



A New Ecosystem of Early Music Studies

COST action 21161

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EDITED BY

Aleksandra **Pister** (Lithuania, leader WG1)

WITH THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF

David **Burn** (KULeuven, co-leader WG1), Ivan **Ćurković** (University of Zagreb), Stefan **Gasch** (Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst, Vienna), Judith **Haug** (University of Oslo), Karin **Lagergren** (Linnaeus University, Sweden), Ivan **Moody** (CESEM - Universidade Nova Lisbon), Aleksandra **Rupocińska** (Poland), Philippe **Vendrix** (CNRS, France), Adam **Whittaker** (Birmingham Conservatory, UK)

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The purpose and main objectives of the workshop

The main focus of the first onsite meeting of the Education Working Group (WG1) was musicology as an academic discipline that has been and continues to be foundational to early music, and, *vice versa*, on early music as an important subject of musicological research with a place in educational curricula. A number of clear challenges for early music in the current educational landscape can nonetheless be identified.

First, the diversification of scientific approaches has resulted in equally diverse demands on training, not all of which can be easily met. Scholars of early music, for instance, need training in skills as varied as paleography, notation systems, codicology, musical sources, philology, the science of editing music, playing techniques, instruments and their making, and a host of languages both modern and ancient.

Furthermore, most European educational systems draw clear lines between conservatories and the universities, meaning that collaboration between science/research and performance can be challenging. The links between the two educational worlds are shaped in different ways in most European countries.

This workshop analyzed the education and scientific landscape of early music in European universities and research institutes and raised following questions:

- What place does early music occupy in curricula and in research programs in European universities and research institutes? What are the most recent changes and what has influenced them?
- Which European universities have programmes in musicology? To what extent is musicology related to early music there?
- What are the greatest challenges to early music education in universities? What would help solve those challenges?
- How many research labs or institutes are there in Europe that pay attention to early music? What are their main research fields? To what extent is early music represented there?

Members of WG1 shared their expertise and discussed those and other relevant aspects.

The place of early music in educational curricula

During the workshop, participants presented the current situation of early music in educational curricula of the represented countries. They also charted the trajectory of recent changes, paying attention to developments in this field, some of which were positive and others of which were disturbing:

“Early music has traditionally been well represented in UK university music departments, with many established scholars holding positions that have ensured its place in curricula. Today, the picture is somewhat different. **Many university departments that once had a thriving tradition of early music no longer teach it at the undergraduate level or do so in a very limited way.** There are some exceptions to this rule, with many of the Russell Group universities continuing to have early music as part of their programmes. Even in this ‘elite’ group of universities, though, some courses of study do not have courses featuring early music. **Nor do they focus on technical skills that were once seen as essential to early music scholarship, such as editing and source study.** Broader engagement with early music in university study is diminishing too; many courses do not explore early music in any detail beyond one or two weeks in an initial music history survey” – Adam Whittaker, UK.

“Nowadays, **early music is present in all music universities in Poland** and in several secondary schools. Here, however, some difficulties can be observed, as recent changes introduced by the Ministry have ended the official existence of early instrument classes with the exception of harpsichord classes. These decisions are incomprehensible to the community and attempts have been made to change this situation.

At universities, changes to doctoral procedures for performing faculties have resulted in written theses related to the repertoire performed, and it is important to note their **increasing level as well as the development of research competence in musicians**, both instrumentalists and vocalists, who have completed several dozens of theses in the last ten years. Subjects such as the study of sources, literature, and palaeography are being incorporated into the study programmes for instrumentalists, which are taught by musicologists to the extent possible. A **huge constraint** for the University is, of course, **financial considerations.**” – Aleksandra Rupocińska, Poland.

“There are different models all over Germany. Institutionally speaking, I’d venture to say that early music is probably included in some form in the curriculum everywhere, but **only a limited number of university departments have professorships especially devoted to early music** (often called “ältere Musikgeschichte”). Some well-known colleagues who specialize in early music have chairs that are not labelled as such. Therefore, **it often comes down to the initiative and specialization of a researcher.**” – Judith I. Haug, Germany.

