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CHOIR IN FOCUS 2010

Choir in Focus 2010

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Preface

The network *Choir in Focus* was initiated by Dr. Ursula Geisler and Dr. Karin Johansson and is based at Körcentrum Syd in the south of Sweden (The Southern Choral Centre, www.korcentrumsyd.se). This centre was established in 2007 as a joint venture between Lund University with Malmö Academy of Music, Odeum and The Department of Musicology, Malmö University, Malmö Symphony Orchestra, and Music South (Musik i Syd).

In 2008, we both became involved in a joint research project to create an overview of existing choral research and to develop structures for further studies. As a first step we organised a series of seminars and a symposium in Malmö and Lund during the academic year of 2008–2009 in order to highlight choir, choir singing and choral work as fruitful research topics. These gatherings gave rise to many stimulating and thought provoking debates. It was in the course of this initial work that we received the vision for an international network.

An international network would bring together researchers from different traditions and disciplines as a creative meeting point. The network would also provide a platform for discussing theoretical and methodological issues under the umbrella of common research interests related to choir.

The network has been made possible through a grant from the Swedish foundation Riksbankens Jubileumsfond. We are very thankful for this, as well as for the goodwill and support from Körcentrum Syd. Participants in the network have continually contributed their knowledge, competence and inspiring topics for discussions. This proves our initial supposition to be right: choral research is both strongly developed and marginalised in Europe, thus constituting a situation where both challenges and visions may be encountered.

This publication is one of the results from the network's first meeting in November 2009. The contributions illustrate how choir singing and choral life may be approached from differing disciplinary origins that vary from historical studies to studies of contemporary performance practice.

From the beginning the overarching goal of the network has been to inspire and motivate research discussions and developments in the area of choral studies. We hope that this publication will give a picture of the variety of approaches and ideas represented by scholars connected with choral research in Europe.

Ursula Geisler & Karin Johansson
Lund and Malmö, October 2010

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Introduction

Ursula Geisler & Karin Johansson

Choir in Focus: A Background

Choir singing, choral practice and singing in general are explored as research objects in a variety of disciplines. Together, they describe a complex and multifaceted field of interesting cultural-historical, pedagogical, sociological, and psychological and music related topics (Brusniak, *Chor*, 2003; Fagius, 2007; Kvist Dahlstedt, 2001; Sandgren, 2005). The disciplines that work with choir related research differ in theoretical and methodological traditions and vary with regard to definitions of the term choir and what should constitute choir research. Although there are vast possibilities for cooperative and cross-disciplinary projects in this area, such studies seem to be lacking.

Two recently published interdisciplinary approaches are documented in *Chorus and Community* (Ahlquist, 2006) and *Chorgesang als Medium von Interkulturalität: Formen, Kanäle, Diskurse* (Fischer, 2007). The former uses *community* as a common denominator and as the theoretical point of departure to grasp "a more inclusive music history, that is, a broader outlook on continuity and change over time" (Ahlquist, 2006, 7). Some other authors such as Fischer (2007) in *Chorgesang als Medium von Interkulturalität* pay attention to choral traditions in different European countries such as England, Italy and Germany. However, the Scandinavian countries are not embraced. Since most of the research projects in these publications focus on German choir singing and its origins in Central and Eastern Europe, the transnational roots of Scandinavian choral traditions receive no attention. Therefore, the network activ-

ity will be able to highlight marginalised research fields and contribute to this newly revived interest in choir topics. The marginalised research fields concern methodological and theoretical issues, as well as historical, cultural and particular 'national' areas.

One task of a choral research network situated in Sweden would be to connect European discourses on *choir* and to establish a relationship with research in Sweden. The network would also encourage debate around the musical and social function of choirs in modern society as a mirroring collective. It would also address individual needs for meaning, health and well-being (Lindström, 2006). Swedish research has a certain focus on acoustical (Ternström, 1989), child-related (Fagius, 2007) and male chorus topics (Jonsson, 1990). It also concentrates on music education (Sandberg Jurström, 2001), peoples' movements (Öhrström, 1997) and to some extent on relations between Sweden and the European continent (Reimers, 1993). These are particularly interesting with reference to the development of choral practices and theories in historical and postmodern times where *choir* as a social practice gained an important status for large parts of the population (not least in Sweden).

The network has four main aims:

- To bring together competent European researchers in research fields related to choir singing, choral practice and common singing.
- To create a European platform for the development of choir research in theory and practice situated in Sweden.
- To investigate the need and scope for cross-disciplinary studies in this field which is perceived as under-researched and as representing possibilities for constructive projects.
- To develop profiled research questions and common projects in this area which is internationally widespread and multifaceted.

The First Network Meeting

The first network meeting drew together 15 participants from 12 universities and music academies in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Germany, France and the UK. It was held November 12–14, 2009 in Malmö and Lund. Our intention was to bring together researchers from a range of institutions and disciplines and to provide a platform for discussing theoretical and methodological issues related to choir.

Recent choir related research has different points of departure. One point of departure involves theory and methodology developed in cultural and social sciences. Another includes historical musicology. With *choir* as an overarching umbrella concept, the network provides the scope for cooperation across national and disciplinary borders. This includes cooperation between the traditional musicological discipline based in humanities and practice-based artistic research in the area of music performance and social science oriented research in music education. The development of joint approaches through combinations of theory, research traditions and methodology from differing traditions constitutes a scientific challenge. Therefore, we expected experiences from different traditions to be discussed and problematised.

The initial aim was for members to inform each other about the research situation in their home countries and to update the network concerning conferences, dissertations and on-going projects of interest. Another ambition was to conduct a discussion about fruitful connections and to facilitate coordinated research projects. This occasion gave rise to many stimulating and thought provoking debates where the participants contributed with experience from differing research traditions.

Points of Discussion

It quickly became clear that the participants represented a great variety of perspectives on choral research topics as well as theoretical and methodological approaches. This variety is exhibited in an international bibliography of choral research publications (Geisler, 2010) that categorises over 4,000 entries from the past three centuries. All the participants noted that existing research on choral topics is not widespread or utilised internationally. A relevant question may be if choral research is a marginalised field without a disciplinary location in the academic system, and hence without an impact or influence upon the formulations of relevant research questions. We suggest that the reasons for the relative invisibility of the results of choral research and of their impacts on choral life are due to underdeveloped forms of communication between theory and practice. It is also due to the complexity of choir culture as a research field. Researching choir culture demands and encourages a multitude of research strategies in different disciplines. Hitherto, the inter-

disciplinary connection and interaction in this area has been insufficient. This is also one of the reasons for initiating this network.

The discussions focused on questions at a meta-level as well as on details of choral practice, history, sociology, education and psychology. Questions on a meta-level included the definition of the term *choir*. Departing from the concept of *collective vocal practice*, questions of changing definitions over time were problematised in relation to national traditions and language aspects. For example, the English terms *choir*, *chorus*, *band*, *ensemble* and *singing group* may have different, yet sometimes overlapping connotations. Similarly, the German term *Chor* relates to *Singgruppe* and to *Gesangverein*. The network debate also explored the situatedness of choral singing in postmodern societies. This led to discussions about how choral life in different European countries is dependent on and interacts with socio-cultural and educational developments with respect to historical backgrounds and processes.

The meeting also provided a scope for personal reflections, suggestions and visions about future directions for choral research. This publication should be seen as a mirror of a work-in-progress rather than as a presentation of completed studies. Thus, we have chosen to enclose these personal reflections as well as a comprehensive list of spontaneous suggestions for further research. The long term aim of the network is to plan and carry out internationally coordinated research projects on choral topics. This publication may help to generate a pool of ideas for achieving this aim.

I
National Perspectives

Choir Research – A Norwegian Perspective

Anne Haugland Balsnes

In Norway there exists an extended body of literature which deals with different aspects of choir methods: warming up, intonation, acoustics, and conducting techniques. However, this literature is not based on research and the contextual aspect of choir practice is rarely subject to analysis.

With respect to *research* more specifically, there exists very little on choir related topics at the Ph.D. level (or higher). Anne Jorunn Kydland Lysdahl (1995) wrote her Ph.D. dissertation on the 19th century male student singing movement from a music historical and aesthetic perspective. My own dissertation (2009) focuses on learning and identity in a local amateur choir. However, within the past few years there has been an extended body of research at the master's degree level. The quality varies with regard to theory and methodology, yet the empirical material that is generated in these projects is nevertheless interesting. I have classified this research into four groups.

Research focusing on learning and development in connection with choir participation:

Identity formation in choir (Knudsen, 2003)
Personal and musical development through participating in *Ten Sing* (youth choir) (Høgne, 1998)

Research focusing on social aspects of the choirs:

Motivations for choir participation (Schjelderup, 2005)
Values and power relations in a choir practice (Myrmel, 2007)

Discourse analysis of a choir practice (Pukstad, 1998)
Choir organizing (Brunvoll, 1991)
Conditions for choir organizing (Kleiberg, 1997)

Research focusing on implications or benefits from participating in choirs:

Benefits from participating in an "Everybody-can-sing-choir (Persen, 2005)
Implications on health and quality of life from participating in a senior choir (Knardal, 2007)

Research focusing on the conductor's role:

Self perceptions of conductors (Øhrn, 1990)
Conductors and communication (Breistein, 2004)
Musical leadership in choirs (Jansson, 2008)

More than 5 % of the Norwegian adult population participates in choirs. Although it is by far the most participant-garnering musical activity, research in the area is still very narrow and limited. I think this has something to do with the status of amateur singing. Seemingly, more focus has been given lately to every day musical practices, including choirs. I hope we see a change in research interest that would produce more relevant studies at a higher level in the future.

Reflections on Choir Research – Why the Network is Important

It was wonderful to meet people who share my interests. Usually one meets either researchers who know a lot about science and research but nothing about choirs, or "choir people" who know a lot about choirs but do not understand what research is about.

The network is a meeting place for an exchange of inspiration, ideas, support, and understanding. Since the conference I have been in touch with several of the members and we have exchanged literature references, texts, experiences and personal reflections.

I think the network will stimulate choir research on the whole and that it will contribute both to the field of practice and bring perspectives from

the choir world into other sciences that we work within, such as music education, music history, and music sociology. A choir is a multifaceted institution and therefore interdisciplinary studies are required to capture the nature of the field. More research also indicates increased status in the field. Research on the field is still very limited considering how widespread the activity actually is.

The praxis field (i.e. the choir itself) will benefit from research because it can make rehearsals more efficient and improve the quality of conductors. Perhaps more choirs can be formed if research results show politicians how important the choir movement is for both individuals and communities. This in turn could result in more money allocated to this specific cultural field.

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Research into Choirs and Choral Education at the Institute of Education, University of London

Colin Durrant & Graham Welch

England basks in a choral tradition that stems back several centuries, a tradition that is the envy of the world, its choirs are full of cherubic children and accomplished adults, singing the most complex fifteenth and sixteenth century polyphony with eagerness and enthusiasm. Or is that really the case? Indeed, England certainly boasts a wealth of glorious choral music largely from the fifteenth century through the Reformation and Restoration periods (Fellowes, 1969; Le Huray, 1967; Dearnley, 1970). Following the death of Handel and William Boyce, choral music in England fell into a decline, with rather mediocre composers writing mediocre music but with collective hymn singing in churches and schools being promoted by the efforts of John Curwen and Sarah Glover (Durrant, 2003). The twentieth century witnessed a resurgence of better quality composers from Elgar and Vaughan William to Britten, Howells and, today, John Rutter, all who have made significant contributions to the choral repertoire – sacred and profane.

Nevertheless, England in reality currently faces many of the issues common across other countries of Europe and North America with regard to singing and choral singing in particular and, even more particular, choral singing with young people. Despite the fact that it is recognised that much of the English choral tradition is based on the church and the emergence of the English anthem following the reformation, society is now changing so quickly that the corporate singing of hymns and religious songs that would have taken place in most school assemblies and special occasions in the 1950s and 1960s, for example, would be a practice not widely adopted or known in the majority of today's schools.

There is, however, a growing emergence and recognition of the importance of singing, both in schools and in a wider cultural context, with a broader range of collective and individual social, musical and health-giving activity. For example, the UK Government's £40m 'National Singing Programme' (2007–2011) for Primary-aged children in England – called 'Sing Up' – has now reached over 80% of Primary schools (January 2009) and over 14,000 teachers have attended courses and events to develop their singing knowledge and skills (http://www.singup.org/about/achievements/) and elsewhere there is greater evidence of advocacy for choral singing (e.g., http://www.choirs.org.uk/home.htm).

A survey of adults' attitudes reflecting on their school experiences of singing is to be found in Turton & Durrant (2002), where it was revealed that not all people think negatively about singing, but rather, were not enthused by the school experience of it. A number of research studies show that careless comment at an early age can impact negatively on people's perceptions and self-efficacy in terms of singing and certainly the belief that choir is not for them (Richards & Durrant, 2003; Welch, 2001, 2008; Knight, 2010).

A wide range of significant research studies have since emerged over the past decade from the music team at the Institute of Education, University of London into the whole area of choral conducting and choral education, as well as the allied areas of singing and vocal development. This initiative was in response to a policy that sought to deepen and extend the existing music education research culture at a time of increasing international interest in the social, intellectual and emotional power of music. The new research addressed the perceived paucity of extended quantitative studies on singing activity and vocal development (Welch), including psycho-acoustics (Himonides and Welch), and established new qualitative studies on choral conductor effectiveness in relation to choirs and their leaders (Durrant) and conductor training and education (Durrant and Varvarigou). This research expertise has attracted significant and sustained numbers of research students, some of whom have since completed their studies and others that are in process. (Examples of the studies in the area are detailed in the Appendix below.)

Focus on Conductors and Conducting

Durrant's most significant study on choral conducting effectiveness was founded on the lack of systematic and structured teaching of conducting within higher education in the UK (Durrant, 1994; 2003). Unlike other

countries in northern Europe, notably Scandinavia and Germany, and North America, conducting does not appear as a central part of musical education consistently. Many choral conductors in England, especially those in cathedrals, have not received systematic training other than by 'osmosis', being part of the environment in which they sang, usually played the organ and eventually conducted.

In addition, those who lead choral music activity in schools are very likely not to have received tuition in conducting (Varvarigou, 2009). Varvarigou's study looked in depth at the training of conductors in particular teaching contexts in the UK. Initially focusing on a survey to find out what actually is taught and where in terms of conducting, she then investigated five choral conducting teaching situations to examine what went on and the perceptions and reflections of those being taught. One related facet of this study reports how an on-line virtual learning environment was used to track perceptions of students and their influence on the development of their peers in one particular teaching situation (Durrant & Varvarigou, 2008). These investigations were carried out in higher education institutions, including one conservatoire and independent organisations, including the *Association of British Choral Directors*. This organisation relatively recently has initiated conducting courses on a more sequenced and systematic level for 'initial', 'intermediate' and 'advanced' conductors, as well as providing 'one-off' instructional courses at their conventions and other events. This situation contrasts vividly with the USA, for example, where at university level, those who intend to become school choral directors will have received significant choral conducting teaching. More universities and colleges are now following suit, both in response to the research that identifies and informs needs (Durrant, 1994) and the political agenda that suggests the time is ripe for such development.

A model of effective choral conducting put forward in Durrant (2003) suggests that there are three main contributing fundamentals:

- the conductor has a series of *philosophical principles underpinning their role*, which include belief in oneself in the role, an understanding of the choral repertoire and of the aesthetic and expressive potential of the music;
- the conductor has a series of *musical technical skills*, including aural acuity and the ability to detect errors in the singing, giving clear indications of tempo, dynamics and phrasing;
- the conductor has a series of *interpersonal skills*, that include creating a non-threatening safe environment in which to enable healthy singing and enable vocal development and communicating effectively in rehearsal and performance.

The attributes within each category are subject to refinement and challenge and are interchangeable and should be regarded holistically rather than individually assessable. The pedagogical and philosophical basis is found in the neuro-psycho-biological sciences articulated in, for example, Thurman & Welch (2000), where understanding the nature of human behaviour and human learning is fundamental to how we, as teachers and conductors, can impact upon the singing and emotional lives of those in our choirs.

