

# Ilmari Krohn and the Early French Contacts of Finnish Musicology: Mobility, Networking and Interaction<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Conceived in memory of the late Professor of Musicology of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre Urve Lippus (1950–2015) and to honour her contribution to music history research, the article analyses transcultural relations and the role of cultural capitals in the discipline during its early phase in the university context.

The focus is on the early French contacts of the founder of institutional Finnish musicology, the University of Helsinki Professor Ilmari Krohn (1867–1960) and his pupils. The analysis of Krohn's mobility, networking and interaction is based on his correspondence and documentation concerning his early congress journeys to London (1891) and to Paris (1900).

Two French correspondents stand out in this early phase of his career as a musicologist: Julien Tiersot in the area of comparative research on traditional music, and Georges Houdard in the field of Gregorian chant and neume notation. By World War I Krohn was quite well-read in French-language musicology. Paris served him also as a base for international networking more generally.

Accomplished musicians, Krohn and his musicology students Armas Launis, Leevi Madetoja and Toivo Haapanen even had an artistic bond with French repertoires. My results contradict the claim that early Finnish musicology was exclusively the domain of German influences.

In an article dedicated to the memory of Urve Lippus, who was for many years Professor of Musicology and director of the discipline at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, it is appropriate to discuss international cooperation, mobility of scholars, networking, and the changing centres of scholarship. After the re-establishment in 1991 of Estonian national independence in connection with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Urve's international activity became influential in this branch of learning – not only within the national confines but also beyond. At a time when in Finland historical musicology was overshadowed by musical semiotics and ethnomusicology, the international gatherings she and her colleagues organised in Tallinn became important for Finnish music history scholars. When a big research project on Estonian music history was launched by the Estonian

Academy of Music and Theatre, Urve considered that a knowledge of the music history of Finland, as well as of the origins of music history writing in this neighbouring country, would be useful to Estonians. Many Finnish colleagues accepted the invitation to participate in music-history conferences in Tallinn.<sup>2</sup>

Urve's death is a great loss to musicology, and to me personally. I cooperated with her from around 1995. Our encounters were not exclusively limited to Estonia and Finland: we met and worked in seven different countries and cities. Urve organised a session at three congresses of the International Musicological Society, those of Leuven (2002), Zurich (2007), and Rome (2012).<sup>3</sup> I participated in these sessions, starting from the preparatory stages. Urve was interested in my area of specialisation, Finnish-French musi-

<sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to Professor Heikki Laitinen for having read an early version of this article and for giving me some valuable comments. They have enriched my documentation and, hopefully, led me towards a clearer argument with regard to the scholarly aims of this paper.

<sup>2</sup> Some twenty years ago the visits to the Estonian Academy of Music of Matti Huttunen PhD, who gave seminars based on his thesis *Modernin musiikinhistoriankirjoituksen synty Suomessa (The Beginnings of Modern Music History Writing in Finland)* (Huttunen 1993) had a special significance for our Estonian colleagues.

<sup>3</sup> The titles of these three sessions were: "Musical Crossroads in Northeastern Europe" (2002); "Musical Life and Ideas Concerning Music in the Aftermath of the First World War and the Russian Revolution: Reconstructing the Establishment in the Countries around the Baltic Sea" (2007); "The Scope of a Nordic Composer's Identity: National Cultures and Exoticism" (2012).