“In Croatia, all institutions that involve music in higher education are housed at universities: these are the universities of Zagreb, Split, Osijek and Pula. All of these incorporate early music into their curricula, mostly at the level of performance, as the curricula for different instruments and singing involve some early music, mostly from the Baroque period. The curricula for music theory and music education involve early music to a significant extent at the

level of choral singing and score reading, as well as musico-theoretical courses such as counterpoint, harmony and solfege. However, only the Department of Musicology of the Academy of Music in Zagreb both practices and teaches scholarly research of early music.” - Ivan Ćurković, Croatia.

“In Sweden, the place of early music in curricula and research programmes has **been dependent on individuals rather than infrastructures promoting historical musicology** in general, and in particular, in early music. As in many other countries, historical musicology at Swedish universities has declined in favour of courses focusing on popular music, sociology of music, etc. No professorships exclusively devoted to early music exist, and neither do research centres or musicological milieus that are solely devoted to the study of early music, although Uppsala University upholds a strong tradition in historical musicology and has ongoing doctoral and postdoctoral research projects on the topic. In general, however, **musicology students encounter early music in very limited contexts**, such as introductory courses in (Western) music history. The opportunity to introduce and attract students to the study of early music is, in other words, limited and is leading to a serious challenge for the future of early music studies in Sweden.” - Karin Lagergren, Sweden.

“There is an MA programme in **baroque singing** at the Lithuanian Music and Theatre Academy. It is possible to study harpsichord and organ at the BA and MA level. Other early music instruments are not represented, and it is not possible to pursue early music theory or musicology of early music as a degree specialization.

Several attempts to establish a department of early music have been made, but none have been successful. Young musicians wanting **to specialize in early music usually choose to study abroad.**” - Aleksandra Pister, Lithuania.

Musicology and early music

A central point of the discussion was the relationship between musicology to early music. This point of departure led the participants to specify whether universities in different European countries had musicology programmes and to what extent these programmes were related to early music:

“Only the **University of Zagreb has a programme in musicology** housed at the Academy of Music. Apart from the aforementioned courses, of which counterpoint is the most specialised for the music of the Renaissance and the Baroque, there are the specific musicological courses that deal with early music, mostly in the realm of historical musicology: Music of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Music of the Renaissance, Music of the Baroque Period, Music of the Classical Period, separate courses for music in Croatia in each of these periods, Organology, Early Music Notation, Aesthetics of Music from Antiquity

to the 18th Century, Historical Musicology and Related Disciplines. Three researchers out of seven, also members of CA 21161, are involved in scholarly research of early music. A moderate percentage of MA students choose to pursue a master's thesis in early music, and **unfortunately even fewer PhD students choose an early music topic for their dissertation.**" – Ivan Ćurković, Croatia.

"Many universities in Germany have musicology programmes. Again, the representation of early music varies very much between departments. **If there is no chair especially devoted to early music; each department decides how much research and teaching time they wish to allot to early music.**" – Judith I. Haug, Germany.

"Most UK universities don't have a degree programme in 'musicology' but **many bachelors degrees in music in universities will have been predominantly skewed towards musicological study.** There are opportunities to study early music in some institutions, but not in all. Some departments don't have the faculty expertise to lead detailed inquiry into music of the Middle Ages, though this is probably less true as we move into the seventeenth century onwards. At **doctoral level, there are quite a number of doctoral researchers** (the precise number I don't know), especially concentrated in Oxford and Cambridge. This, to a large extent, reflects the density of staff expertise within these institutions and the significant resources they have to support a wider early music research ecosystem." – Adam Whittaker, UK.

"Polish universities currently offer musicology studies in the following six cities: Warsaw, Kraków, Poznan, Wrocław, Lublin, and Opole. Universities offering early music performance operate in the following cities: Warsaw (and a branch in Białystok), Kraków, Katowice, Poznan, Gdańsk, Bydgoszcz, Łódź, Wrocław.