Further doctoral study on conducting is being undertaken by Alan Kwok, who is carrying out a philosophical exploration on gesture and how it is used in various levels of communication, in everyday life, in dance (including traditional Chinese), movement as well as in conducting. He is investigating the natural response of human gesture and its relationship with the symbolic form of music and conductors' symbolic use of gesture to indicate and express music's characteristics (Durrant, 2009). It adopts a cross-cultural approach, Kwok being a Chinese lecturer in Hong Kong, who trained as a Western classical musician and who conducts and teaches choral conducting.

Focus on Choirs

With a more specific focus on choir, another of our doctoral students, Flora Yeung, is carrying out a study on the impact of singing in school choirs in Hong Kong on adult singing behaviour. As a singer and conductor from Hong Kong, she has completed a survey on the choirs open to adults to discover aspects of their membership, how they came into existence, their aims, their musical repertoire and what influenced the singers to join their particular chosen choirs. Hong Kong itself does not have a strong choral tradition, at least in the Western European sense, yet choral singing is a significant part of school and, notably, secondary school community life. A large number of schools take part in the annual schools' choir competition (and indeed are expected to take part), thus engaging large numbers of young people in the singing activity (Yeung, 2007). However, Yeung discovers that not all experiences of choral singing at these events are regarded as positive, with a great deal of pressure

being put on singers and conductors to achieve high results. Her hypothesis is that these formative experiences in childhood and adolescence do impact upon the consequent attitudes and participation in choral singing activity in adulthood (a theme echoed in Knight's recently completed doctoral research into adults who perceive themselves as 'non-singers' in Newfoundland). Many of the choirs being investigated have particular and well defined 'identities', including such groups as a Welsh male voice choir, a Chinese women's choir, Bach and baroque choirs, which give clues as to musical repertoire and/or the nature of the membership of each group. The post-colonial context is perhaps important here and Yeung draws on research within the Hong Kong community and its schools (Leung, 2003; Ho, 2007) on the transition from being a British colony for 150 years to a re-adjustment and re-identification with China.

The motivations behind the enthusiastic behaviour of singers in these choirs illustrate a complex and multifaceted research framework of interesting cultural, sociological, pedagogical, psychological and music-related questions. Although various research studies have looked into Hong Kong people's music making behaviour, the still expanding phenomenon of adult choirs in the Hong Kong local community is seldom documented, since these research projects mainly focus on general music making and school music teaching rather than choral singing in choirs. This is a contrasting perspective on the choir phenomenon to the more well established practices found in northern Europe.

Another study on choir is the investigation of the relatively recent introduction of female choristers into English cathedrals. There are various related strands of research. Welch (2007; in press; Welch & Howard, 2002) continues to investigate the preparation of female cathedral choristers at Wells Cathedral in the West of England (with Evangelos Himonides of the IoE and David Howard of York University). This longitudinal study is in its eleventh year and has generated a range of evidence as to how young female singers are inducted into the performance traditions of cathedral music and of how their voice mature from adolescence into young adulthood.

There is also doctoral research being undertaken by Claire Stewart that is more widely focused and investigating both the reasons why the previously all-male choral tradition in UK cathedrals was very publicly challenged by Salisbury Cathedral in 1991, as well as how this impacted on other cathedrals across the country. The dataset includes a year-long study of Litchfield Cathedral in its first year of their introducing a girls' choir.

Another related study has just been completed by Williams (2010), in which she investigated the underlying vocal health of male cathedral choristers through longitudinal and comparative studies. Boy choristers who sing in UK cathedrals and major chapels perform to a professional standard on a daily basis, have extensive linked rehearsals and are also expected to follow a full school curriculum. Significant differences emerged between the vocal health of the boys in the chorister group and the (comparative) non-choristers. Perhaps paradoxically, the choristers who board (i.e., have residence as well as study in the school during term time) have the lowest incidence of voice disorder, although they experience the highest vocal loading. This suggests that the voice is being athletically conditioned to support such extensive singing activity, and/or that the chorister group employs some form of self-regulation with regard to overusing the voice. The comparison between the groups of participant boys suggests that there are powerful cultural and social influences by peers in voice use. The longitudinal data also provided insights into the vocal behaviour during the onset of adolescent voice change with particular information about the vocal skills employed in the upper pitch range.

Focus on Singing and Vocal Development

The study of singing and vocal development embraces all ages – child, adolescent and adult – and categories: 'non-singers' (Knight, 2010), 'developing singers' (Welch et al., various) and 'professionals' (Williams, 2010; Williams et al. 2005). Within this diversity, there has been the particular longitudinal focus on the development of choristers as an example of highly skilled, yet young, professional singers (mentioned in the previous paragraph).

More recently, as part of the wider research into the impact of the UK Government's National Singing Programme 'Sing Up', there has been an evaluation of the Choir Schools Association's 'Chorister Outreach Programme' (COP). The programme is designed to promote high quality singing in schools by drawing on the expertise available in cathedrals through shared school-based and cathedral-based activities with adult and chorister mentors. An investigation of three projects in Durham, Exeter and Bradford suggested that the COP is having a positive benefit on both children's singing behaviour and also their attitudes to singing (Welch, Papageorgi et al., 2009).

Meanwhile, over the first two years (2007–2009) of investigating the main 'Sing Up' programme (led by a consortium headed by Youth

Music), we have visited 155 schools across England. We have assessed the individual singing behaviour and development of 8,162 children, aged 7+ to 10+ years. We have also noted children's attitudes to singing in different contexts (such as in school or outside) and also whether singing has any impact on their self-concept and sense of social inclusion. Amongst the key findings are (i) although we expect average children's singing competency to improve with age (that is, older children tend to be more advanced in their singing than younger children), those with experience of *Sing Up* demonstrate significantly greater improvements; (ii) furthermore, irrespective of social background and ethnicity, there are examples of measureable singing *Sing Up* linked improvements for boys as well as girls; and (iii) if children experience singing activities that have (a) positive, and expert, child (and/or adult) role models – such as in 'Sing Up"s *Singing Playgrounds* and *Chorister Outreach* programmes – and (b) experience a rich musical repertoire, including singing games and opportunities for collective performance, then older children (boys as well as girls) are likely to develop and sustain much more positive attitudes to singing and to continue to be engaged and motivated to take part (Welch et al., 2009).

There was also evidence that singing development appears to be related to self-concept and sense of social inclusion, i.e., these are positively correlated, with more advanced singers also having a more positive self-concept and sense of being socially included. This finding is echoed in a related research study of the impact on child participants of a choral development programme in Emilia Romagna, Italy. Both children and their teachers benefitted from participation in this Ministry of Education-funded regional programme. In particular, children who had taken part in the *Progetto Musica Regione Emilia Romagna* had a much more positive view of themselves and of their connection to the community (Welch, Preti & Himonides, 2009).

Overall, there is considerable evidence that participation in singing activities, particularly as part of a collective, brings a range of beneficial impacts. In addition to the musical benefits, there are positive effects on physical and psychological (mental) health and well-being (e.g., relieving anxiety, promoting relaxation, improving lung function, lowering heart rate and blood pressure), as well as on self, social development and social attachment.

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Appendix

Doctoral studies in choirs, choral education, singing and vocal development include the following:

(Recently completed)

Himonides, E. (2008). *The Psychoacoustics of Vocal Beauty: A Framework for the Interpretation of Sung Performance Quality using New Technology.*

The study focused on factors that influence the perception of quality in people's singing, including the relationship between underlying physiological responses and the acoustic experience.

Rinta, T. (2008). *Connections between Children's Speaking and Singing Behaviours: Implications for Education and Therapy.*

This thesis reported how children's speaking and singing are related physiologically, psychologically and socially, but not developmentally.

Preti, C. (2009). *Music in Hospitals: Anatomy of a Process.*

This was a study of groups of professional musicians (singers and instrumentalists) in England and Italy and why they were able to achieve a positive impact on their patients and the hospital environment.

Varvarigou, M. (2009). *Choral Conducting Preparation in the UK.*

The thesis investigated the educational provision available for choral conductors, leading to the proposal for a heuristic theoretical framework of six parameters by which the quality and impact of the process could be evaluated.

Knight, S. (2010). *A Study of Adult 'Non-singers' in Newfoundland.*

This was a study of how a 'non-singing' identity in adults is attributed by socio-cultural expectations and the negative experiences of significant others in childhood.

Williams, J. (2010). *The Implications of Intensive Singing Training on the Vocal Health and Development of Boy Choristers in an English Cathedral Choir.*

(Current on-going studies and their foci)

Francis, M. Aspects of performing and assessment of performance.

Grimmer, S. The transmission and development of skill for solo performance in the Classical music traditions of South India and the West.

Kayes, G. A multi-methods investigation of the characteristic singing behaviours of female music theatre and Western classical music performers.

Kwok, A. A philosophical exploration on gesture and how it is used in various levels of communication, in everyday life, in dance (including traditional Chinese), movement as well as in conducting.

Stewart, C. The transformation of the English cathedral tradition through the introduction of female choristers.

Yang, Y. The challenges inherent in promoting traditional folk song performance and pedagogy in Chinese higher education: A case study of Hua'er.

Yeung, F. The impact of singing in school choirs in Hong Kong on adult singing behaviour.

Sweden – A National Perspective

Gunnel Fagius

> *"Sweden has made a name for itself as a country rich in choral activities. Well-developed training programmes for choral singing and directing have resulted in many choirs of consummate technical ability and artistry – ensembles that have inspired composers to write for the human voice in various choral constellations."*

This quotation is from the information brochure, "The Swedish Choral Miracle. On Choir Life in Sweden. Why, How and Where Do People Sing in Choirs?" (Fagius, 2009). It highlights a true and historical fact about the popularity of choirs in Sweden. However, this phenomenon must be discussed with regard to how it came about and whether research done on the topic is enough to explain how this was possible.

The organisation of choral singing in Sweden has been well established for a long time. The roots of organised Swedish choral singing have been the subject of musicological and pedagogical research for the last 30 years. Some of this research has included singing among students at the beginning of the 19th century, singing together in broad-based movements, choral singing in the Church of Sweden, school choirs, singing together in an educational perspective, the education of choral conductors and choral singers, choral repertory, and choral composers.

The choral scene in Sweden is currently changing and we still find exquisite and skilled chamber choirs performing at a high level. We also still find a more popular tradition of choir singing which nurtures the old concept of coming together and having a good time by singing well

known choral music. There is also a modern concept of singing together in small groups. Additionally, there is a change in repertory and new singing ideals in which traditional choral songs are sung alongside modern choral compositions in a classical sense.

We need to scrutinise previous research. We should examine many choral conductors in addition to professor Eric Ericson, and investigate conditions that have guided Swedish choral singers throughout the middle of the 20th century – a crucial time in the development of choral artistry. In addition, we need to find out if there were other situations and other ideals of choir singing during that time. By improving our historical knowledge, we will also improve our understanding and examination of current choral ideals with respect to social changes and changes in educational methods and musical styles.

Three main areas of choral research make significant contributions to Swedish choral development:

1. Swedish choir tone

- How does choir tone influence choir repertory and vice versa?
- Aesthetic ideas of vocal tone throughout different points in time.
- Ideal of vocal tone in an anthropological sense.

2. Children and singing

- Nurturing a deep knowledge of the anatomy and voice development of children's voices as well as linguistic and neurological research on children's voices and singing requirements. This could impart new tools to understand the requirements for children and singing, especially in a historical perspective.
- Studying the historical aspects of children's singing can enable us to describe and understand current vocal ideals.
- Study children's choir as a pedagogical and artistic instrument and how it has been used since the middle of the 1950's.
- Investigate the categories of descant choirs in a historical light.

3. Choral artistry or singing

- Investigate the existence of the community singing movement (Swedish: *allsång*).

- Investigate the existence of feel-good choirs (i.e. anyone-can-sing choirs).
- Where do you find these choirs, what are the organisations, who are the leaders, what is their education, what do they sing, who are the audiences?

Choir Research in Europe – Perspectives for a Comparative Research Approach

Helmke Jan Keden

First and foremost, we would like to state that choir singing was and still is a popular form of cultural expression all over Europe, and this is something that motivates us to attempt to understand the reasons for this phenomenon that appears in a great variety of forms. In searching for answers, the members of the choir network could benefit by using and developing comparative approaches.[1] In my view, any topics for research into the phenomenon of European choirs could be orientated along the following lines that provide numerous intersections worthy of further investigation.

The historical dimension

Over the past few centuries, choirs and choir music were subject to highly divergent processes of development. If we look at European choirs, we see that "choir research" can never be separated from national, socio-political and denominational events and changes.[2] Such apparent phe-

1 Cf. Grochulski, M., Kautny, O. & Keden, H.J. (Hrsg.) (2006). *Musik in Diktaturen des 20. Jahrhunderts. Internationales Symposium an der Bergischen Universität Wuppertal vom 28./29.2.2004. Tagungsband*. Mainz: Are.

2 Cf. Brusniak, F. (1995). „Chor und Chormusik: II. Chorwesen seit dem 18. Jh., 1. Überblick; 3. Wurzeln, Anfänge, Ausprägungen; 4. Von 1800 bis 1848/49; 5. Von 1850 bis 1918; 6. Vom Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs bis zur Gegenwart; Literatur". In: L. Finscher (Hrsg.). *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. 2. neubearbeitete Ausgabe. Sachteil Bd. 2. Kassel, 766-824. Ders. mit Klenke, D. (1995). *„Heil deutschem Wort und Sang!" Nationalidentität und Gesangskultur in der deutschen Geschichte*. Augsburg; Klenke,

nomena are reflected both in manifold artistic forms and in numerous forms of administration that accompany and characterise choirs to this day.[3]

The transnational dimension

Numerous studies show that everyday choir activities, in the past and present, must be reviewed from the point of view of national interference. Many musico-cultural developments cannot be understood without investigating transnational exchanges or mutual influences of "choirs on the move".[4]

The functional dimension

Even if choir singing is merely performed for the sake of "l'art pour l'art", singing in groups always has a purpose since it is not possible to make music without a reason. It might therefore be desirable to find out why singing in choirs actually came about and why singing in a community is popular even today. This means that we should ask what it is that makes people sing in choirs using the aid of psychology. The question of the "meaning" of choir singing (even if it is frequently articulated subconsciously) must at the same time include an ideological-critical approach to research, such as the functionalisation of community singing for political purposes.[5]

The biographical dimension

There are only a few cultural "movements" other than singing in lay choirs in which the commitment of individuals plays such an important

D. (1998). *Der singende „deutsche Mann". Gesangvereine und deutsches Nationalbewußtsein von Napoleon bis Hitler*. Münster.

3 Cf. Brusniak, F. (2007). „Zur Entwicklung der Chorkultur in Deutschland – Eine Einführung in Institutionen und Organisationsformen". In: E. Fischer (Hrsg.). *Chorgesang als Medium von Interkulturalität: Formen, Kanäle, Diskurse*. Stuttgart (= Berichte des interkulturellen Forschungsprojekts „Deutsche Musikkultur im östlichen Europa" 3), 19–26.

4 Cf. Fischer 2007.

5 Cf. Keden, H.J. (2003). *Zwischen „Singender Mannschaft" und „Stählerner Romantik". Die Ideologisierung des deutschen Männergesangs im „Nationalsozialismus"*. Diss. Stuttgart.

part in the dynamics of groups. This phenomenon can be traced back to the "non-professional" status of many choir conductors and functionaries, who are not professional musicians, yet fulfil their passion for making music in choirs. Thus, it makes sense to ask about the influences and opportunities that lay choirs offer to different European nations, and to what extent these choirs have been and still are influenced by individual personalities.[6]

The dimension of day-to-day choir activity

Contemporary "choir research" should also orientate itself around the current state of day-to-day choir activity because it offers wide scope for empirical research. By using qualitative and quantitative methods, we can work on important issues, including questions of technique (e.g., voice training) and psychological questions (individual/collective/choir conductor). These questions are important for current research into learning methods; they open up new perspectives both for future educational concepts and for choir projects and compositions.[7]

6 Cf. Wäsche, C. (2007). *Vom Singen im Volke. Richard Poppe (1884–1960) und die Ideale des Finkensteiner Bundes*. Würzburg: Margraf Publishers (= Würzburger Hefte zur Musikpädagogik; 2).

