures, as they have been called here, were divided into educational and working gestures. In practice, there are certain, learned “tricks” and practical advice that help a young conductor to establish his own identity as a future professional conductor as well as to develop the ability to communicate through gestures. The interviews in Part II showed that these “tricks” were taught in Jorma Panula’s conducting class. They ranged from concrete musical advice given by the professor while studying a score with the students to choosing concert programs and to the advice given in his Memorandum on how to behave in a situation with an orchestra. “Psychological training”, as Panula has called, also prepared the students to confront difficult situations and take into account all the external matters that they were supposed to deal with in their future work communities.

These educational gestures were carried out by the conductors in their professional lives with orchestras, and transferred and moulded into personal working practices. It became obvious that this collegial process of sharing, advising and educating has had profound sociological effects on musical life in Finland as well as on conducting and on orchestras as institutions. The system that was developed around “Panula’s class” has spread to other fields of musical education and has also had an impact on a generation of young professionals who then became the active group behind the society Korvat Auki, the Avanti! chamber orchestra, and the Ensemble Toimii!.

2. Educational continuity and the sociological effects of Panula’s class

Several of Jorma Panula’s former have concretely taken part in the educational continuum. They have started to teach themselves and to pass on the practices while continuing to work
on the level where the educational gestures take place. The duty of the older colleagues to help the younger ones has thus been passed on for several generations.

One of the conclusions that could be drawn on the basis of the material introduced in Part II was that the changes that took place in the Sibelius Academy conducting class during the period of Panula’s professorship can be seen concretely in the ways Panula’s former students are now working. What has been passed on most clearly during the last ten or fifteen years is the practice of teaching. As described in Part II, using an orchestra and video-taping the lessons have proved to be the most important and effective educational practices. The conductors studying today in the Sibelius Academy conducting class are experiencing the effects of the profound changes in the education of conductors in Finland.

2.1 Emerging tradition

The continuum that has developed and that continues is, therefore, both historical and practical. Erkki Salmenhaara described tradition as a continuum from the point at which, for the first time, an unbroken historical line of development begins.\textsuperscript{449} In Salmenhaara’s opinion, the temporal starting point for the historical tradition of music in Finland – the beginning of a tradition – was at the turn of the twentieth century. This dating is very accurate in connection with institutional history. It also applies to conductors as an institution, since orchestral conducting is also generally tied, both historically and sociologically, to the development of the orchestra as an institution. It can also be applied to all other Finnish musical institutions relevant to this study, for example, music education and composers.

The first person in the Finnish educational conducting continuum was Leo Funtek, Jorma Panula’s teacher. It could be said that a tradition of a kind has began. It is not a technical but a practical tradition, as could be seen from the educational system introduced in

Part II. It is not only historical and practical, but also sociological and ideological in a way that it passes on the ideas of what kinds of attitudes a teacher should assume with students. The collegiality that has been so important to Panula seems also to have affected his students. This, in turn, can be seen in the more collegial way that contemporary Finnish conductors work in their own communities, and it also shapes the working culture of their orchestras.

The tradition of conducting that exists in Finland does not fit into the structural framework – definitions and conventions – of the so-called Western tradition, often referred to in this study. One of the reasons seemed to be that there have never been any schools in conducting in Finland, meaning, as mentioned above, that there are no traditions in conducting technique.

In this study the work of Elliott W. Galkin⁴⁵⁰ and José Bowen⁴⁵¹ on the historical and technical development of conducting has often been cited. The idea one gets from these studies is that different traditions actually mean different schools in conducting that have developed along historical lines but are primarily focused on technique: different methods of conducting and gesticulating. Accordingly, the history of “Western conducting” could be seen as a chronological progress of three things: conducting techniques, the ways and means of conducting, and the development of an orchestra as the conductor’s instrument, its size, “layout” and instruments.

Tradition in Finland consists of a historical tradition that is linked with the history of Western conducting, of practices, and the development of an orchestral institution, the emphasis being very different from what is usually meant by the Western tradition. In Finland the historical view of conducting is emphasised by the development of institutions, musical life, music itself, and musicianship (institutionalism and education of orchestral musicians and conductors who often started as orchestral musicians).