Early music in musicology departments is particularly present in academic centres such as Kraków, Warsaw, Wrocław and Poznań. Each of them has **really active researchers with high achievements and high qualifications.**" – Aleksandra Rupocińska, Poland.

"There **are 6 universities that offer programmes in musicology:** Uppsala University (today the only musicology department in Sweden), Stockholm University, Gothenburg University, Lund University, Linnaeus University (Växjö/Kalmar), and Örebro University ca 2005 (fused with music pedagogy). **None has special programmes in early music** but Uppsala University has by tradition a strong profile in music history." – Karin Lagergren, Sweden.

"In Lithuania, musicology can be studied at music academies at the BA and MA levels. Doctoral studies in musicology are offered in universities and some research institutes. From time to time, musicology students choose early music

topics for their BA, MA, or PhD theses.” – Aleksandra Pister, Lithuania.

Challenges to early music education in universities

One of the main impediments to early music education is the general prejudice that students dislike music history and early music, although this is not supported by analytical studies. Statistically decreasing numbers of candidates for music studies are also reflected in the field of early music, but this issue is global. Another issue is that a scientific approach to early music, such as historical musicology, is not always appreciated by early music performers if it has no relevance to the perspectives of performers:

“One challenge is that **there is a general assumption that students dislike music history** (I do not think this is true). Another challenge is that fewer and fewer read music, which is a hindrance in analysing actual music.

One important factor concerning how musicology operates today is **that there are so many topics that need to be covered in musicology studies**, much more than music history and music theory that by tradition has been one of the strongest areas in musicology.

A last challenge I would like to put forth is the view of early music that **owes more to its traditional past than something that is highly topical** and can be used to discuss many **current trends**. [...]

One last thought: I find that students appreciate early music to a much greater extent than for example Romantic music.” – Karin Lagergren, Sweden.

“In my experience, **the main challenge is a general opinion that students are not interested in early music**. Considering that unsatisfactory or decreasing student numbers are reported from musicology departments, musicologists are understandably anxious to create curricula that are supposedly most appealing to students. And **early music is generally acknowledged as being not appealing to (prospective) students**; whether this notion is based on fact or feeling, I’m not sure.” – Judith I. Haug, Germany.

“Some of the challenges in Croatia are the **low availability of sources** for the study of early music, including both national and regional heritage and its primary sources, **which are sometimes inaccessible, and musicological literature and music sources of early music on a global scale**. Also, the lack of tradition and scholarly confidence to tackle bigger questions and issues rather than the narrowly defined ‘national’ ones.” – Ivan Ćurković, Croatia.

“Arguably the greatest challenge in universities to early music education **is the perception that it is somehow not relevant or interesting to the current generation of students**, nor does it address an employability agenda which is used to judge the efficacy and quality of a programme.” – Adam Whittaker, UK.

“The development (noticeable in Poland) in recent years in the field of early music education in performance certainly **requires support and close cooperation with musicologists**. It is one of the more important challenges for universities such as conservatories **to employ competent people with musicological training and knowledge**.

Certainly one of the most important problems is the **statistically decreasing number of candidates in music studies**, which is also reflected in the field of early music. The current economic situation in the country as well as in Europe, which is hopefully temporary, also has an impact on the reduction of events and plans for the promotion of early music at the level of the last ten years.” - Aleksandra Rupocińska, Poland.

“One of the challenges lies in the early music community itself internationally. The **scientific approach to early music, or historical musicology, is not always appreciated by performers of early music and artistic researchers**. Hence a certain distance between musicology and performance departments at high schools, academic and artistic approaches. Historical musicology is sometimes seen as something distant to early music practice, something “boring” and not applicable in performance, in sporadic cases coming to extreme definitions, such as “defective”, if it has no performer's perspective. Such an attitude may be due to a lack of specific knowledge (in old notations, codicology, music theory, etc.), that requires time and consideration or due to limited knowledge of how to benefit from scientific material or little trust in science (musicology) in general.” - Aleksandra Pister, Lithuania.