7 Cf. Ashley, M. (2009). *How High Should Boys Sing? Gender, Authenticity and Credibility in the Young Male Voice*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Choir Music in France: A Historical Insight

Guillaume Lurton

It is widely accepted that choral music in France has been historically weak and that it has gone through a renewal over the last decades. The idea of a choral renewal however has to be put into perspective. This notion is often linked with a description of France as a *choral desert* ("le désert choral français"). It is true that over the last fifty years, choir practices in France developed robustly and went through profound transformations. Still, these transformations did not occur out of an empty landscape.

Choir music being historically linked with religious repertoires, the secularisation of France since the Revolution had a strong impact on choral practices. On the one hand, choir schools attached to cathedrals declined. Moreover, new republican musical training institutions, such as the Conservatoire, focused on instrumental music and opera singing and neglected choir music. Consequently, choral practices did not disappear, but they developed independently from religious and musical institutions.

From the nineteenth century until the 1940's, choral music was the result of many isolated private initiatives. These included the creation of popular choirs (*Mouvement Orphéonique*, *Fêtes du Peuples*, *Choeurs populaires*), of religious choirs (the *Cecilian Movement* from Germany), of choirs oriented toward the rediscovery of ancient music (the movement of *Schola Cantorum*). A great heterogeneity of choral practices which is still relevant today followed the great diversity of these experiences, in terms of repertoire, of social and ideological orientations.

A first renewal of choir music happened in the aftermath of World War II. *Popular Education* played a major role in the expansion of choral practices. Choir Federations were created. Through the organisation of training sessions for choir conductors and the publishing of new repertoire, they contributed to the creation of an increasing number of amateur choirs organised as private non-profit organisations. Up to now, secular associative choirs remain the main form of choral practices in France.

A second renewal took place during the 1980's and the 1990's. Cultural policies aimed at reintegrating choir music appeared within musical institutions where previously this had been neglected. New *curricula* and diplomas have been created for choir conductors, within the conservatoire. New choir schools have been created, mainly on a secular basis. These policies resulted in the professionalisation of parts of the French choral world. A significant proportion of the conductors working with amateur choirs are now professionalised (40% of amateur choirs are conducted by a professional). Finally, the cultural policies in favor of performing arts companies also allowed for the professionalisation of a limited number of choirs and vocal ensembles, which resulted in the development of new job markets for a limited number of choir singers.

Danish Choir Research Traditions

Peter Nissen

Relevant Institutions

Choir research in Denmark is mostly present at universities and music academies.

- Humanistiske/Geisteswissenschaftliche/Study of the Arts Research Institutions:
  - University of Aarhus, Department of Musicology
    - Professor Linda Maria Koldau
    - Associate professor Erling Kullberg (New Danish Choir music)
  - University of Southern Denmark, Center for Songs and Ballads
    - Research librarian Peter E. Nissen
- Music academies (practice and teaching Institutions)
  - Classical music choir teaching and performance
    - The Royal Danish Academy of Music
    - Jutland Academy of Music
    - Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Southern Denmark
  - Popular music choir teaching and performance
    - Jutland Academy of Music
    - Aarhus University, Department of Music (Associate professor Jens Johansen)

  - Church music choir teaching and performance
    - The Royal Danish Academy of Music
    - Jutland Academy of Music
    - Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts, Southern Denmark

Relevant Research

With the exception of Aarhus University, Choir research in Denmark has primarily been done in monographs and in different kinds of temporal projects until now:

- History of choirs and institutions
  - Steensen, S.C. (2009): *De syngende Drenge. Herning Kirkes Drengekor 1949-2009*. Poul Kristensen.
  - Palsmar, H. (2007): *På elverskud. Strejftog i dansk kormusik; festskrift DR Radiokoret 75 år*. København: DR. [National Radio Choir].
  - *Festskrift Skt. Annæ Skole*, 2004.
  - Møller, N. (1998): *Sangskolen (Skt. Annæ skole)*. Private publication.
  - Ørbæk Jensen, A. (1996). *Hellige Flamme. Studentersang i Danmark i 1800-tallet*. København: Engstrøm Sødring (= Studentersang i Norden; 3). [Student singers]
    - Scandinavian research project: *Studentersang i Norden*.
    - MA-thesis: Ørbæk Jensen, A. (1983). *Danish Amateur Choirs 1970-82*. University of Copenhagen. Unpublished ms.
  - Buch, J. (1989). *Uglen og lyren studenter-sangforeningen 1839-1989*. Nyt nordisk forlag Arnold Busck.
  - Schiørring, N. (1977/1978). *Musikkens historie i Danmark*. Bd 1, *Fra oldtiden til 1750*; Bd 2, *1750–1870;* Bd 3, *1870–1970'erne*. København: Politikens forlag.
  - Literature before 1970: Arnholtz, A. (1951). *Lille dansk sangleksikon: oversigtslister til dansk sanghistorie*. København.
- Repertoire and works
  - Kullberg, E. (2009). *Sange for kor: Dansk kormusik i det 20. århundrede*. København: Wilhelm Hansen.

- Alsinger, B.F. & Willemoes, P. (1996). *Komponisten Svend S. Schultz. Et kapitel af dansk musikliv*. Hørsholm: Friis.

- Performance and culture
  - New movie: Herning Kirkes Drengekor: "En stemme for livet" (2009). NovaMedia Film. [A Voice for life – Herning Young Male Church Choir]
  - Rossen, J.M. & Sharvit, U. (2006). *A Fusion of Traditions: Liturgical Music in the Copenhagen Synagogue*. Syddansk Universitetsforlag.
- Practice and teaching literature (after 1970) [Science of music pedagogy]
  - Fischer-Nielsen, W. & Pedersen, M. (2002). "Brugen af nye salmer og rytmisk musik i kirken". I: T. Jensen (red.). *Håndbog for korledere i rytmisk kirkemusik*. Herning Folkeskolens Musiklærerforening. [Popular church music choir]
  - Krogh, A.L. & Krintel, A. (2000). *101 opvarmningsøvelser, kor*. Århus: Systime.
  - Enevold, M. et al. (1994). *Håndbog for korledere*. Egtved: Edition Egtved. [Children's choir]
  - Poulsen, T. (1988). *Metodik i korarbejdet*. Egtved: Edition Egtved (= Folkekirkens ungdomskor, kornyt – nodebilag 1988/2).
  - Schuldt-Jensen, M. (1987). *Korledelse, punktkursus*. Holte: Solbakken.
  - Høybye, J. (1972–76). *Korarbejdshefte 1-4*. Danske Folkekor.
  - Ochsner Ridder, H.M., Daniels Beck, B., Lærke-Engelschmidt, M. & Hyldgaard, S. (2009). "MusikRgodt : erfaringer fra en pilotundersøgelse af korsangs indflydelse på trivsel og humør". *Dansk Musikterapi* 6 (2), 16–22.
- 24 MA-thesis from the universities

Chapters in which choirs are mentioned in earlier work about Danish Music history (e.g., *Musikkens Historie i Danmark, vol. I–III* by Nils Schiørring, 1978) are also notable.

II

Projects and Individual Perspectives

Widening Young Male Participation in Chorus: Keeping Boys Singing?

Martin Ashley

Introduction: Aims and Definitions

This paper describes *Boys Keep Singing*, which is a work in progress that aims to impact upon the long-standing gender imbalance in choral singing and the worry shared by many choir directors about the greater difficulty encountered in recruiting male singers as opposed to female. The work is particularly concerned with boys aged between eleven and fourteen. This is partly because such young males have long held a special place in the history of sacred "classical"[8] music as voices valued in their own right. At a more pragmatic level, it is because of the possible relationship between a large scale exodus of boys from singing in chorus during this period of early adolescence and the future availability of adult tenors and basses for a whole range of choral activities.

It will be helpful at the outset to set out what is meant by the terms "chorus", "choral singing" and "choir". Why, indeed, has the word "chorus" rather than "choir" been used in the title of this paper? A working definition of "choir" is provided acoustically by Ternström (2009) who suggests that the minimum number of singers that can constitute a vocal chorus is three to a part. This is because the chorus effect of conflicting intonation, attack and synchronisation is first heard when the number of voices is more than two. Thus, for the performance of four part

8 The term is used in its broad, popular sense rather than the stricter meaning of the Haydn/Mozart era.

vocal music, the smallest number of singers possible to count as a choir is twelve. Eight singers would be a double octet, acoustically different to a choir. This assumes that a choir is also a chorus.

"Choir" also has musical and social meanings. Musically, we might use the term "choir" when choral performance is the sole focus whereas "chorus" has associations with the use of the term in Greek drama that we might see today in the opera or music theatre chorus. Socially, however, the term has become increasingly linked in the minds of young people with social class and generation. To use their words, choirs are "posh" and "for the elderly" (Ashley, 2009). This is exacerbated by such factors as the use of electronic processing and amplification to enhance small numbers of voices, and the popularity of TV shows such as *X Factor*. Such shows connect more readily with a popular culture of celebrity soloists or vocal bands to which the majority of young people are more likely to relate, as listeners but also as composers and performers of their own music. Indeed, this latter is another area in which choir singing is not connecting with the many young people who value their own song writing and what they regard as "their" music rather than the transmission of the Western canon of accepted choral works (National Music Manifesto, 2006:48). Welch (2009) has described the difference between the *re-creative* approach of the latter and the *creative* approach of the former (see also National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, 1999).

These are issues that affect young people of both genders, but the impact upon boys is particularly great. A comprehensive literature review by Clift et al. (2008) suggests that adult female participation in singing outnumbers male participation by a factor of 3:1.

The UK National Singing Programme

The UK is currently the beneficiary of a large £40m government funded National Singing Programme, launched in 2008 and due to end in 2011. This has a target of making 100% of primary schools "singing schools", which raises two extremely important questions:

Will boys and girls contribute equally to the statistics?
Will boys continue to sing in equal numbers to girls beyond primary schooling and through the particularly difficult 11–14 years into adulthood?

A comprehensive base line evaluation of the National Singing Programme by Welch et al. (2009) has indicated that boys do indeed present particular problems and challenges that make affirmative answers to both these questions a hard goal. This evaluation confirms the author's own research – that boys increasingly turn against what Welch et al. call the "school song" by age 11. Adolescent boys are more likely to look to their own song writing which lies outside a culture based on the transmission of the Western canon. The transition between primary and secondary schooling at age 11 is also a crucial watershed in which the "babyish" can be dismissed and significant questions arise about the nature of contact primary age children have with choral music as opposed to school singing. The author's own research suggests that boys who *do* sing in classical sacred choirs maintain in their minds a clear distinction between what they regard as the babyish music of primary school or the lack of challenge in secondary schools and the demanding choral works which they value precisely because they feel challenged and extended (Ashley, 2002; 2009).

This raises questions about "posh" because of the degree to which boys' access to challenging choral works has traditionally been linked in the UK to a long-standing socio-economic and cultural divide between independent and state maintained education. This was noted by Irvin Cooper, originator of the cambiata[9] voice concept, on a study tour to the UK in 1963. On the one hand, he was in awe of the public schools and cathedrals where he found choral singing "among the finest in the world" (Cooper, 1964). In the state maintained schools, however, he found what he considered widespread ignorance of the adolescent boy voice. Different teachers held wildly differing conceptions of what the ranges of such voices might be and there was little understanding as to why unison singing with boys and girls at the same pitch was inappropriate and traditional school song books therefore useless (ibid: 119). Cooper was distressed by the apparent lack of systematic co-operation and inservice training in the UK that might allow these teachers to develop the idea. That little has changed between 1963 and 2009 is clearly

9 The term "cambiata" may not be universally familiar. It refers to a boy's voice in an early stage of change during puberty when the high treble register is no longer available but adult male vocal ranges not yet attained. John Cooksey in his seminal voice change classification employed the term "mid-voice". Some contention exists with regard to cathedral choristers who might employ falsetto techniques to maintain the treble register during their cambiata phase.

noted in an inspection of music provision by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) which was particularly critical of singing at KS3 (ages 11–14) and noted acutely teachers' ignorance of basic principles of vocal development in boys (Ofsted, 2009).

The tension between a knowledgeable independent sector and the state sector has surfaced within the National Singing Programme through a sometimes uneasy truce between a community music tradition that is predominantly aural and the more traditional Chorister Outreach Programme (COP) which is firmly grounded in notation and a classical musical training. The COP, though in overall terms a minority, is by far the most significant single grouping within SingUp, accounting for £10m out of the total £40m budget. To a degree this reflects government recognition of the significance of the English choral tradition and support for the principle that excellence should be shared across education sectors. A further evaluation has been undertaken by Welch et al. of the COP. This evaluation has employed as its principal instrument measures of children's developmental singing competency against a baseline (Rutkowski, 1997, and Welch, 1998). These would appear to suggest that "COP schools" (i.e. a sample of those state primary schools that had engaged with cathedral choristers and classically trained music staff) had been the most effective means of raising singing competence within the National Singing Programme (Welch et al., 2009b: 30). To this must be added two important caveats. First, the instruments chosen by Welch and his colleagues are conditioned by certain cultural assumptions and their appropriateness for use across the whole National Singing Programme might be questioned by some (see SingUp debate on quality at www.singup.org/quality/). Second, Welch et al.'s own data appear to suggest that the cathedral schools may be amongst the poorest performers when it comes to raising the singing competence of their non-chorister pupils.

This evaluation also looked at children's attitudes to singing and the COP schools again achieved the highest scores in all three analytical categories of attitude to singing, engagement with singing and social inclusion (ibid.: 34). However, analysis of the results by gender appears to suggest that the COP is having less impact in addressing boys' attitudes to singing. First, it is the case that the number of girls from COP schools recorded as participating in singing is approximately double the number of boys, with a variation across age groups that suggests that the problem of declining interest in singing together in school chorus may not have been solved. Boys' participation in particular continues to decline

toward the crucial watershed age of eleven (ibid.: 17). Second, Welch et al.'s data record that *within* the COP projects there were statistically significant gender differences, girls being more positive in their attitudes to singing and reporting stronger engagement with singing than boys (ibid.: 35–36).

Boy Choristers as Role Models

This is of particular interest to the present *Boys Keep Singing* project for perhaps obvious reasons. Of particular significance are the claims that are being made that cathedral choristers are somehow role models for boys' singing, which are currently based upon largely anecdotal evidence or optimistic assumptions. The Welch et al. evaluation did not test these claims nor apparently appreciate their significance. The only currently available data are those from the author's own study which provides consistent evidence that boys the same age as choristers (i.e. about thirteen years) regard the high tessitura of the so-called "head voice" as inappropriate for boys of their age (Ashley, 2008; 2009). A synthesis of these findings with those of Welch et al. would suggest that cathedral choristers are therefore perhaps not as effective as role models for boys as they might be. Paradoxically, boy choristers may even actually increase girls' interest in singing whilst confirming the prejudices of boys against "singing like a girl" and consolidating patriarchal hegemony within the music industry (Ashley, 2010a; 2010b).

An important area for further work here concerns the attitudes that may be engendered in boys of nine to ten years of age by boys approximately three years older. A three year age gap is potentially significant, the older boys being from the "big" or secondary school. The author's existing study again suggests that attitudes in nine to ten year olds may not always be positive, words such as "weird" having been used to describe chorister singing. However, this work is now beginning to be dated and the COP has developed significantly since these data were gathered. In particular, there seems to be a growing appreciation of what may be involved in bridging the gap between cultural traditions, though the degree to which this is happening needs to be formally analysed and recorded. Whilst uncertainties remain here, the worrying possibility that some chorister outreach could be counter-productive in motivating boys to sing clearly needs urgently to be further tested, preferably through reasonably large scale quantitative work.

At its heart is the fundamental question, how high should boys sing? This is addressed for boys in their own language by the on-line digital book *I'm a Boy: how high should I sing?* which is one of the project outputs and now available to *Choir in Focus* network members. The *Boys Keep Singing* resources include a collection of films, an on-line digital book *for boys* which includes voice and singing samples, and a practitioner network with the option for uploading further films, recordings, lesson plans and professional viewpoints. Finally, a university education faculty partnership with four "laboratory schools" that have agreed to test the impact of the materials on new Y7 pupils (aged eleven) moving up to secondary school in September 2010 has been established.