⁴⁵¹ Bowen 2003.
Here it also becomes apparent what exactly is meant by the problematic nature of the
term ‘practical’ and the practices of conducting: first, there are the ways in which an orchestra
has been and is conducted; second, the specific techniques; and thirdly, the concrete ways
musicianship and conductorship have been and are passed on – the idea of the Finnish
educational continuum with specific teaching practices.

Keeping in mind the number and employment history of the Finnish professional
conductors who work and have worked abroad, it seems strange that the latest international
research on the subject does not so much as mention them. One of the reasons could be the
rapidly developed way of training in Finland, which differs profoundly from the
contemporary education of conductors elsewhere. In the context of the Central European
history of conducting, the historical and practical aspects cannot be separated even on the
educational level because of the influence of the above-mentioned schools in conducting and
baton technique that have carried on practical traditions as part of their history. In certain
European cities that have been very influential centres of musical life for centuries, both
nationally and internationally, the education of conductors has progressed steadily and still
goes on along strictly formal lines.

From the technical point of view, there have been many different ways of conducting
over the course of Western music’s history. With regard to Finnish conductors, division into
the tradition of baton conducting and the tradition of the so-called conductor-musicianship,
which has been referred to in this study, is not as clear as it seems to be in the wider history of
the Western conducting.

Here the tendency has been towards many-sided musicianship as the basis for
conducting studies. As came out in interviews with John Storgårds,452 there have always been

conductors with many-sided musical careers, working both as ensemble musicians and as orchestral conductors, performing as soloists and composing at the same time.

Considering the lateness with which the higher-level music education was established in Finland, compared for example to the development of conservatories in Central Europe, all-around musicianship could be said to have become a prominent feature of the conductors’ education in Finland at quite an early stage. It was pointed out that the first conducting course in Central Europe was arranged by Arthur Nikisch in 1905, in the Leipzig Conservatory. However, in Finland the idea of many-sided professionalism has been central both to the pedagogical practices and to the process of choosing students from the 1950s, whereas in most European conservatories versatility still has very little weight in the education of a professional conductor.

Effects of types considered

It also turned out during writing of this study that the way the ideas of conductorship have been passed on has affected such matters as the relationship between a teacher and students or the working culture and actually has had less significance on a personal level. In Part II, in the chapter entitled Conductor types the historical and sociological typifications of conductors was discussed. These were the models those “legendary” conductors who taught also passed on to their students. Certain problems have occurred as a result – the teachers pass on the manerisms and “bad habits” as well.

In Finland there has never been such a “problem”. Jorma Panula’s habit was not to give examples to his students. Nor did he show them how to conduct. With only the musical facts given and a video-taped image to observe afterward, it was possible to weed out, so to speak, poor mannerisms from the very beginning. In this thesis the question of passing on ideas of conductorship has only been touched upon briefly. It would, however, be a subject for
extensive study. In addition to historical and sociological aspects, such fields as biographical study, aesthetics, and performance practices would add to this research. However, these areas would have been too much to address in this study; they remain to be more thoroughly investigated and analysed in some other research project.

2.2 From conducting class to work communities

One of the consequences of Panula’s educational system, aside of its profound effects on music life, has been to make the transition from conducting class to professional working life so smooth as to be almost non-existent. The reasons for this seem to be very practical. As discussed in Part II, there were collaborative projects in Panula’s conducting class, such as “laboratories” where young composers could hear their works performed live and could benefit from the practical opinions of the young conductors, who in turn had invaluable practice in conducting contemporary music. Also the rehearsal orchestra for the conducting class made it possible for young instrumentalists to gain experience – and form cooperative groups that would later work actively in musical life, in estivals, ensembles and projects.

As a result, many young conductors have played in the same orchestras they later had the opportunity to conduct, perhaps working as orchestral musicians while studying in the conducting class. They have thus already integrated into the work communities during their training. The musicians have worked with the conductors, and perhaps also accepted more readily their change of role, as already said in the text.

There is a two-way system that has developed in Finland’s musical life. During Panula’s professorship he recommended his students to the orchestras, first on an amateur level, then to professional orchestras, and soon the orchestras began to make inquiries whenever conductors were needed. In addition, the orchestras, by giving young conductors the chance of working with them, had the opportunity to be aware of potential visitors and new musical directors.
This practice no longer is so lively as it was during Panula’s time, but there are still traces to be seen in professional symphony orchestras.