Research labs and institutes with a focus on early music

WG1 also considered research labs or institutes in different countries and tried to ascertain to what extent early music is represented there and what their main research fields are:

“In addition to the universities in Poland, there is the **Institute of Art at the Polish Academy of Sciences** -an interdisciplinary research institution whose responsibilities include research into and documentation of Polish art and artistic culture, **also in the field of musicology (including early music)**.

Its musicology department presents the results of source research in periodicals in the quarterly “Muzyka” and in important publication series, such as *Monumenta Musicae in Polonia* [...] An important institution for Polish musicology and culture is the Fryderyk Chopin Institute, which organises the International Chopin Competition on historical instruments. The Institute cooperates with an international group of musicologists, has a publishing house, and organises conferences and workshops, as well as the great festival ‘Chopin and his Europe.’” - Aleksandra Rupocińska, Poland.

“Sweden has no research labs or institutes devoted to early music.” - Karin Lagergren, Sweden.

“Outside of universities, it is primarily **editorial projects and archives** that cover the early music field, such as Bach-Archiv Leipzig or the Stiftung Händel-Haus Halle. **Many editions are attached to university departments**, such as Corpus Monodicum in Würzburg, the Lully edition in Saarbrücken, or Corpus Musicae Ottomanicae in Münster.” - Judith I. Haug, Germany.

“In Lithuania, research into early music takes place in different institutions - universities, music academies and research institutes on a small scale. Research is **mostly project based** and pursued **on the initiative of individual researchers**. There are no research institutes that pay visible attention to early music. The Lithuanian Culture Research Institute is an interdisciplinary research institution whose responsibilities include research and documentation of Lithuanian culture as well as research in the field of musicology at the Department of Music and Theatre History. **Early music is incorporated into retrospective projects**, such as ‘Mournful Church Music in 16th-20th century Lithuania’. Research carried out at this institution **focuses mostly on Lithuanian heritage**.” - Aleksandra Pister, Lithuania.

“The Institute for Croatian Music History at the Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences. Research carried out at this institution focuses entirely on Croatian, e.g. **‘national’ heritage**. Due to the availability of sources and the leadership of the Institute, as well as the interest areas of many of the scholars employed there, **it focuses on joint research projects predominantly on 19th-century music, while scholars who study early music carry out individual projects.**” - Ivan Ćurković, Croatia.

“In the **UK context, most research into early music is taking place in universities**. Institutes and networks exist relatively informally as collaborations between like-minded colleagues, or as publishing committees attached to major publications series, such as Early English Church Music. There are some specialist ensembles which are focused on early music, building on traditions of the antiquarian societies of ‘ancient’ music. These organisations are often not involved directly as researchers in early music, but frequently **partner with academics as part of funded projects and dissemination activities.**” - Adam Whittaker, UK.

Solutions and recommendations

The workshop participants recommend the following actions to promote change in early music education and research:

1. Organizing more **active outreach** to make the public aware, of how relevant early music is to present-day society and its challenges;

2. **Networking** among musicologists who specialize in early music and are often the only ones at their institutions;
3. Exploring **innovative research methodologies**, creating a **platform** where teachers can share tools and teaching material;
4. Gathering **data** on structure and nature of early music education in Europe;
5. Connecting early music to **heritage agendas**;
6. Strengthening the **attractiveness of historical musicology**, placing it into the **spotlight**;
7. Making early music **relevant** to musicians and researchers of **contemporary music**, encouraging younger composers to write for early instruments.

“Outreach will be crucial. Early music scholars have to find ways to make absolutely clear **how relevant our research is to present-day societal challenges** that matter to young people (example: migration and transculturality). Early music is much more than dead white men - we members of EarlyMuse are evidently aware of that, and many of us are exploring **innovative, decentering, or decolonial avenues in our research**. This has to reach the wider community. If outreach, performance, and academic communication activities were easier to fund - for example, if they were normalized as parts of a grant application - so much could be done. I am sure that **many early music scholars are actively interested in all sorts of artistic and media collaboration or outreach**.” - Judith I. Haug, Germany.