The entire project aims to be inclusive and culturally broad. It is driven by the principle that a good education will empower boys to make well informed choices and to appreciate the full possibilities of the male voice with greater understanding and less prejudice than may currently be the case. However, there is an undeniable cultural divide between the classical choral tradition of boys' singing in a high treble up to the age of thirteen or fourteen and the notion of arranging repertoire to suit the changing adolescent voice that is strongly associated with John Cooksey's research (Cooksey, 1993) and the developmental work of advocates such as Don Collins (Collins, 2006). This divide is exacerbated by a growing tension between choir directors and singing teachers attentive to voice science. Questions about the possible exploitation of boys or damage to young, developing voices through excessively protracted use of the treble register have been raised (Williams, 2001). The cathedral music sector seems also to be experiencing some uncertainty because of a growing (though scientifically unproven) belief that puberty may be coming earlier (Ashley, 2010; Ashley, Howard & Williams, forthcoming)

The National Youth Choirs of Great Britain

The resources were produced in collaboration with the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain (NYCGB). The main National Youth Choir itself is for young people aged between sixteen and twenty two and is intended to provide a choral equivalent to the National Youth Orchestra. There are also regional training choirs for thirteen to eighteen year olds which do not guarantee membership of the NYC, but can be an important preparation for audition. Since 2002 there has also been a

boys' choir for age 9 upwards until the young person is eligible to audition for one of the training choirs. Although in theory open to any boy capable of passing the audition, in practice the choir is dominated by boys from independent schools, including a number of current or ex-cathedral choristers. The reasons for this are precisely those described above: it is mainly in the independent sector that the opportunities for choral singing and quality choral training exist. The promise of broadening the social base and including more pupils from state schools was one of the main reasons for funding being granted to the *Boys Keep Singing* project.

The members of the NYCGB boys' choir were all auditioned for parts in the films and consulted for their views with regard to the question of appropriate singing range during puberty. This is reported elsewhere in a more detailed paper that describes the investigation into these boys' understanding of Cooksey's research (Ashley, 2010, forthcoming). In summary, most were quite well informed about what was happening to their own voices. Almost all felt that if they were to act as role models for younger boys, they should sing initially only in the lower register that would be more familiar to those with little knowledge of the sacred choral repertoire. Most felt that this was necessary to capture interest first in younger boys, some of whom might then progress to singing in a wider range. Nearly all expressed the view that they greatly enjoyed their own participation in classical choral singing, but preferred not to disclose much about this to their non-singing peers at school. This was entirely consistent with the author's previous research.

Since this research, recording and filming took place, the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain have taken a stronger lead in responding to boys' vocal needs through the provision of a cambiata section, described on the choir's website as "an important step in the expansion of NYCGB as the Junior Choirs continue to flourish" (NYCGB, 2009). This itself may become a fertile ground for investigation of the earlier puberty hypothesis as it will be possible to monitor any changes in the relative numbers of twelve to fourteen year olds assessed as treble or cambiata by the expert teachers employed.

The *Boys Keep Singing* materials are now available to members of the *Choir in Focus* network who have been granted access (the site is password protected for reasons of child protection). Access can similarly be granted to any choral practitioners or researchers with a bona fide interest in promoting or sustaining boys' interest in singing. As the project moves into its action phase, it will need to:

- capitalise on the increased interest in singing associated with the SingUp National Singing Programme as boys transfer to secondary school at age 11 (SingUp does not extend to secondary schools);
- promote more positive attitudes to singing amongst boys approaching the crucial watershed age of 11, principally through the validation of the activity by older boys acting as role models;
- promote and publicise better opportunities for such boys to receive good choral training in schools and junior choirs, raising the possibility of audition for county youth choirs, the NYCGB itself and, where appropriate, cathedral choirs;
- achieve in schools a significantly improved understanding of how singing through voice change can be a positive experience for boys, leading to increased interest in choral singing as a social and cultural activity that promotes well-being;
- work toward some degree of resolution of the social class and generation based differences in musical taste that are so significant in the UK youth choral scene.

The evaluation phase of the research, which is to be undertaken in collaboration with the laboratory schools, will need to look at:

- Y7+ boys' views on SingUp and any contact they may have had with choristers through a COP;
- Y7+ boys' use of and reactions to the D-book;
- Y7+ boys' response to schemes of work for singing developed by their schools through engagement with the *Boys Keep Singing* films and supporting resources;
- the effectiveness of the project materials (including the practitioner network) in supporting the recruitment of boys;
- the impact on boys' singing of in-service training for teachers provided as a result of the project;
- the cultural impact of a greater understanding by teachers and students of the nature of voice change and the repertoire for young adolescent male voices.

Conclusion

The task facing *Boys Keep Singing* is immense. It should be clear from this paper that there are significant needs for further research. The possibilities for the funding of such research are diminishing as economic recession bites and the SingUp programme itself comes to an end in early 2011. This paper has shown that there continues to exist a large gap between the dominant singing cultures of state and independent schools, with choral singing being concentrated heavily in the latter. This is readily apparent in the *Boys Keep Singing* films which have tried to remain culturally neutral but which inevitably reflect the reality of what is found in those schools chosen as case studies of success in keeping boys singing. This cultural difference peaks over the question of how high boys should sing. It is mainly the independent sector with its associated cathedral choirs that advances the culture of a protracted use of the treble voice up to age thirteen or fourteen. It is mainly the state maintained schools where teachers might respond to in-service training based upon research such as that of John Cooksey.

Boys Keep Singing really has two main agendas. On the one hand, it aims to broaden the social base of participation in choral singing, on the other hand it is driven by the conviction that singing, *any kind of singing*, is good for boys. The degree to which it may achieve any success in these endeavours is largely dependent upon the degree to which practitioners understand the problem and are prepared to co-operate in a reconciliation of cultural traditions for the benefit of including more boys in the arts.

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Choir in Focus Research Network. Personal Reflections on Choir Research

Martin Ashley

Singing, indeed most types of musical performance, presents us with two fundamental choices. We can re-create or we can create. By the former, I mean that a composer can set down his or her thoughts which subsequently require performers to realise and interpret them. By the latter, I mean that the singer/songwriter oversees the whole process, perhaps inventing both words and music as well as performing them. It is, of course, the former, which is the more familiar in the world of choirs and choral singing. The reasons for this are practical as much as historic. One cannot have fifty songwriters in a choir of fifty!

When it comes to the important question of recruiting new generations to choral singing, this divide is not unimportant. It is the latter that has become more familiar to the majority of young people. As the seminal music educators Paynter and Aston (1970) pointed out back in the 1970s, young people have had, since at least the 1950s, their own music. As often as not this is creative rather than re-creative, and the point is driven home by Lucy Green in her important book, *How Popular Musicians Learn* (2002). It is reflected in the present school curriculum, in the UK at least. Music education is no longer thought of as the transmission of a canon of accepted works. Instead, the three pillars of listening, composing and performing hold conceptual sway.

At its best, this approach to music education serves young people and music well. At its worst, however, it is in danger of degenerating into the ubiquitous "keyboard lesson". Pupils are left to wander aimlessly and one fingered over the digital keyboard with a sense of instruction and purpose which strikes me as similar to the approach to "creative writing" that so discredited English primary schools prior to the 1988 Education Reform Act. Of course, teachers are endlessly exhorted by government to "use ICT" in their teaching. The digital keyboard with its assorted paraphernalia of peripherals is, I suppose, doing that. It was, however, with a wry smile that I heard a thirteen year old pupil announce loudly "Oh I hate computers" when the teacher announced a transition from singing to keyboard work in a lesson I was observing.

The wry smile can be traced to other experiences with young people that lead me to believe that they may now live in a world where computers and ICT are the mundane and the everyday, whilst the use of the physical body, the voice (unaided by anything other than the chorus of one's peers) and the acoustic of a large building is the novelty. This, I believe, is an important opportunity for choral singing. It is the thinking behind the film *Big Acoustic* in the *Boys Keep Singing* project. At the time of writing, I do not know what, if anything, this will achieve. The "big acoustic" is a religious building (as such acoustics so often are) and this introduces another whole raft of socio-cultural complexities. Time alone will tell. However, I return to my opening theme of the creative and the re-creative, illustrated by some material sourced from my 2008 monograph. I wrote then:

"... The significance of gospel singing becomes clearer when juxtaposed with the following extract from an interview with Y7 boys at another city comprehensive school, who were asked to recall their experiences of singing at primary school:

We done singing with this lady wot came in. It was really good.
Why, what was good?
We got into groups and we could sing songs we liked.

The issue here is that choir is unpopular because of the degree to which you are 'bossed around' and the extent to which you have to follow (as in ballet) a prescribed syllabus, whereas group singing of 'songs we liked', facilitated by a female, was 'really good'. It has to be contrasted with another focus group of boys at the same school, who recall an off-putting experience at the hands of a traditional male choir trainer. The boys had been challenged for apparently criticizing choral singing without experience of it:

MA: So who's actually been and tried it?
Jason: I have. In Weston Park. You went to this church.
MA: What was it like?

Jason: Embarrassing. Everybody was embarrassed and nervous. Nobody wanted to be overheard by anyone else. That person would be really embarrassed.

Alec: It was boring.

MA: Why?

Alec: He shouted at us if we went too high. And he stopped if we got the note wrong. He kept stopping and we had to sing it again."

The dominant pedagogy in popular music is not instruction in theory but self-discovery through practical experimentation, as one respondent put it "with your mates in your Dad's garage". Traditional male trainers, some of whom can still be given to seeing boys as objectified instruments of their own will and artistic vision, rather than the more "feminine" approach of young people to be nurtured, need to take note.

It is not necessarily hard to re-introduce the joys of singing in chorus with others in a large acoustic space. It is probably fair to say that the National Singing Programme, and particularly the Chorister Outreach Programme with its opportunities for primary school children to sing in cathedrals, has by now demonstrated that a sufficient number of times. But there is clearly a note of caution. A traditional "bossy" approach to choral singing no longer washes with young people. By "bossy" I am referring to the boys' experience quoted above, I am not referring to the strong leadership of masters of the art I have seen. Many years ago I was an organ pupil of Alan Wicks at Canterbury Cathedral. Much more recently, I worked with Greg Beardsell of the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain. Both were truly inspirational in the way they worked with young people to set really high standards. Neither was "bossy".

Young people, their views, their feelings, their hopes and aspirations and the way we treat them matter. The enrichment of young lives through choral singing and the uplift which that might in turn bring to older generations matters. That is what choir research means to me and the network will be important if it offers the opportunity to report on how young people are recruited to choral singing across Europe.

A brief introduction – the problem

The imbalance of gender in choral singing and choir recruitment has for a long time been an issue. It is now becoming one of the most pressing problems that we face. This is a strange situation to be in, for the United Kingdom has a splendid tradition of choral singing in cathedrals by choirs of men and boys, and the UK government has very generously funded a National Singing Programme for primary schools (SingUp, £40m)

Choirs need men!
Men are hard to get.
Men start out as boys.
Boys are even harder to get!
The prognosis? Not good!

Choir Singing is "uncool"

There is a popular perception that choir singing is "uncool" and this clearly makes the recruitment of boys difficult. However, previous research by the author has shown that this is less a problem with boys themselves than with the way the media portrays choir, and with a lack of vital knowledge – of voices and singing, and of boys and boyhood.

Boys do not understand their voices.
Adults do not understand boys.
Teachers lack subject knowledge.
Boys are demonised ("hoodies, yobs, feral youth") and expectations are too often low. Boys' singing is not valued.

What are we doing about it?

A large grant from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council has enabled a significant resource to be produced. The task now is to evaluate that resource and to undertake further research on its impact. The resource consists of:

A collection of short films about boys and their voices, and successful practice in schools.
A Digital-book for boys (written in their own language and profusely illustrated with pictures, diagrams and audio files).
An on-line practitioner network that links expert knowledge and singing opportunities for boys.
A pilot strategy to keep boys singing as they progress from primary to secondary school.

Access to this programme is through www.boys-keep-singing.org

Ten Important Publications

Ashley, M. (2009). *How High Should Boys Sing? Gender, Authenticity and Credibility in the Young Male Voice*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

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Learning in Choirs – Belcanto as a Community of Practice. Summary of a Research-Ph.D. Project

Anne Haugland Balsnes

Background

In Norway more than 200,000 people (5% of the population) sing in *amateur choirs*. This was the field of interest for my Ph.D. project. The aim of my study was to increase awareness and understanding of a local choir as an institution and what participating in such a choir is about. The study meets the need for research both on the musical practice of adult amateurs as well as their learning outside of traditional music educational institutions (Finnegan, 1989; Folkestad, 2006; Jørgensen, 1995; Karlsen, 2007).

Singing in general and more specifically singing in choirs is currently a popular phenomenon. In Scandinavia, there are many movies and television serials that focus on choirs. More than 500,000 Norwegians have seen the movie *Heftig og Begeistret* (*Cool and Crazy*) – an extraordinarily high number considering the fact that Norway only has 4.5 million inhabitants. The movie follows about 30 members of a male choir from a small fishing village in northern Norway. The Swedish movie *As it is in Heaven*, the story of a local church choir and its members, also became extremely popular. There have also been Norwegian television shows depicting choirs for prison inmates, business colleagues, and local communities, not to mention competitions such as *Idol* and *Det Store Korslaget* ("The Great Choir Battle").

Singing, music and participating in choirs have always had a strong impact on my life. Therefore, I decided to focus on choirs in my Ph.D. project. At the same time, I have always wanted to travel the world and seek exotic things. Therefore, I planned to investigate a particular Cuban choir tradition to combine these two interests. I started studying Spanish and went to Cuba to acquire contacts. Although I worked hard, I faced consistent problems, both methodological and practical. When the person I considered to be my principal contact asked me to help him escape to the United States, I found myself enveloped in a personal Cuban crisis. My supervisor responded by saying "It's time you kill your darling!" (i.e. my dissertation examining Cuban choirs). He also suggested that investigating a Norwegian choir would be more valuable to national music life in Norway.

When my supervisor learned that I was the conductor of a mixed choir in my own local community, he stated: "You have an empirical gold mine in your own pocket!" After a period of grief because of my lost Cuban project, I decided to examine my own choir, *Belcanto,* although I had several objections. First, there is not a more common phenomenon than this mixed choir because every Norwegian local community has at least one choir – no matter how small! Second, how could this be an exciting project? Third, could I investigate a choir that I was leading myself?

As it turned out, I was able to employ a similar perspective as I had intended for the Cuban project even though I had made a huge geographical and cultural transfer. It is not difficult to see the contrast between communistic Cuba and a small community in southern Norway. In Norway, I would have to look for the exotic in the general. The researcher's role had also changed dramatically in the new project. I was about to investigate my own neighbourhood and I found myself in a dual role as conductor *and* researcher (Fink-Jensen, 2003).

I had not been conducting *Belcanto* for a long time when I started working on the research project. During the same semester the choir experienced a crisis after I took over from the previous conductor who founded the choir 18 years ago. This crisis gave me a lot of important information which I will refer to subsequently, but first I will locate the choir in time and space.

Belcanto and Søgne

The choir is situated in *Søgne*, a community in southern Norway located between the cities of Mandal and Kristiansand. It has a long coastline with more than twelve hundred small islands. The number of inhabitants recently passed 10,000 which means the population has more than tripled in the last 50 years. The coast and short distances to cities with possibilities for work make Søgne attractive for both tourists and residents. The identity of the community has been challenged in many ways over the last years due to an increased number of inhabitants, few job possibilities inside the community, and ongoing discussions about merging with neighbour municipalities. At the same time, much effort has been made to put Søgne on the map. There are more than 300 local organisations, a local newspaper, a monthly magazine for 80 associations, and many local history associations.

The choir *Belcanto* was founded in 1985 as an alternative to the local community church choir which later disbanded. The only two criteria for participation were age (over 23 years old) and a love for singing. *Belcanto* wanted to operate both inside and outside the church. However, during the first years of the choir's existence, it performed mainly at local and regional church services as well as other religious gatherings. In addition to this, *Belcanto* cooperated with other local actors including choirs and the local marching band. Eventually, they started to stage musicals and big concerts with professional soloists and musicians; the two most important projects are the performance *Sanger om Søgne* ("Songs of Søgne") which was performed in 1997, 1999 and 2006 and will be performed again in 2010, and the contemporary musical piece *Kyst* ("Coast") from 2003. Both of these projects are musically and practically complex.