It should be mentioned that there are also new forms of cooperation that have emerged, such as conducting workshops arranged with the Sibelius Academy conducting class, although they are outside the scope of the present study. Together with an extensive and well-organised music school system, which has been described as exceptional in a European context, the education of conductors can be said to continue to affect the structures of musical life.

Conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, quoted in the text, mentioned that the education of conductors differs significantly from the training of other musicians. An essential part of that training is what he calls “public training”, the only possibility for a conductor to practice with his or her own instrument. Just as it is the duty of the older generation to help support the younger generations, creating an educational continuum, is, according to Salonen, the duty of society, which should provide conductors with opportunities to conduct. Similarly, he says that conductors are needed, and therefore they should be provided with working opportunities.

What makes the former “Panula’s class” an internationally exceptional phenomenon is that Finnish conductors, who, like conductors everywhere, usually work alone, have a professional community back home. The same kind of collegiality that has developed around Panula’s conducting class is not to be found – at least not to the same extent – anywhere else. Even if the nature of the profession takes the conductors to a different country almost every week, in their teacher’s opinion they stand out everywhere they work. He says: “Well, they

---

453 Interview with Esa-Pekka Salonen, 3.5.2001.
know how to do it, and have a good basis for it. You can tell they are confident with themselves – they just do what they want”.

---

454 Interview with Jorma Panula, 27.11.2001.
APPENDIX 1

Some biographical notes on the Finnish conductors presented in and interviewed for this study.

**Kajanus, Robert** (1856 – 1933)
Kajanus was the first professional musician to make a living as an orchestral conductor in Finland. He studied in Leipzig and attended the rehearsals of Hans von Bülow and the Gewandhaus orchestra. Kajanus has become known for organising the concert life of Helsinki at the turn of the twentieth century. He founded the first permanent symphony orchestra (the Helsinki Philharmonic) in 1882, and conducted it for fifty years.

**Hannikainen, Tauno** (1896 – 1968)
Cellist Tauno Hannikainen studied in Paris with Pablo Casals and André Hekking and then made a notable career as a professional conductor. In the early 1940s he moved to the United States and conducted the symphony orchestras of Boston and Chicago. Hannikainen also taught conductors at the Sibelius Academy.

**Parmet, Simon** (1897 – 1969)
Simon Parmet conducted the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra for a while, but soon became the conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Along with being a conductor, Parmet taught the Sibelius Academy conducting class in the 1950s. One of his pupils was Jorma Panula.

**Jalas, Jussi** (1908 – 1985)
Conductor Jussi Jalas studied in Paris with Renée-Baton and Pierre Monteux. As well as being a conductor, Jalas was the first teacher of the newly organised Sibelius Academy conducting class. He taught the class from 1944 to the middle of the 1960s. Jalas was the son-in-law of composer Jean Sibelius and became known for having a thorough knowledge of Sibelius’ music.

**Panula, Jorma** (b. 1930)
Conductor, composer, and pedagogue, Jorma Panula was appointed professor of conducting studies at the Sibelius Academy in 1973. Over the next twenty years he changed the education of conductors entirely, while making a notable career as conductor and composer. Most Finnish professional conductors have earned their diplomas from the so-called ‘Panula’s class’ (1973–1993).

**Almila, Atso** (b. 1953)
Atso Almila studied conducting in Jorma Panula’s class and was among the first to receive diploma from Panula’s class. As well as following in Panula’s footsteps as a teacher, Almila has made a career as conductor and composer. He also has his own orchestra in Kuopio.

**Salonen, Esa-Pekka** (b. 1958)
Esa-Pekka Salonen studied composition and the horn in the Sibelius Academy as well as studying in Panula’s class. He belonged to the group of young musicians who founded ensembles Korvat auki, Avanti!, and Toimii!. In addition to being the chief conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, he workes widely abroad, and has made a notable career as a
composer. In the season 2008/2009 Salonen will take up the post of chief conductor of the Philharmonia Orchestra in London. In recent years Salonen has also started to teach.