“Making early music research more attractive **by providing incentives to younger scholars** could solve these problems, as well as approaching early music research with **more innovative research methodologies** that follow more recent trends in musicology and the humanities.” - Ivan Ćurković, Croatia.

“We can’t change the structures in which we are working. Universities are tenacious structures and full of administrative obstacles. I think we need to work from within musicology itself [...].

- Musicologists specializing in early music are often lonely at their institutions. **Networking** among forces are welcome.

- Since remote learning has been greatly facilitated by Zoom and the steep learning process we went through during the pandemic, why not **initiate courses in this format where we can invite each other for guest lectures?**

- Why not develop a platform where teachers can share tools, material for teaching that they have created themselves, ideas for how to structure courses etc. so that ideas and good examples to follow can be shared?!” - Karin Lagergren, Sweden.

“**Having some robust data** on the wider early music landscape **would be invaluable** in making the argument to course directors and academic

managers that this area of work has immense value despite attracting small numbers of students,. The proposals discussed in the working group meeting around **connecting early music to the heritage agenda** is one avenue that we could pursue - we do have some evidence from UK projects that this has been successful to attract external investment, but also to build student interests in developing the skills which will support further study of early music.”
- Adam Whittaker, UK.

“One of the solutions could be **to strengthen the authority and attractiveness of historical musicology by putting it in the spotlight**. That could happen by interviewing musicologists, by making the public very aware of who the authors of the modern editions of musical sources or treatises are (why not during concerts?) and by using other outreach and dissemination actions. That would also make historical musicology more attractive for the young generation. Another solution would be **to strengthen the dialogue between musicology and performance**, initiating joint activities and projects.” - Aleksandra Pister, Lithuania.

“[...] I aim to begin to address the question of **making early music relevant to musicians and researchers of contemporary music**. There has been, generally speaking, a divide between these two in that those who study contemporary music at tertiary level tend to have little awareness of the way in which early music (with the possible exception of Baroque repertoire) has not only shaped musical history, but also might inform the work of composers, performers, and researchers.

The CESEM - Universidade Nova, Lisbon, the University of Évora and the Higher Schools of Music of Lisbon and Oporto are built around the idea of **encouraging younger composers to write for early instruments**, ensembles and vocal practitioners. I have personal experience as a composer working with innumerable early music groups and written for a wide range of historical instruments. Additionally, I publish performing editions of Renaissance polyphony and reflect on analytical and aesthetic studies. All these experiences lead me to propose **examining the ways in which early music might be further incorporated into the narrative of history and technique for students of composition and other disciplines relating to contemporary music**. These would include increasing historical awareness of early repertoire, examination of its musical techniques as technical resources for contemporary composition, and exploitation of the particular sounds and techniques of early instruments.

An important aspect of the forthcoming multi-institutional proposal is that it brings together universities and conservatoires, and thus researchers, creators, and practitioners - a further aspect of this question which requires serious consideration.” - Ivan Moody, Portugal.

Survey on university education and research in early music

During the roundtable discussion, a survey of university education and research in early music was presented. This survey was formulated and conducted by Aleksandra Pister (WG1 Leader), David Burn (WG1 Co-leader), Philippe Vendrix (Action Chair), and Rebekah Ahrendt (Action Vice-Chair). Participants of the workshop gave their feedback on the content of the survey and were asked to help distribute the questionnaire, which collected information on the musicology of early music in Europe (teaching, researching, and training), including definitions of early music; how many universities and research labs in different countries participate in early music teaching, researching, and training, their results; and their funding methods. The survey is anonymous.

Four Short-Term Scientific Missions are planned to collect data at various European educational institutions. Before the second Management Committee meeting of the *EarlyMuse* Action in September 2023, data from the different partners will be obtained in order to complete a primary analysis of the structure and nature of early music education in Europe.