In 2003 there were 40–50 members in the choir, most of them in their forties and fifties. Many of them lived in Søgne, but the majority was not born and raised there. Many of the members had been with the choir for several years. After 18 years, the conductor wanted to become an ordinary singing member of the choir and asked me to take over. I had moved to Søgne the previous year and was eager to engage in the community's cultural life. I had seen the choir perform and was taken by the members' great enthusiasm. At the same time, I could not deny that there were certain musical aspects that needed improvement.

My qualifications for the job had to be the very best. I had a Master's degree in conducting from the Norwegian Academy of Music. I started to rehearse at a tremendous pace because we had no time to lose! I worked so hard that there was hardly any time for jokes and chit-chatting and I often forgot to take a break. After the first performance, many people in the public said they had never heard the choir sing so well.

However, a number of members left the choir and there were rumours that more people considered doing the same. The choir was in crisis. We decided to arrange a meeting to discuss issues. The discussion demonstrated that people were worried mainly because of two reasons: They felt that they couldn't keep up with the rehearsal tempo and they thought that the choir would only work with "serious" music with me as the conductor. I had to promise to take more time when rehearsing new repertoire and to work with a variety of musical styles. I also told myself to slightly decrease my ambitions and never skip the break.

The Research Process

As I have described in my dissertation, the choir went from being in a state of crisis to becoming a case in my research project. The members appreciated this. "Feel free to investigate me!" invited one of the male jokers in the choir. They laughed when one of the bass singers said, "on one condition. We want our full names in the report!" A tenor commented that it would be most valuable for science if *Belcanto* was investigated. It was obvious that the singers were proud of the choir and that my interest in them as a researcher was a confirmation of the choir's value.

I began without any fixed research questions. In line with the purpose of the study, I asked myself open-ended questions such as what goes on in a local choir. I was able to delve into this particular choir by conducting a case study, not because it was remarkable in any way, but because it was a *typical* Norwegian mixed choir and thus representative of numerous local choirs in Norway. The majority of the more than 200,000 choir members in Norway sing in choirs similar to *Belcanto*. There exists very little research on choirs, especially at the Ph.D. level or higher. Moreover, I did not find any studies that investigate relations inside and outside any particular choir.

I began mapping the history of the choir by studying documents such as meeting protocols, annual reports, and newspaper reviews. I interviewed 17 members including the former conductor and two previous members. The selection was based on criteria such as gender, age, place of residence, experience in the choir and personality. Interviewed persons are given pseudonyms in the dissertation, except for the former conductor whose identity would be impossible to conceal. His role was more official.

During the interviews, I was told personal stories about the choir and what participation in the choir meant to the subjects. In addition, I conducted participant observation for a period of more than three years which meant that I tried to write down everything that was going on, including my reflections after rehearsals, breaks, concerts, tours and celebrations.

It is rather controversial to investigate a practice where the researcher is also a member of the target group. I have discussed this thoroughly in my dissertation. However, taking on different roles has both its advantages and disadvantages (Nielsen & Repstad, 2004). In my case, I was able to closely follow a group of people over an extended period of time. I went from being a newcomer in the community, and therefore an outsider, to becoming an insider in the period of three years. This process had an important impact on my research (Wadel, 1991). An investigation of one's own fellows is certainly a *different* kind of project, but not necessarily a project of lesser quality than a study conducted by an outsider (Gullestad, 1991; Paulgaard, 1997).

I did not take my point of departure in any specific theory as is often the case for qualitatively-oriented research (Wadel, 1991). While and after I was conducting the case study, I considered the following questions with regard to the comprehensive material I had collected:

- What types of issues can this material address?
- What questions is the material able to answer?
- Which theory can illuminate this material?

The study was grounded in earlier choir research as well as music educational theory concerning informal arenas for learning since my main perspective was music education (Folkestad, 2006).

I decided to locate the study's theoretical framework on theories of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), and in particular, Etienne Wenger's theory of communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). These theories present a way of perceiving how processes of learning are integrated in social practices. Learning is not just about acquiring knowledge. It is a dynamic movement from peripheral to full participation in the community. Learning is a process of creation; it transforms who we are and what we can do. Consequently, learning and identity work are inseparable aspects of the same phenomenon. According to Lave and Wenger, their theory represents an anthropological and sociological perspective. Therefore, additional theories also informed the work, especially from the sociological and anthropological fields of science.

The main research questions developed in this process were concerned with the interplay between musical and social aspects of the choir practice, and with how participating in a local choir contributes to the development of learning and identity.

Results

The local dimension

One of the main fields of analysis dealt primarily with an examination of the role played by the choir in its local community, and how the activities of the choir serve to strengthen their sense of local belonging.

According to Finnegan, music possesses a special role in framing events as rituals (Finnegan, 1989). The choir takes part in highlighting events such as celebrations, openings, special services, weddings, and funerals. As one of the members put it, "when something is going on, Belcanto is there!" Thus, the members feel that they play an important role in the local community. They have contributed to bridge-building between different factions in the village by cooperating with other community actors (Repstad, 2005). In addition to other voluntary organisations, *Belcanto* forms a meeting place in the local community (Amit-Talai, 2002).

I have mentioned *Songs of Søgne* as the greatest success in the choir's history. More than 6,000 people have seen the performance so far and there will be a new production in 2010. The songs deal with themes including local history, descriptions of certain places and the local landscape as well as cultural aspects and ways of life. As this statement puts it, "*Songs of Søgne* is about ourselves!" Both actors and the public learn about the community through the lyrics. They laugh about themselves, become more sensitive, and receive material useful for their own reflections with respect to place, identity and belonging. The choir members feel that they contribute to enriching the community through performance which both preserves the local culture and creates new culture. For a few days *Songs of Søgne* gathers almost the whole community at the local cultural centre where the production takes place.

The results of my study indicate that the choir members learn how to be inhabitants of their local community through participation, thereby demonstrating learning and the construction of identity and belonging related to place.

The social dimension

Social interactions within the choir were also subject to analysis. Choir practice structures the lives of members because it is a weekly activity (cf. Finnegan's concept of *pathway*, 1989). The choir functions as a *sanctuary* – apart from family or work commitments (Huizinga, 1955). At the same time, participation in the choir also means commitment. *Belcanto* is not a "drop by" choir as one of the members put it. There are also several tasks that must be done to keep choir practice going in addition to regular attendance.

The choir plays an important role in the members' social life as an extended network. In my dissertation I call it a *centre of care and resources* where the members can attain help and care. For many immigrants in Søgne, participation in the choir has led to social integration in the local community (Amit-Talai, 2002); "Being in the choir expands the number of acquaintances", one of them remarked. There are also examples of the choir functioning as a network for family and friends who are not in the choir.

In my dissertation I discussed the practice of the choir in relation to Robert E. Putnam's concepts of *bridging* (inclusive orientation) and *bonding* (exclusive orientation) (Putnam, 2001). According to the choir statutes, *Belcanto* is open to anybody regardless of political views, religion, and special preconditions. It is therefore a bridging-oriented organisation with "high ceilings and low thresholds" as some members put it. At the same time other aspects of the choir practice indicate bonding such as association with the local congregation, and despite the statutes, a homogenous group of members with respect to age, ethnicity, background, and class.

In addition to the focus on care and openness, members also negotiate issues concerning choir practice. For example, they discuss how long the breaks should be, the presence of social clicks within the choir, touring, religion, lifestyle, democracy, and economy. In particular, there are tensions between musical and social interaction which cause both harmony and disharmony to characterise choir practice. Choir practice embodies positive energies such as collaboration and reciprocity and it also contains negative energies including tension, negotiations, and conflicts. In line with Wenger (1998), I consider these forces natural and necessary for the development of choir practice.

The musical dimension

The most discussed issue is the repertoire which is most natural when a group of people gather in order to sing. It seems as though the aesthetical preference of the choir is *variation* or "all kinds of music". It is important that the music be not too complicated or advanced, yet members also want to strive for perfection. As a music educator the conductor faces huge challenges considering the fact that the members' competences vary to a high degree. Some of the members have studied music, while others have no idea how to read music (Jurström, 2001).

Many of the local and social aspects in my study will probably apply to other local groups, such as bridge clubs and scouts. Is there anything special about choir singing? My own study and other theories argue the affirmative. Music has a special power to set us apart from the ordinary life (Finnegan, 1989). Furthermore, it seems as though there is a qualitative difference between listening to music and making music (Bailey, 2004; Barthes, 1977). Moreover, the singing voice is a special instrument with a close connection to breath and body, emotions and self-identity (Bailey, 2004; Persen, 2005). The voice is a personal and democratic instrument that everyone possesses and there is no specific education to master it in order to sing in an amateur choir. Community singing can create an experience of condensed cohesion (Schütz, 2004). The members have stories of peak experiences which they describe as "most satisfactory", "extremely wonderful", "kick", and "heavenly" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). One of the members stated that, "Choir singing is an ideal image of human fellowship".

Learning and identity work

There are many challenges to running a local amateur choir. In a choir such as *Belcanto*, the interplay between social and musical aspects is vital. It seems as though learning takes place when this interaction works best. According to Wenger's theory of communities of practice, learning and identity are inextricably linked to each other. In connection with this aspect, I will present the story of Diana who is one of the members of *Belcanto*. She states that singing has given her a new life.

Diana is 53 years old. She would have shaken her head if somebody would have told her nine years ago that she would join a choir. She had suffered from shyness all her life. She almost didn't dare speaking in public, let alone singing and she had not sung since school. However, she later moved to Søgne and met people who persuaded her to come with them to a choir rehearsal. Diana has loved choir singing since that day. She never misses a rehearsal or a concert. Her life is structured around the choir schedule. She says that she has grown and developed more self-confidence by participating in the choir. "Now I dare doing a lot of things that I have never done before", she also says. She gives speeches, bakes cakes, finds sponsors, helps administer the choir, and last but not least, she sings with all of her heart. Diana always knows her part by heart; otherwise she says that she cannot smile while singing. She really loves the applause after performances the most. Diana has grown from being a shy novice to becoming a resource in the choir, both musically and socially.

This study shows that learning and development in various areas constitute one of the main implications of choir participation, and this may in turn lead to an increased quality of life (Ruud, 2000).

Conclusion

The results of my study demonstrate how a local choir constitutes a multifaceted institution in which several different elements interact. It also shows how the balance between these different elements is vital for the existence of a choir. Consequently, the application of a comprehensive and contextual perspective is highly significant when dealing with amateur choir practice.

Important Publications

Selecting ten important publications in my area has been difficult. As it turned out, I have not chosen literature specifically on choir research, but rather publications that have inspired me to develop thoughts on different aspects of choir research, such as what sort of an institution a local choir constitutes and what participation in a choir is about. I have decided to give one sentence on each publication to explain how the author(s) have inspired me.

Betty Bailey has conducted a comprehensive study on several choirs and choir members from different perspectives which taught me how multifaceted a choir can be (Bailey, 2004). *Odd-Are Berkaak* and *Even Ruud* conducted a case study on a rock band which inspired me to do the same with regard to a choir (Berkaak & Ruud, 1994). *Ruth Finnegan* studied "hidden musicians" – amateur musical practices in a local com-

munity and thereby inspired me to focus on the many adults who sing and play music week after week, year after year, without getting much attention (Finnegan, 1989). *Christopher Smalls'* concept of "musicking" has been important in order to understand music as an activity (Small, 1998). *Even Ruud* investigated the relationship between music and identity and has inspired me to see how important music can be in people's lives (Ruud, 1997). He has also written about music and quality of life, thereby giving me keys to understand what participating in a choir can mean for members (Ruud, 2000). *Tia DeNora* has written about music in everyday life and helped me understand the many functions music can have in people's lives as well as how people use music as a "technology of self" (DeNora, 2000). To understand how the choir constitutes a social network for members, *Robert D. Putnam's* writing on social capital has been significant (Putnam, 2001). *Anthony Cohen's* "The symbolic construction of community" also helped me analyze the choir as a community (Cohen, 1985). *Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyis* concept of "flow" has been useful in explaining the "choir experience" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Finally, I have to mention *Jean Lave* and *Etienne Wenger's* book on situated learning (1991) and Wenger's theory of communities of practice (1998) which made it possible to develop a theoretical framework allowing for a comprehensive and contextual perspective that I found most required when dealing with local amateur choir practice.

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„Blick zurück nach vorn“. Chorwissenschaftliche Forschung im Zeichen der 150. Wiederkehr der Gründung des Deutschen Sängerbundes 1862

Friedhelm Brusniak

Vorbemerkung

Am 21. September 1862 wurde in Coburg der *Deutsche Sängerbund* (*DSB*) gegründet. An dieses historische Ereignis will der *Deutsche Chorverband* (*DCV*) erinnern, der 2005 durch Fusion von *DSB* und *DAS* (*Deutscher Allgemeiner Sängerbund*, vor der Auflösung durch die Nationalsozialisten 1933 *Deutscher Arbeiter-Sängerbund* [*D.A.S.*]) entstanden ist. Im Rahmen eines vom *Deutschen Chorverband* ab 2010 geförderten Forschungsprojekts *Deutsches Chorwesen* sollen Geschichte und Gegenwart des institutionalisierten und organisierten chorischen Singens aus interdisziplinärer Sicht untersucht werden. Angesichts der Bedeutung des deutschsprachigen Chorgesangs in der Welt – der *DCV* kooperiert mit der *Zentralstelle für den deutschsprachigen Chorgesang in der Welt* in Solingen und ist Mitglied in der *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Europäischer Chorverbände* (*AGEC*) und im *Welt-Chorverband* (*IFCM*) – sollen Chorforscher und Experten benachbarter Disziplinen aus dem In- und Ausland zur Mitarbeit eingeladen werden. Das über 2012 hinaus konzipierte Forschungsprojekt ist am Lehrstuhl für Musikpädagogik des Instituts für Musikforschung der Universität Würzburg angesiedelt und wird von mir geleitet.[10]

Das historische Datum 1862 soll nicht nur als willkommene Gelegenheit einer repräsentativen Dokumentation der wechselvollen Geschichte des *Deutschen Sängerbundes* genutzt werden, sondern auch der Reflexion über die Wurzeln, Anfänge, Entwicklungen und Ausprägungen bis in die Gegenwart dienen. Dabei wird es weniger darum gehen, bereits in der Vergangenheit behandelte historische, ideengeschichtliche und musikalische Aspekte zu vertiefen, sondern vielmehr darum, intensiver als bisher auch politische, gesellschaftliche, musikwissenschaftliche und musikpädagogische, soziologische, psychologische, ethnologische und kulturwissenschaftliche oder auch medizinische, vor allem stimmphysiologische und therapeutische Perspektiven zu beachten.

Über traditionelle historisch-systematische Überlegungen hinaus werden daher die erst in jüngster Zeit intensiver diskutierten vielfältigen Kontexte des chorischen Singens überhaupt sowie alte und neue zukunftsorientierte interdisziplinäre Netzwerkbildungen oder Erkenntnisse aus Bereichen der Neurowissenschaft und Pränatalmedizin ebenso zu berücksichtigen sein wie Impulse aus der Elementaren Musikpädagogik und der Musikgeragogik. Die Herausbildung einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft vor dem Hintergrund einer globalisierten Musikkultur und der demographische Wandel erfordern intensive Reflexionen über grundsätzliche Fragen musikalischer Bildung und Vermittlung, Breiten- und Spitzenförderung, veränderter vereinsrechtlicher und ökonomischer Themen, des musikalischen Spiel- und Wettbewerbsgedankens, der Musikpräferenzen und des Repertoires, der musikalischen Rezeptions- und Wirkungsforschung, des Chormanagements und des Sponsorings, der Proben- und Aufführungspraxis, der Medien und der Interpretenkultur sowie schließlich der musikkulturellen Identitäten und der musikalischen Biographieforschung – behandelt etwa aus der Perspektive von Klangräumen, Hörräumen, Spielräumen, „musikalischen Lebens- und Erinnerungsräumen“.