**Saraste, Jukka-Pekka** (b. 1956)
Jukka-Pekka Saraste studied violin and conducting in the Sibelius Academy, together with Atso Almila and Esa-Pekka Salonen. In 1983 Saraste, together with flutist Olli Pohjola and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, founded the Avanti! Chamber orchestra. As well as having made a career as a highly acclaimed conductor abroad, Saraste has been chief conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and worked with the Finnish Chamber Orchestra. In the season 2006/2007 Saraste took up the post of the chief conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra.

**Oramo, Sakari** (b. 1965)
Sakari Oramo studied in Jorma Panula’s conducting class and received his diploma in 1992. He has been the chief conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and is currently the chief conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Oramo is also the Principal Conductor of the Kokkola Opera. In addition to working with orchestras in Europe and the United States, he performs regularly as a violinist. In 2008 Oramo will take up the post of chief conductor and artistic advisor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra.

**Ollila (Hannikainen), Tuomas** (b. 1965)
Tuomas Ollila studied in Panula’s conducting class and received his diploma in 1991. He completed his studies with Ilja Musin in St Petersburg, and took part in the summer music course in Tanglewood in the summer of 1993. He has conducted almost all Scandinavian orchestras and worked with many Central European and Australian orchestras. Currently, he is the artistic director of the Sixth Floor Orchestra, specialising in period instruments.

**Lintu, Hannu** (b. 1967)
Lintu started his career in the Sibelius Academy conducting class by playing cello in the rehearsal orchestra. He got his conducting diploma in 1996 and has since worked with orchestras in Scandinavia, Central Europe, the United States, and Canada. He has recorded with many orchestras and ensembles and has become known especially for conducting contemporary music and opera. Lintu has been appointed chief conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra and will take up his post in 2009.

**Mälkki, Susanna** (b. 1969)
At the time of this writing, Susanna Mälkki has started her first season with the Ensemble InterContemporain in Paris. She studied cello and conducting in the Sibelius Academy and worked as a solo cellist in Gothenburg before finishing her studies in the year 2000. She has quickly made a notable international career and has conducted orchestras all over Scandinavia, Central Europe, and Japan. She has become known especially for her contemporary music projects and her work as an opera conductor.

**Storgårds, John** (b. 1963)
John Storgårds has made a versatile career as violinist, composer, and conductor. He studied with Jorma Panula and received his diploma in 1997. He has worked with all Finnish and many European orchestras. He works intensively and tours with his own orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of Lappland, and performs widely as a violinist. Having been the chief conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra since the year 2006, Storgårds will take up
the post of chief conductor of the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra at the beginning of autumn 2008.

**Franck, Mikko** (b. 1979)
Since studying with professor Jorma Panula and finishing his conducting studies in 1998, Mikko Franck has quickly built up a wide range of repertoire both with symphony orchestras and in the opera house. He has been the chief conductor of the Finnish National Opera and the National Orchestra of Belgium. In recent seasons, Mikko Franck has worked with such orchestras as the Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Bamberg Symphony, Finnish Radio Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Dallas, Chicago, and London Symphonies, the Philharmonia and Israel Philharmonic orchestras.

**Ollikainen, Eva** (b. 1982)
Eva Ollikainen studied at the Sibelius Academy with Jorma Panula, Atso Almila and Leif Segerstam, and got her diploma in 2003. She completed her studies in the International Conductors Academy of the Allianz Cultural Foundation in London, working with Kurt Mazur and Christoph von Dohnányi, and conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra. In the summer of 2006 James Levine invited Ollikainen to participate in the Tanglewood Music Academy. Ollikainen has worked with several orchestras in Scandinavia, Central Europe, and Britain and is the conductor of the Uusinta Chamber Orchestra.
APPENDIX 2

COURSE FOR CONDUCTORS

Memorandum to my students/Jorma Panula

1) Selection of repertoire and contact with the orchestra

- when choosing repertoire one has to take into account the standard and capabilities and efficiency of the orchestra - circumstances at the rehearsals and in the concert i.e. the space, acoustics, lighting, café, porters

Note!

