

Editor's Foreword

Rotating through different musicological research areas, the sixth issue of *Res Musica* yearbook returns to historical musicology where it started in 2009. Over the last few decades music-historical research field has gone through conceptual changes everywhere in the academic world. Estonian scholars have kept up with those developments: since 1995 we have been engaged in discussions on music history methodology in several high-level international conferences in Estonia. Those experiences have made us clearly recognize the extent and value the “smaller” histories have to offer to the larger context.

To a large extent, the selection of authors in this collection of articles was determined by the status of research projects currently carried on in Estonian music-historical research field. At the same time this volume documents the many and various lines of thought of today's more active writers in Estonian historical musicology. To offer a wider methodological context to their accounts, for this issue's opening act we were fortunate to get an interview with one of today's most prominent music historians, **Hermann Danuser**, Professor of Historical Musicology at the Humboldt University of Berlin. In Estonia, for a considerable time now the music historians have taken Carl Dahlhaus's ideas as a basis of their own thinking. Since Herman Danuser, a close colleague and comrade-in-arms of Dahlhaus, has not only meticulously documented Dahlhaus's ideas but also extensively elaborated on these, the questions asked in our interview concerned, first and foremost, the status of Theodor Adorno's and Carl Dahlhaus's ideas in contemporary musicology.

It is somewhat exceptional that the introductory article to this issue's music-historical studies is an Estonian translation of a discussion, recently published in Swedish, of Johann Valentin Meder's opera *Die beständige Argenia* by Professor Emeritus of Lund University and honorary member of Estonian Musicological Society, **Folke Bohlin**. His article continues the work of several German and Estonian music historians in researching one of the main events in music theatre history in Estonia, and it excitingly links with Anu Schaper's study published in the previous issue of *Res Musica*.¹ Among other issues, Bohlin's article raises a question on the national-cultural affiliation of such a calibre major opus as Meder's *Argenia*, and although the time of national music histories is largely over, the question itself is not redundant even today. Rather, the controversial fate of that opera, that is undoubtedly of art value and holds a remarkable position in cultural history, eloquently demonstrates how problematic cultural studies approach can be to a text that is shared by several cultures (in *Argenia*'s case: German, Swedish and Estonian). The next article by **Anu Schaper** on mobility of musicians in the Baltic Sea region offers a wider viewpoint on this particular subject and, by applying elements of cultural exchange theory (*Kulturtransfertheorie*), Schaper aims to provide a wider methodological framework for examining the problematic questions concerning this era's and region's music life.

¹ Schaper, Anu 2013. Poliitiline Argenia: Johann Valentin Mederi ooper “Kindlameelne Argenia” omaaegsete sündmuste taustal. [The political *Argenia*: the opera *Die beständige Argenia* by Johann Valentin Meder against the background of the political events of its time]. – *Res Musica* 5, pp. 12–23.

Contemporary historiography has started to pay more and more attention to so-called microhistories, i.e. to previously neglected and unresearched processes in common people's everyday life that, trivial as they may seem at first glance, considerably widen the ground essential for larger generalisations.

Both **Aleksandra Dolgoplova** in her study of music of family rituals in Narva during the late era of Swedish rule, and **Heidi Heinmaa** who researches the living and working conditions of musicians employed by the city or the church in the 18th-century Tallinn (Reval) by examining their written bequests (*Nachlassverzeichnis*), hold in scrutiny archival documents previously considered insignificant. **Anu Kõlar**'s exhaustive study of the church musicians' life of Tallinn St. Olaf's Church during the early Soviet Era, based on those musicians' written memoirs, also definitely belongs to the group of microhistories. In her study, Kõlar discusses different aspects of cultural memory, and deals with methodological issues that arise from using memoirs of members of clearly delineated communities as reflections of cultural memory and as sources for writing music history. **Kristel Pappel** and **Toomas Siitan** have co-written an article that investigates the reception of substantial works by J. S. Bach and Wagner in the late 19th-century Russian Empire. However, even this study can be included to the group of microhistories: in studying the early performances of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and the performance tradition of selected operas by Wagner in 1883 Tallinn and St. Petersburg, the authors' aim is to disclose the general national-ideological background of particular musical events and proceed from there to construct their wider socio-political context.

The last two articles in this collection are not directly connected to issues of music historiography. However, their authors manage to offer new visions on the classical subjects of the European music history. For an extensive period of time now, classical philologist **Ave Teesalu** has investigated the texts of Boethius, one of the pillars of Western thinking about music. For musicologists who tend to be familiar only with this late Roman philosopher's treatise "Fundamentals of Music" (*De institutione musica*), Teesalu's philological take on Boethius's "The Consolation of Philosophy" (*De consolatioe Philosophiae*) adds aspects to understanding this philosopher's views on music in particular, as well as those of European Middle Ages in general. **Eerik Jõks**, in his thorough research into a complex topic of contemporary reception of medieval sacred Latin monody (i.e. the musical style of Gregorian chant), carefully disentangles the problems of performance and notation of that musical style and supports his arguments with substantial originally devised perception experiments.

The editor of this issue sincerely thanks this collection's anonymous reviewers for their willingness to collaborate and ability to offer constructive suggestions: their selfless help played an important role in the final polishing of the texts in this collection. Finally, I am sure that all contributors to this edition will join me in expressing heartfelt gratitude to the technical editor Anu Schaper for her meticulous and patient attention in preparing this volume.

Toomas Siitan