Zu beachten ist in diesem Zusammenhang des Weiteren, dass beim Jubiläum des *Deutschen Chorverbandes* 2012 nicht nur an die Gründ-

10 Vgl. hierzu die Informationen in: *Neue Chorzeit. Zeitschrift des Deutschen Chorverbandes*, Heft Januar 2010, 8f.: Interview mit Eva Krautter: „Blick zurück nach vorn. DCV-Forschungsprojekt beleuchtet Geschichte und Gegenwart des organisierten Chorwesens unter neuen Gesichtspunkten“, und Heft April 2010, 15: Nachrichten aus dem DCV-Präsidium: „Neue Forschungsperspektive für Sängermuseum“ (Kooperation zwischen Sängermuseum Feuchtwangen und Universität Würzburg).

ung des *Deutschen Sängerbundes*, sondern auch an die zuvor erfolgte Gründung jener regionalen Chorverbände erinnert wird, die dann ihre Delegierten nach Coburg entsandten. So planen inzwischen zeitgleich noch weitere Chorverbände wie der *Fränkische Sängerbund* (*FSB*) und der *Chorverband Bayerisch-Schwaben* (*CBS*) (früher *Schwäbisch-Bayerischer Sängerbund* [*SBS*]) Jubiläumsveranstaltungen, zu denen spezielle Chorforschungsprojekte, die ebenfalls mit mir vorbereitet werden, substantielle Beiträge leisten werden.

Eigene Forschungsschwerpunkte (Überblick)[11]

Da bereits in der ersten Amtszeit des inzwischen (2009) wieder gewählten Präsidenten des *Deutschen Chorverbandes*, Henning Scherf, eine Anfrage an mich gerichtet wurde, ob ich zu einer Mitarbeit für das *DSB*-Jubiläum zur Verfügung stehen würde, wird verständlich, dass ich seither den Versuch unternommen habe, meine eigenen bisherigen Forschungen zumindest in einigen Teilbereichen systematisch voranzutreiben. Die Ausgangslage waren einerseits meine landeskundlichen Studien zur Geschichte des *Fränkischen Sängerbundes* (1991)[12] und zu den *Anfängen des Laienchorwesens in Bayerisch-Schwaben* im 19. Jahrhundert (Habilitationsschrift Augsburg 1997)[13] sowie zu einigen anderen Regionen (bes. Schlesien und Thüringen)[14], andererseits mein Überblicksartikel „Chor und Chormusik. II. Chormusik seit dem 18. Jahrhundert" in *MGG2* (1995)[15] und die wegweisende chorwissenschaftliche Tagung in Essen 2002 im Auftrag der *Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Chorverbände* (*ADC*) mit der Publikation von „Zehn Essener Thesen zum Chorsingen im 21. Jahrhundert" (Tagungsband 2003)[16].

Auf dem Feld der Vereins- und Verbandssoziologie beschäftigen mich vor allem Trägerschichten und die jeweiligen ideellen Ziele der singenden Gruppen und die Wechselwirkungen mit der Kirchen- und Schulmusik, speziell beim Kantorei- und Kirchenchorwesen[17], auch in Bezug auf alte und neue Netzwerkbildungen insbesondere in der Zeit der „musikalischen Jugendbewegung" und „kirchenmusikalischen Erneuerungsbewegung" mit den Folgen für den Nationalsozialismus und die Nachkriegsjahre,[18] sowie das Verhältnis von bürgerlicher und Arbeiter-

11 Vgl. hierzu auch weitere Hinweise in meiner Auswahlbibliographie (www.musikpaedagogik.uni-wuerzburg.de). Wenn nicht anders angegeben, werden im Folgenden eigene Publikationen aufgeführt.

12 (1991) *Das große Buch des Fränkischen Sängerbundes*, München; (2002) „Chorwesen". In: P. Kolb & E.-G. Krenig (Hrsg.). *Von der Eingliederung in das Königreich Bayern bis zum beginnenden 21. Jahrhundert*. Würzburg (= Unterfränkische Geschichte; 5/2), 209–215.

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15 Art. (1995) „Chor und Chormusik: II. Chorwesen seit dem 18. Jh., 1. Überblick; 3. Wurzeln, Anfänge, Ausprägungen; 4. Von 1800 bis 1848/49; 5. Von 1850 bis 1918; 6. Vom Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs bis zur Gegenwart; Literatur". In: L. Finscher (Hrsg.). *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. 2. neubearbeitete Ausgabe. Sachteil 2. Kassel, 774–776, 777–824. Weitere historisch-systematische Darstellungen in Art. (1999) „Chor. I. Musikalisch". In: H.D. Betz (Hrsg.). *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 4, Bd. 2, Tübingen, 167–169; Art. (2005) „Chor, Chormusik". In: F. Jaeger (Hrsg.). *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, Bd. 2. Stuttgart, 720–729; (2007) „Zur Entwicklung der Chorkultur in Deutschland – Eine Einführung in Institutionen und Organisationen". In: E. Fischer (Hrsg.), *Chorgesang als Medium von Interkulturalität: Formen, Kanäle, Diskurse*. Stuttgart (= Berichte des interkulturellen Forschungsprojekts „Deutsche Musikkultur im östlichen Europa"; 3), 19–26.

16 (2003) *Chor – Visionen in Musik. Essener Thesen zum Chorsingen im 21. Jahrhundert*, hrsg. im Auftrag der Arbeitsgemeinschaft Deutscher Chorverbände, Kassel; (in Vorbereitung) „Der Chor als ‚musikalische Form der menschlichen Gemeinschaft'. Anmerkungen zu den Vorträgen des ‚I. Kongresses für Chorgesangwesen in Essen' 1928". In: H. Jung (Hrsg.). *Weimar 1919–1933. Bericht des Kongresses in Mannheim 2008*.

17 Art. (2001) „Kantorei". In: H.D. Betz (Hrsg.). *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 4, Bd. 4, Tübingen, 787f.; (2009) „Aus einem ‚Haufen singender Menschen' einen ‚Chor' formen. Der Beitrag Wilhelm Hopfmüllers (1885-1951) zu einer ‚grundlegenden Neubesinnung des Kirchengesangs'". In: *Fränkische Sängerzeitung* 56 (4), 22f.

18 (2005) „Wege und Bewegungen. Plädoyer für eine Dokumentation der Kirchenmusikalischen Erneuerungsbewegung". In: *Musik und Kirche* 75, 258–264; (2008) „Bach und Mozart auf dem Herzberg. Zur Bach- und Mozart-Pflege Fritz Jödes unter dem Eindruck der dänischen ‚folkehøjskole'-Bewegung". In: O. Kongsted, N. Krabbe, M. Kube & M. Michelsen (Hrsg.). [Festschrift] *‚A due'. Musikalische Aufsätze zu Ehren von John D. Bergsagel und*

sängerbewegung.[19] Kultursoziologische Problemstellungen, schwerpunktmäßig im Bereich Fest- und Feierkultur,[20] werden ebenso intensiv verfolgt wie massenpsychologische Phänomene, etwa bei politischen, gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Großveranstaltungen.[21]

Im Rahmen der Historischen Biographik befasse ich mich schon seit geraumer Zeit intensiv mit Protagonisten der Chorbewegung seit dem späten 18. Jahrhundert im Umkreis der Philanthropen Joachim Heinrich Campe (1746–1818) und Christian Gotthilf Salzmann (1744–1811), vor allem mit dem Namensgeber des *Stuttgarter Liederkranz* (gegr. 1824), Christian Carl André (1763–1831)[22], sowie mit Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832), Hans Georg Nägeli (1773–1836), Karl Pfaff (1795–1866) und Otto Elben (1823–1899),[23] mit der Haltung prominenter Dichter des 18. bis 20. Jahrhunderts zum chorischen Singen und zum institutionalisierten und organisierten Laienchorwesen, namentlich Friedrich Schiller[24], Friedrich Rückert[25], August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben (1798–1874)[26] und Rudolf Alexander Schröder (1878–1962)[27], sowie mit Chorkomponisten wie Friedrich Silcher[28], Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy[29], Robert Schumann und Julius Otto[30],

Heinrich W. Schwab. Copenhagen (= Danish Humanist Texts and Studies; 37), 70–84.

19 (2009) „'Das erwachte Bewußtsein'. Ausgewählte Quellen zur Geschichte des deutschen Arbeitergesanges". In: G. Rothbacher, H. Krones & M. Ortner (Hrsg.). *125 Jahre „Eintracht" Innsbruck – 125 Jahre sozialdemokratischer Kulturarbeit in Tirol*. Innsbruck [Bericht über das Symposion gleichen Namens vom 7. und 8. März 2008 in Innsbruck], 24–49.

20 (im Druck) „Sängerfeste, Liederfeste und Gesangfeste vor 1848/49 im Spannungsfeld von Geselligkeit, Volksbildungsidee und Politik". In: *Mitteilungen der Arbeitsgemeinschaft für mittelrheinische Musikgeschichte* 2010.

21 (2009) „'Erinnerungsort' Nationalhymne". In: *Musikforum* 7 (4), 19–21.

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25 Zum Forschungsstand vgl. zuletzt: (2008) „Friedrich Rückerts Mahnung an die deutschen Sänger im Jahre 1863". In: *Volksmusik in Bayern* 25, Sonderheft, 18–21; (2010) „'O sendet eure Töne der goldnen Zukunft zu!' Friedrich Rückerts Appell an die Teilnehmer des Ersten Deutschen Sängerbundesfestes in Dresden 1865". In: T. Siitan, K. Pappel & A. Sõõro (Hrsg.). *Musikleben des 19. Jahrhunderts im nördlichen Europa / 19th-Century Musical Life in Northern Europe. Strukturen und Prozesse / Structures and Processes*. Hildesheim (= Studien und Materialien zur Musikwissenschaft; 60), 57–77.

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27 (2010) „Rudolf Alexander Schröder als Dichter und Komponist von Kirchenliedern". In: W. Hirschmann & H.-O. Korth (Hrsg.). *Das deutsche Kirchenlied. Bilanz und Perspektiven einer Edition*. Kassel, 173–185.

28 Zum Forschungsstand vgl. zuletzt: Art. (2006) „Silcher, Friedrich". In: L. Finscher (Hrsg.). *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 2, *Personenteil* 15, Kassel, 794–798; Art. (2010) „Silcher, Friedrich". In: *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 24. Berlin, 412–414.

29 Brusniak, F. & Klenke, D. (1999) „Sängerfeste und die Politik der deutschen Nationalbewegung". In: *Die Musikforschung* 52, 29–54, hier: 48–50 (*Festgesang an die Künstler* op. 68, *Der Jäger Abschied* op. 50,2).

30 (2005) „[Robert Schumann:] Sechs Lieder für vierstimmigen Männergesang op. 33 – Drei Gesänge für Männerchor op. 62 – Ritornelle nach Friedrich Rückert in kano-

Richard Strauss und Hans Pfitzner[31], Erwin Lendvai[32] und Heinz Werner Zimmermann.[33]

Weitere Forschungsschwerpunkte liegen auf repertoire-, rezeptions- und wirkungsgeschichtlichen Aspekten unter besonderer Berücksichtigung terminologischer und gattungsgeschichtlicher Fragen („Chorlied", „Vereinslied", „Gruppenlied"),[34] zuletzt besonders in Bezug auf die so

nischen Weisen für mehrstimmigen Männergesang op. 65 – Fünf Gesänge aus Heinrich Laubes ‚Jagdbrevier' für Männerchor mit vier Hörnern ad libitum op. 137". In: H. Loos (Hrsg.). *Robert Schumann. Interpretationen seiner Werke*. Laaber, Bd. 1, 171–175, 405–407, 417–421; Bd. 2, 321–323; (2010) „Robert Schumann, Julius Otto und die Sängerbewegung". In: T. Synofzik & H.-G. Ottenberg (Hrsg.). *Schumann und Dresden. Bericht über das Symposion „Robert und Clara Schumann in Dresden – biographische, kompositionsgeschichtliche und soziokulturelle Aspekte" in Dresden vom 15. bis 18. Mai 2008*. Köln (= Studien zum Dresdner Musikleben im 19. Jahrhundert; 1), 65–77.

31 (2007) „Schillergedichte als A-cappella-Chöre: Richard Strauss' ‚Der Abend' op. 34,1 und Hans Pfitzners ‚Columbus' op. 16 im Kontext der Chorbewegung um 1900". In: H. Geyer & W. Osthoff (Hrsg.). *Schiller und die Musik*. Köln/Weimar/Wien (= Schriftenreihe der Hochschule für Musik FRANZ LISZT; 4), 379–394.

32 (2009) „Erwin Lendvai (1882–1949), der 'kühne Neuerer des Männerchors'". In: P. Kuret (Hrsg.). *Glasba v dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja / Music in the Twenties of the Twentieth Century*. Ljubljana (= [Kongressbericht] 23. slovenski glasbeni dnevi / 23rd Slovenian Music Days 2008), 197–206.

33 Zum Forschungsstand vgl. die beiden Aufsatzbände (2000) *Heinz Werner Zimmermann: Komposition und Kontemplation. Überlegungen und Untersuchungen zu Musikästhetik und Musiktheorie*. Mit Einführung und Werkverzeichnis zum 70. Geb. des Komponisten, Tutzing und (2005) *Heinz Werner Zimmermann: Komposition und Reflexion. Neue Überlegungen und Untersuchungen zu Musikästhetik und Musiktheorie*. Mit Einführung und Werkverzeichnis zum 75. Geb. des Komponisten. Tutzing sowie die Beiträge (2006) „Das chorsymphonische Werk Heinz Werner Zimmermanns". In: *Chor und Konzert* 40 (1:120), 22–25; (2006) „Das A-cappella-Chorwerk von Heinz Werner Zimmermann". In: *Chor und Konzert* 40 (2:121), 22–24; Art. „Zimmermann, Heinz Werner". In: L. Finscher (Hrsg.). *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart 2, Personenteil 17*, Kassel, 1506–1508; (2008) „Heinz Werner Zimmermann: Von der ‚Missa Romana' zur ‚Missa Profana'". In: P. Kuret (Hrsg.). *Obsebnost, nacionalna identiteta v glasbi v obdobju globalizacije / Personality, National Identity in Music in Era of Globalisation*. Ljubljana (= [Kongressbericht] 22. slovenski glasbeni dnevi / 22nd Slovenian Music Days 2007), 228–238.

34 (1989) „‚Deutschlands Liederkrone'. Das Schwäbisch-Fränkische Archiv für vierstimmigen Männergesang – eine Bestandsaufnahme der beliebtesten Männerchöre in den Jahren 1842 bis 1848". In: F. Brusniak & H. Leuchtmann (Hrsg.). *Quaestiones in musica. Festschrift für Franz Krautwurst zum 65. Geburtstag*. Tutzing, 49–60 [mehrere überarbeitete und mit neuen Beispielen versehene Fassungen, zuletzt für: O. Borst (Hrsg.)

genannten „Kaiserliederbücher", d.h. die *Volksliederbücher für Männerchor* (1906) und *für gemischten Chor* (1915) sowie das *Volksliederbuch für die Jugend* (1930).[35]

Deutsches Chorvereinswesen – Aspekte transnationaler Einflussnahmen: die Solinger Tagung 2009

Anlässlich der internationalen Konferenz „Die Vielfalt Europas. Identitäten und Räume", die das Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentrum *Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas* an der Universität Leipzig 2007 veranstaltete, konnte ich über „Funktionen des gemeinsamen Singens" referieren.[36] Diese Konferenz gab den Anstoß, intensiver über „Aspekte trans-

(1999). *Geschichte als Musik*. Tübingen, 129–148, 271–275]; (2009) „Atlas pjesama europskih jezika ‚Zvučnoga mosta'" [„Der Liederatlas europäischer Sprachen der ‚Klingenden Brücke'"]. In: *Tonovi Zagreb – Časopis glazbenih i plesnih pedagoga* 53 (24:1), 52–56; (2010) „Lieder als ‚persönlicher Erinnerungsschatz'. Nachdenkliches über Singerfahrungen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart". In: *Musik und Kirche* 80, 178–185.