- a concert hall or a multipurpose hall etc.
- a permanent conductor
- the orchestral manager
- tours, opera, theatre work
- "the primadonnas" of the orchestra, the leader, principals, music librarian, administrative staff, managers, porters, extra contributors etc.
- make sure that the music material is ready in all respects
- arrival at the site of the concert and orientation

2) Arriving at the rehearsal - be prepared to meet those who want to take time off, those who complain, those who praise, those who are late

- "morning service" = talk to the orchestra
- your dress, appearance, walk, outlook, voice and the substance of your pep talk have an influence on the impression that the orchestra forms about you
- tuning of the orchestra

3) In front of the orchestra

- opening remarks (no nonsense!)
- organise the rehearsal schedule according to the use of the orchestral resources, you either extend or shorten the schedule so that musicians need not wait around too much
- "the product specification" and cultural background of the piece to be played

4) Starting off

- decide if you are going to play an entire piece/movement or a part of it
- commentary with words and gestures - position - wait - hands - wait
- talk if necessary? - a clear upbeat and go!
- are you going to conduct as if at a performance or as if at a rehearsal (exaggerated gestures during a strange work and/or sight reading)
- use your ears - eyes and remember how things went in terms of playing and attitudes. React with facial expressions - gestures - (words?)
5) Interrupting:
- WHY DID YOU INTERRUPT? THAT'S WHERE YOU START REHEARSING!
- possible praise and criticism (pinpointing problems)
- to what extent do you listen to the suggestions of the leader, principals and players
- use your ears and eyes and remember reactions of playing and attitudes

6) Style of rehearsing
- approximation/generality or accuracy?
- by parts, by desk or individually?
Do you demand other peoples' attention as well while the others are playing?

7) Coffee break
- choose an appropriate moment
- decide yourself, if you want to use coffee break for rest, work or to make contact with people or just chit-chat
- the tiredness of the orchestra depends on your effectiveness (concentration!)

8) After the rehearsal
- decide on the strategy for the next rehearsal, arrange rehearsal times and other details with possible soloists or choir
- be prepared for surprises: changes in the repertoire, changes of soloists, changes of rehearsing times, missing musicians
- think how do you spend your leisure time (c. 20 h a day)

9) Dress rehearsal
- do you want to have some audience at the dress rehearsal or how do you prepare yourself for the possibility that the tickets have been sold in advance?
- go through the dress rehearsal in your mind afterwards and try to foresee in advance the potential areas of confusion (unclear transitions between movements, rhythms, intonation faults and other technical problems) but concentrate only on the composer's message.
- REST PROPERLY: NO EXTRA WORK, NO NOISE, NO ALCOHOL ETC

Are you very nervous before a concert?
WHY?
Are you uncertain - why? It will disappear if you don’t try to do more than you are able to cope with or if you don’t try to be more than what you are. Remember, personality radiates. People will see through.
APPENDIX 3

Gestures in the process of conducting

CONDUCTOR - CONDUCTOR + ORCHESTRA - CONDUCTOR + ORCHESTRA + AUDIENCE

\       /  
Transitional, mediating middle-ground

MUSICAL analytical

/                        \    
TECHNICAL concrete visual EXPRESSIVE interpretational personal

/ \  
Analysing the score Rehearsal Performance
Refereces and bibliography

Monographies


Antek, Samuel (1963): *This was Toscanini*. New York: The Vanguard Press.


**Scientific articles**


**Other articles**


Haapakoski, Martti (1993): Leo Funtek – Man who was a Whole Conservatory. *Finnish Music Quarterly 3*.


Karttunen, Anu (1997): Where there’s a will there’s a way. *Finnish Music Quarterly 4*.


Knuuttila, Mervi (1976): ”Sinfonisesta sodasta” paperisota. *Rondo 1*.


267


Sachs, Harvey (2002): ‘art for me is a lot of sorrow and little joy’. *BBC Music Magazine May 2002*.


Tuomisto, Matti (1990): “The conductor is an instrumentalist: his instrument is the orchestra.” *Finnish Music Quarterly 1*.


**Interviews**

Interview with Susanna Mälkiä 20.11. 2005. Helsinki

**Discussions**

Discussion with Atso Almila 10.3.2005

**Score**