35 Zum Forschungsstand vgl. zuletzt: (2005) „Das ‚Volksliederbuch für Männerchor' (‚Kaiserliederbuch') als ‚Volkslieder-Buch' und ‚Volks-Liederbuch'. In: W. Salmen & G. Schubert (Hrsg.). *Verflechtungen im 20. Jahrhundert. Komponisten im Spannungsfeld elitär – populär*. Mainz (= Frankfurter Studien. Veröffentlichungen des Hindemith-Institutes Frankfurt am Main; 10), 20–29.; (2007) „'Rahvalaulukogu meeskoorile' (‚keisrilaulik') ja selle muusikalooline tähendus" [„Das ‚Volksliederbuch für Männerchor' (‚Kaiserliederbuch') und seine musikhistorische Bedeutung"]. In: U. Lippus (Hrsg.). *Meeskoor ja meestelaul* [*Männerchor und Männergesang*]. Tallinn (= Eesti Muusikaloo Toimetised [Beiträge zur estnischen Musikgeschichte]; 8), 23–38; (2008) „Die Valentin-Rathgeber-Bearbeitungen in den Volksliederbüchern für Chorgesang des 20. Jahrhunderts". In: E. Gaß & B. Gaß (Hrsg.). *Rathgeber im Kontext. I. Internationales Rathgeber-Symposium am 3. Juni 2007 in Oberelsbach. Festschrift für Franz Krautwurst*. Oberelsbach (= Musica Buchonica; 2), 77–106; (2009) „‚Keine Sammlung, die die praktische Musikübung der Vereine widerspiegelt' – zur Kritik am ‚Kaiserliederbuch'". In: *Querstand* 4, 19–48; (2009) „Das ‚Chorliederbuch für die Wehrmacht' (1940) als ‚musikalische Liebesgabe ins Feld' – ein Beitrag zur Rezeptions- und Wirkungsgeschichte des ‚Kaiserliederbuchs'". In: *Historische Mitteilungen der Ranke-Gesellschaft* 22 [2010], 95–111. – Vgl. auch: (2004) „Heimatlieder der DDR als politische Lieder – Annäherungen eines Musikpädagogen aus dem Westen". In: Dr. T. Goll & Dr. T. Leuerer (Hrsg.). *Ostalgie als Erinnerungskultur? Symposium zu Lied und Politik in der DDR*. Baden-Baden (= Würzburger Universitätsschriften zu Geschichte und Politik; 6), 73–79.

36 (2009) „Musik als Suche nach nationaler Identität und transnationales Angebot. Funktionen des gemeinsamen Singens". In: W. Eberhard & C. Lübke (Hrsg.). *Die Vielfalt*

nationaler Einflussnahmen" im Bereich des Chorvereinswesens nachzudenken. Die Möglichkeit hierzu bot die Einladung der *Zentralstelle für den deutschsprachigen Chorgesang in der Welt* im Rahmen des *I. Internationalen Chorfestivals* in Solingen am 16. Oktober 2009.

Die einzelnen Vorträge befassten sich mit folgenden Themenfeldern: „Deutsches Chorvereinswesen als ein ‚weltweites Exportprodukt'?" (Friedhelm Brusniak, Würzburg), „Geselligkeit und Politik im ausgehenden 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert" (Dietmar Klenke, Paderborn), „Das Päpstliche Sängerkollegium als ideelles und ästhetisches Vorbild der frühen Chorbewegung" (Bernhard Janz, Würzburg), „Das Deutsche Chorvereinswesen als Vorbild? Probleme und Perspektiven der Kulturtransferforschung am Beispiel der Pariser Chorvereine des 19. Jahrhunderts" (Martin Loeser, Greifswald), „Deutsche Männergesangvereine im Ostseeraum und der Anfang der lettischen Singbewegung" (Helmut Loos, Leipzig), „'… in der strengen Pflege des deutschen Liedes Deutschlands Seele hüten'. Sängereliten zwischen Konvergenz und Abgrenzung in Amerika" (Harald Lönnecker, Koblenz), „'Deutschem Liede, Deutscher Art, stets in Südwest die Treue wahrt!' – Zu den Anfängen deutscher Chorvereinigungen im heutigen Namibia" (Helmke Jan Keden, Hilden). Die Publikation der Vorträge ist in Vorbereitung.

Der *Deutsche Chorverband* begrüßt das chorwissenschaftliche Projekt *Choir in Focus* und lädt die *Network*-Teilnehmer zu einer Fortsetzungstagung anlässlich des Fachkongresses für die deutsche und europäische Chorszene *chor.com* in Dortmund am 22.–25. September 2011 ein.

Summary

On September 21, 1862 the *Deutsche Sängerbund* (*DSB*) was founded in Coburg. Built in 2005 by a fusion of *DSB* and *DAS*, the *Deutsche Chorverband* (*DCV*) will remind us of this historic event in 2010. A research project concerning the *DCV* has been initiated at Würzburg University in 2010 which will document the history of the *DSB*. This will also be an opportunity to consider interdisciplinary aspects of the *DSB* with respect to politics, sociology, psychology, ethnology, pedagogy as well as medicine, especially involving the physiology of voice and therapy. New research fields include neuroscience, prenatal medicine, elementary music education, music geragogy, globalisation and demographic change.

Personal fields of research include sociology of associations, musical biographical science, aspects of repertoire, reception history, musical genres, as well as musicological regional science such as in Bavaria, Franconia, and Swabia, and the history of non-professional choir practice from a synoptic view (*MGG2*, 1995, conference proceeding Essen 2003). The *DCV* invites the members of the network to an additional conference in the course of *chor.com* in Dortmund in 2011.

Europas. Identitäten und Räume. Beiträge einer internationalen Konferenz Leipzig, 6. bis 9. Juni 2007. Leipzig, 465–481 [English: (2010) „Music as a Search for National Identity and a Transnational Offering. The Functions of Singing Together". In: W. Eberhard & C. Lübke (Eds.). *The Plurality of Europe, Identities and Spaces*. Leipzig, 433–449)].

Choir in Focus Network. Draft Collaborative Research Proposal. Concepts and Practices of Leadership in Choir Culture within Europe

Colin Durrant

My research interest lies in the nature of the relationship between conductor and choir (Durrant, 2003; 2009) across musical styles and genres and across nations and cultures. The relationship concerns (i) the nature of communication, verbal and non-verbal as well as style and impact of conducting gestures; (ii) the background and training of the conductor; (iii) the organisation of the choirs and role of the conductor; (iv) musical preference and choice of repertoire.

This interest stems from the traditionally unsystematic training and education of choral conductors in England and, indeed, the UK generally. This is in direct comparison with the situation in the USA and, for example, in Scandinavian countries and Germany. More recently awareness of this situation has been heightened with the emergence of sporadic university courses and those offered by independent organisations like the *Association of British Choral Directors*.

My proposal would follow on from the discussions at the recent Lund meeting and include:

- 'mapping' the choral conducting education systems and practices across the countries;
- conducting case studies of considered 'successful' but non-professional choirs in each chosen country, one of each from (i) school, (ii) church, (iii) community, and investigate the relationship between conductor and choir through observation and interview;
- analysis of findings to determine the impact of education/training of choral conductors on their 'behaviours' with and approaches to choirs in rehearsal and performance;
- make some recommendations for conductor education and for further research into the relationship between conductor and choir.

The network would be a valuable way of gaining insight into the variety of practices in the area, sharing and disseminating successful ones and sharing and solving problems.

Personal Reflections on Choir Research

Gunnel Fagius

Since 2002, the Uppsala University Choral Centre has been my place of academic residence where I have investigated choral research in Sweden. From this platform, I have tried to understand the vast field of singing together (i.e. choirs) from a musicological perspective as well as from other research areas.

The network, *Choir in Focus*, is an important tool one can use to understand different disciplines within choir research and their related research methods. The network also facilitates research of various choral traditions in the network countries with regard to singing ideals, choral repertory, chorus-conducting education, and the sociological and historical conditions of the choral phenomenon.

In Sweden it is relatively easy to find the kind of knowledge necessary to create a network on choir research in an interdisciplinary fashion, perhaps thanks to the small size of the country. However, we need a plan in order to keep each other informed about what is going on. What should be the areas of collaboration and for what specific issues should different sciences be responsible? At the same time, I wish it were possible to cultivate specialities within choir research, such as examining choral society from a musicological or pedagogical perspective, or as an anthropological or sociological researcher. It is also important for us to understand what voice researchers do with respect to medicine as well as what researchers on acoustics do. Is it possible to organise seminars for a continuous discussion with a wider circle of researchers without making the number of network participants too large?

During the last few years, journalists from broadcasting companies, journals, newspapers and television have regularly asked for information regarding research on choir singing. There has been an increasing interest from the public in Sweden and other Nordic countries about the choir singing phenomenon. They want to know why and how we sing. Many questions reveal a presumption about choral singing as something historically new. We need an information hub in order to provide more information about the vast competence of choirs in Nordic countries from a historical perspective based on choral research from several disciplines. Can the network do this? We also need to be aware of how to maintain, improve, and expand the network.

I hope we will be able to show the need for more research after three years of our project, *Choir in Focus*. If so, our aim should be to gather funding possibilities for research scholarships.

Choral Research: Remarks to a Global Bibliography

Ursula Geisler

When the Southern Choral Centre was established in 2007 it indicated a greater need for choral research activities on a national level, especially in the south of Sweden.[37] In trying to encourage this, the Department of Musicology and the Department for Research in Music Education and Performance (Malmö Academy of Music) at Lund University received the responsibility of taking an inventory of the choral research field on both a national and an international level.

The choral research inventory at the Department of Musicology focuses mainly on research literature. It records publications from both a historical and transnational point of view and systematises these publications along music pedagogical and music historical terms. It also aligns research strategies with respect to this field, which to some extent might be described as marginalised. As such, the inventory is the combination of a bibliography and a guideline to the field of choral research with an international outlook. One of its main goals is to make visible what is often hidden and to give an overview of the academic tendencies in different choral research discourses. Another goal is to identify connections between different academic traditions and to show desiderates in choral research in order to become aware of relevant research questions and areas for future research in both a national and international perspective. Articles, monographs and anthologies are registered, in addition to newspapers and online resources. In the following sections, I will address some aspects of this according to the question of systematisation of choral research literature and to relevant research resources.

One difficulty with respect to finding relevant choral research literature is that library catalogues and databases are often not systematised in a manner that makes it easy to identify "choral" issues. Different terms can indicate the relevance of choral research (e.g., "Chor", "kör", "choir", "coros", "kwaya", and "hor"). In addition, choral topics can be hidden behind titles with more general musical topics or titles, which then are difficult to explore (e.g., "singing", "vocal", and "sound"). However, this inventory has its limitations because it is difficult to find and to take into account every relevant choir-related term in a global choral perspective – and not least because of its starting point in choral research in Europe and the United States.

Choral Research Literature: Some Examples

There exist a great number of publications dealing with choral questions in one way or another. In Sweden there is research on acoustics (Ternström, 1989, 2003; Sundberg, 1987), children's singing (Fagius, 2001, 2007), male choruses (student singers) (Jonsson, 1990; Larsén, 2009), continental influences (Reimers, 1993), choir leading (Sandberg Jurström, 2009), and sound (Hedell, 2009). When categorizing different research approaches on an international ground, it is obvious that some topics and perspectives are more common than others.

Publications that are interesting from a choral historical perspective often come into being out of an interest in documentation, festivity or jubilee. One genre of choral interest is different kinds of commemorative publications for single choirs or a singing group's history. These publications, which are common today, can include interesting topics and facts, such as names, dates, locations, discourses, reception history and intercultural connections. Institutional history is only one field of choral research interest. Other research deals with topics including performance practice, acoustics, sociology or choir's reception in both historical and contemporary perspective. There are some meta research publications (Bohlin, 1993; Brusniak, 2003) on choral music in connection with specific genres such as opera, drama and tragedy. From a pedagogical perspective, a lot of research interest focuses on

37 In December 2007, a resolution was passed to establish a Southern Choral Centre, "Körcentrum Syd", with Lund University with Malmö Academy of Music, Odeum and The Department of Musicology, Malmö University, Malmö Symphony Orchestra and Music South as initiators and institutional partners.

questions about different choir techniques and on choir leading, social factors and psychology. Musicology has even dealt with individual compositional styles and choir music composition in a more narrow sense.

Thus, it can be said that the most challenging aspect of a global bibliography of choral research concerns categorisation and systematisation, rather than simply finding the relevant literature. At the same time, debates about the boundaries of definition come to the fore. What is choral research and how inclusive should the term 'choir' be? There is a clear tension between the diversity of singing groups with respect to structure, naming, purpose, reception over time, and the idea of a 'choir', that builds upon a rather young development of the four-part mixed choir tradition. This latter-mentioned phenomenon has contributed to Sweden's famous reputation involving choirs and the mystification of the "Choral Miracle".

Many current resources regarding choral music have developed out of a service attitude towards choir needs and repertoire. This includes a copious amount of existing choral sheet music on different internet platforms. They are often designed as a helping tool for both conductors and choirs. In a global perspective, there are only a few academic institutes with a specific or strong focus on choral research.

The global inventory shows that there are different thematic interpretations of what "choral research" ought to be. There is a great amount of work regarding specific choir piece composers and conductors, as well as choir's special history and repertoire since the 18th century. Questions of style and genre are addressed as well as those regarding the Western origin of the concept of choir since the ancient dramas. Additionally, there are many publications regarding acoustical and educational questions, including those about singing movements and nationalism. Research conducted during the last few decades has contributed to music sociology with a community focus as well as both intercultural and transnational perspectives. Furthermore, the psychological aspects of choral research, including questions about the "healing power" of singing as an activity, have become a center of interest.

The diversification of choral research might be the result of an unequal development of institutional canons with respect to musicological topics. At the same time, it can be interpreted as a result of the broadening of methodological and theoretical approaches in the cultural sciences. It marks the extension of scientific borders which have an influence on the conception of research fields. Choirs and choral life raise questions with respect to social participation, health, leisure activities, democracy in modern societies, psychology, musical communities, gender, vocality, instrumentality and more. Therefore, it is not the task of the inventory to contribute to a complete picture of the entire choral research field, but rather to make a useful selection of relevant research titles that represent the most relevant choral research topics and that identify future research needs.

Choral Research Interests

I have until now mostly focused on singing aspects from a comparative and historical perspective in my own musicological research. Singing movements and singing ideas in the musicological discourse about Sweden and Germany's processes of nationalisation from the end of the 18th century up to the late 1940's have been central. An interesting starting point for transnational choir research is to look at the utility and ritual impact of choirs and choral forms in both the public sphere and in individual's lives. Choirs can shape social realities on the one hand, and choirs are shaped by them, on the other. This fact is obvious in a long term perspective and it is mentioned here in order to avoid an ahistorical manner of description. However, historical contextualisation is an important task for choral research. For example, in the past few years, aspects of "cultural heritage" have been considered in different European countries. With respect to singing history in Europe, choral history obtains importance from several interwoven aspects. The network *Choir in Focus* aims to bring researchers together on several choral aspects from different European research traditions. One important task is to identify and describe the status quo of choral research and bridge gaps in methodologies and theories related to choral research. The inventory aims to be one part of this process and it will hopefully contribute to future choral research in Sweden and Europe.

The bibliography is published as a pdf on the Southern Choral Centre's homepage: http://www.korcentrumsyd.se/forskning/forskningsprojekt/

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Practice-related Studies of Choir: Music Education and Artistic Research Perspectives

Karin Johansson

Background

One of the aims of the Southern Choral Centre (Körcentrum Syd) is to support activities in the field of choir music by encouraging a dialogue between different agents in the field and by initiating and co-ordinating education, performances and research. The research network *Choir in Focus* has proven to be a platform for developing such dialogues between researchers, as well as between practitioners, educators and researchers. First, it gives researchers from different traditions and national backgrounds the opportunity to meet and exchange views on theoretical and methodological approaches to choral research. Second, it creates a space for discussions concerning future directions of choir research. Third, it is a meeting point for theory and practice and a starting point for a debate about the relationship between research and musical practice. In this paper, I will focus on the third point and briefly discuss the development of research that is close to the artistic and pedagogical practice of choir singing and choral work. There are several relevant questions in this area:

- How can research contribute to the development of artistic choral practice?
- How may this musical practice be accessed and studied by researchers?

- How can theory and methodology be used and developed in order to explore topics that are interesting to researchers as well as important to practitioners?

Inside Views on Contemporary Swedish Choral Practice: An Interview Study

During the autumn of 2008, I conducted qualitative in-depth interviews with 26 established Swedish choir leaders. The study had two aims: (i) to explore prominent performers' perspectives on central and important topics related to choir, and (ii) to map out research areas and questions with artistic and pedagogical relevance for the field of musical practice.

The choir leaders (13 male and 13 female) come from all parts of Sweden and represent a range of musical genres, educational backgrounds and performance traditions. They were chosen and invited to take part on the basis of their reputation, prominence and long-standing experience in the field of Swedish choir life. The following areas were covered in the interviews:

- What is your story as a choir leader?
- Why have you chosen to work with choir?
- What are the most important aspects of making music with choirs?
- Which areas are unexplored?
- What are your long term goals and visions?
- Do you have ideas about how choir singing and choral work may be developed, in education and in performance?
- What is needed?

The choir leaders described their individual experiences of choral work in depth, each from their differing institutional, educational and musical backgrounds and perspectives. As a whole, the study gives a multifaceted picture of what successful choir leaders define as the heart of choral practice. Not surprisingly, all aspects of leadership and musical quality are seen as important areas for development and further exploration. An interesting observation is that even though most participants claim not

to have anything to contribute in the area of research, the data contains many ideas based on well formulated problems and suggestions deeply grounded in musical practice and experience. These will be formulated as possible research projects together with the themes that are generated during data analysis.

Comments on the Study

Contemporary choir singing in Sweden is a rich and multifaceted phenomenon with many directions for development. These include traditional or professional four-part choirs and vocal ensembles, all male and all female choirs, children, youth and senior choirs, business choirs, health choirs, scenic choirs, political choirs, and so-called complaint choirs. Contemporary choir singing is thus a dynamic field that can be described as a historically grounded, socio-cultural and musical practice with many local variations and shapes. The complex and fascinating object of choir singing and choral work offer vast opportunities for interaction between practitioners and researchers who may have differing goals, yet share mutual interests due to their focus on choir.

However, a general impression is that there is a gap between the world of performers and educators and the world of researchers. Geisler's global survey of research (2010) about choir shows that publications on this topic are abundant, but they are not widespread or shared across national borders. Neither do they seem to reach practitioners or to be relevant for them. As mentioned, a clear result of this study is that very few people know about or employ research studies in their practical work. The choir leaders all express an interest in participating in research projects and suggest many areas that they consider important or possible to investigate in cooperation with researchers. However, few of them have experience with research or artistic developmental projects in their musical practice. Almost no one mentions musicological, sociological, psychological or other choral research as having had any influence on their music-making.

From the vantage point of my dual position as a musician and a researcher, this situation creates possibilities and positive challenges. On the basis of this study, which is still a work in progress, I argue that there is a need for trans-disciplinary and practice related studies where suitable methodological approaches can be combined with inside and outside perspectives. Research questions relating to choir singing and choral work constitute an ideal starting point for the formation of multi-disciplinary research teams. 'Choir as a collective vocal practice' can be an umbrella topic and multi-disciplinary research teams can combine professional competence from music, musicology, music education, music psychology, sociology and artistic research among other areas.

In the relatively young discipline of music education and performance, researchers often investigate contemporary musical practice and employ a variety of approaches (Bresler, 2007; Colwell & Richardson, 2002), but studies on choir singing and choral practice in Scandinavia are still scarce. In the even younger area of artistic research, such studies are nonexistent. However, these are domains for potential expansion with respect to higher music education (Jørgensen, 2009). A Danish survey of choir leaders' financial situation (Pedersen & Smed Jensen, 2007) relates musical quality to the allocation of economic resources. It also exemplifies how quantitative methods may produce suggestions for explorative qualitative research questions with a high relevance for practitioners. Recently, the first two choir-related theses in music education (Sandberg Jurström, 2009; Haugland Balsnes, 2009) present examples of fruitful methodological developments and illustrate how musical knowledge development and production in choirs can be studied from multiple perspectives, as well as in situations where aspects of performance and education overlap and interact.

Artistic research and *the artistic turn* (Coessens et al., 2009) represent a development where popular notions of art and artists are questioned, along with traditional academic conceptions of knowledge. Gadamer (1997) wrote that "art is knowledge and the experience of artistic works means to take part in that knowledge" (p. 37). The mystification and marginalisation of artistic geniality will be no longer viable when and if artistic learning and creative processes will be possible to study, articulate and debate. This also poses important methodological questions that may contribute to healing the Cartesian wound in Western European culture.[38] Borgdorff (2007) writes that "art practice – both the art object and the creative process – embodies situated, tacit knowledge that can be revealed and articulated by means of experimentation and interpretation" (p. 18). He makes a distinction between research *on* the arts, *for* the arts, and *in* the arts. Research *in* the arts represents research

38 The 'wound' refers to the fundamental split between mind (*res cogitans*) and body (*res extensa*) in Descarte's metaphysical system, and to how this dualism has permeated Western thinking.

development with an emphasis on professional artists' inside perspectives (Lilja, 2007). *The practice,* where distinctions between method and the research object are dissolved are central to studies of artistic work (Hannula et al., 2005).

The scene of contemporary choral music-making is a dynamic one. The practice is constantly developed in courses, conferences and ongoing dialogues (see for example www.sverigeskorforbund.se). From this point of view, practitioner-oriented popular science literature on choir-related topics (e.g. Bengtsson, 1982; Fagius, 1997) is a genre that may be expanded and can attract wide interest. Close-to-practice perspectives on certain aspects such as successful conducting (Durrant, 2003) and in-depth studies of musical artistic practice (Stålhammar, 2009) may inspire further explorative and cross-disciplinary projects.

Examples

Three brief examples of prospective research studies are outlined below from suggestions and ideas given by choir leaders during interviews. In different ways they may articulate non-conceptual forms of experience and knowledge in the creative and learning processes of choral practice, as well as combine perspectives *on*, *for* and *in* art (Borgdorff, 2007).

The first project encompasses the conception, creation and performance of a piece of contemporary choral music at a regional music festival in a part of Sweden where choir singing has a strong social and cultural impact. In a longitudinal case study, all stages are analysed as a whole from ideas and commissioning, over composition and practising, to interpretation, performance and recording.

The second project focuses on choral sound, harmony and gender aspects. Traditionally, all-female choirs sing arrangements that lack a harmonic grounding in complete chords. This study follows the musical and social development of a choir where deep female voices are encouraged and where the repertoire is arranged accordingly. This questions conventional views of repertoire, musical expression and ways of singing.

The third project studies musical literacy. The abilities to read music and to relate independently to notation are important aspects of choir work. The study investigates and elaborates methods for improving musical literacy and explores its relationships to musical expression, experiences of choir singing and quality development. Consequently, it considers the choir as a living instrument and also deals with the dynamic relationship between the singers and the choir leader.

Under common headings in these projects, choir as a research object may be studied from different perspectives and with different methods:

- artistic research studies – aspects of composition, improvisation and performance studied by composers, conductors and singers from inside the practice or in collaboration with researchers;
- music education studies – aspects of learning new music, singing, leadership and choir conducting studied by both researchers and practitioners;
- historical studies – local choral traditions, performance practice and repertoire history;
- psychological studies – aspects of perception, listening and the experience of choir music;
- music production studies – relationships between technology and musical choices studied in the context of recording;
- sociological studies and cultural studies – aspects of regional development, music as a cultural expression and as part of identity formation.

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"Soldiers of German Song" and "Singing Revolutions" – Fields of Ideology-Critical "Choir Research"

Helmke Jan Keden

In the course of my historical studies on the subject of German Choirs and Choir organisation, I have chosen an approach that takes a critical view of ideology. I was particularly interested in examining those processes that led to the formation of "community identities" or their functionalisation and ideologisation within different socio-political systems. The point of departure for these studies was an examination of choir music and the way choirs were organised in the Third Reich.

Within the framework of several studies on this topic and with the aid of mainly discourse-analytical procedures, I was able to show that the reorganisation of German choirs according to the dictates of the newly-installed regime in the Third Reich did not happen congruently but, despite a mainly nationalistic singing clientele, this reorganisation was a decidedly heterogeneous process.[39] There were too many breaches of faith, too many radical demands, and these seemed to contradict those same conservative intentions of numerous male choirs that in part longed for the glory of their imperial past. The consequence of this devel-

39 Cf. Keden, H.J. (2003). *Zwischen „Singender Mannschaft" und „Stählerner Romantik". Die Ideologisierung des deutschen Männergesangs im „Nationalsozialismus"*. Diss. Stuttgart; id.: (2001) „Kulturfassade und irrationale Ästhetik: Die Gleichschaltung des Chorwesens im Nationalsozialismus". In: B. Müßgens (Hrsg.). *Musik im Spektrum von Kultur und Gesellschaft: Festschrift Brunhilde Sonntag zum 65. Geburtstag*. Osnabrück, 189–201.

opment was an unprecedented outburst of debate on the future aims of individual choir organisations. The most heated debates were conducted within the largest choir organisation founded in 1862 which had a membership of 1.3 million people in 1934 – the *Deutscher Sängerbund* (*DSB*, German Singers Association).

Closer examination of the organisation and the day-to-day management of choirs and their repertoire revealed that within this organisation there was a dispute about radical demands and concessions that in the end could only be resolved through personal intervention by the highest authority, including, among others, J. Goebbels who was able to restore the peace in a way that was compatible with the principles of Nazi ideology. The result was alignment with national socialist doctrine at all levels.

Thus, the result of the analysis of the administrative restructuring was that it was not an entirely smooth process as one might suppose on account of the mainly national-conservative membership of the *Deutscher Sängerbund*. Rather, the research sources available show that this process was characterised by fierce disagreement both inside and outside the association. The reasons for this lay mainly in an unresolved distribution of responsibility, and this lack of coherence was partly exploited by the lay choir organisations desire to consolidate their own positions under the Nazi regime and to acquire superior positions in other Nazi cultural organisations.

We can also see that the leadership of the singers' unions were definitely keen to put new political guidelines into practice such as the abolition of democratic principles in favour of the Führer's dictates. They did this in an almost sycophantic manner. However, the immediate consequence of organisational changes, such as tightening up the organisation, merging ensembles, rewording statutes, and excluding Jewish members, was that these measures were anathema to the vast majority of members. Even if the vast majority of the singers inwardly sympathised with the new way in which things were going, it remains to be said that the process of organisational direction was not concluded until two years *after* the establishment of the Nazi regime. After that differences of opinion were still visible.

An examination of the choir's daily routine after the installation of the National Socialist (NS) regime shows us a similar picture. Yet, even before the installation, the *DSB* leadership realised that male choirs, which were worried about getting new members, had to reform their "old-fashioned" *Liedertafelstil*. This reform was to be carried out as a sort of rapprochement with the intentions of the so-called "youth music movement"[40]. This was a musical form of expression with a multi-facetted view of reform whose stated intention in the 1920s was to return to the naturalness and simplicity of a "past era" to provide a counterweight to the "technologised" modern world.

Before that, functionaries found themselves up against massive resistance by older members because of their attempts to implement a "new way". The vast majority of the singers did not want to relinquish their traditional way of making music which was characterised by an exaggerated, artificial style of singing that was celebrated in numerous song contests. Now that the national-socialists had seized power and reorganised the structure of the *DSB*, the functionaries saw that there was an opportunity to breathe new life into the reform of the *DSB* that had hitherto dragged on for some time. The aims of the "youth music movement" had already been infused with ideology as early as the 1920s (by Walther Hensel et al.). This was now radicalised and aligned with NS ideology which was transported into the ensembles via politically-aligned singers print media such as the *Deutsche Sängerbundeszeitung* (German Singers Association Newspaper). Regulations for choir organisation included exact guidelines for choir practice that had to be held according to military rules. Singers were also enlisted to perform at party political meetings. Numerous choir practice sessions were put on an equal footing with service in the SA (Sturmabteilung); special training camps where male choirs were supposed to transform themselves into "singing platoons".[41] Instead of singing in harmony, singing in unison was propagated just as unhealthy singing in unison was practised in the NS brigades.

It is understandable that these guidelines clashed with conservative notions of music-making held by members who were concerned more with voluntary commitment and artistic competence. In particular, the debates held publicly between 1934 and 1936 on the question of what national-socialist alignment (of the choirs) meant for day-to-day choir activity demonstrate that, despite extensive agreement on the question of political orientation, there were still clear differences of opinion regarding the practical consequences at choir level.[42]

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40 Cf. Reinfandt, K.-H. (1987). *Die Jugendmusikbewegung. Impulse und Wirkungen.* Wolfenbüttel; Scholz, W. (1980). *Die deutsche Jugendmusikbewegung in Dokumenten ihrer Zeit von den Anfängen bis 1933*. Wolfenbüttel.

41 Cf. Götsch, G. & Kelbetz, L. (1934). *Männerchor oder singende Mannschaft. Männerchor in der Entscheidung*. Hamburg.

42 Cf. Stege, F. (1934). „Neuorientierung des Männerchorgesanges". *Tonkunst* 38 (26), 401f.

The same picture emerged from an examination of the repertoire favoured by the Nazis. Here, too, the *DSB* executive made vehement attempts to influence the choice of songs in the repertoire after the Nazis seized power. This process was pushed ahead by the publication of new songbooks that no longer contained works by Mendelssohn and others that were considered "obsolete". More restrictive measures were also taken, inlcluding a compulsory list of songs to be performed by every choir.

Another measure taken by the *DSB* executive was the promotion of performing artists by holding large-scale composing competitions, all aimed at finding what was considered to be the "style for the new age". Many functionaries saw this new style as a diffuse combination of late-romantic / youth-musical composition techniques known collectively as 'Stählerne Romantik' ("Steel Romantic Music"). There was a clear tendency to compose monumental works to be performed at concerts for mass choirs similar to those performed at religious ceremonies, and to pay homage to worldly aims of the new political regimes. The greatest manifestation of this "culture of celebration" was the 12th German Singers Federation Song Festival held in 1937 in Breslau – a mass propaganda event that, with Hitler and Goebbels in attendance, was the climax of national-socialist instrumentalisation.[43]

Yet, as mentioned previously, a number of singers either did not want to or were not able to be part of the various effects of this radicalisation. When it became clear in 1935 that publicising any discussion within the association was strictly prohibited, many singers left their respective associations, and by the outbreak of the war half of them had left (approximately 600,000 people). Singers who remained in their associations became loyal servants of national socialism.

I was able to demonstrate the ambivalence of the "community-building" aspect of choir singing by focusing my research on the political alignment of German male choirs which came to be the ideologised "ideal of community", and by considering two other studies on the "workers' culture of singing" what was banned by the Nazis,[44] and choir singing in national socialist concentration camps.[45] Choir singing was instrumentalised by the national socialists as a means of ideological indoctrination, but the secret underground "worker singers" used choir singing as a means of resistance against the Nazis. In the concentration camps choir singing played an important part in the preservation of one's own identity.

The results of these studies were incorporated into a study carried out by Bergische Universität Wuppertal that compared different dictatorships and the phenomena of choir music in the Baltic Countries and Germany.[46] It became clear how difficult it is to compare the varying functions and significances in different contexts. With reference to the title of this essay, I would like to ask one question: What measures, contexts and horizons of understanding are necessary to meaningfully categorise the concept of a "singing revolution"? On one hand, it could be a term for ideological indoctrination according to the dictates of the national socialist regime. On the other, it might be a term that we could use to describe the liberation of the Baltics from Soviet rule.

I have also been able to gain valuable insights into transnational processes that were particularly active in the so-called "Weimar Republic" (1918–1933) in research that I have been carrying out at the University of Bonn. On the basis of the singers' journal *Mitteilungsblatt der Zentrale für die deutschen Chorverbände im Ausland* (Proceedings of the Central Organisation of German Choir Federations Abroad), I was in a position to clarify how energetically the *Deutscher Sängerbund* attempted to transplant it's notion of German culture to numerous German outposts outside the Third Reich, and thus create the semblance of a non-existent German culture.[47]

43 Cf. Deutscher Sängerbund (Hrsg.) (1937). *Festführer zum 12. Deutschen Sängerbundesfest*. Breslau.

44 Cf. Keden, H.J. (1999). „'Kommst Du auch zum Kaffeeklatsch?' Ein Beitrag zur 'Arbeitersängerbewegung' im Nationalsozialismus". *International Journal of Musicology* 8, 245–264.

45 Cf. id.: (2005). „Musik in nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern". *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte. Beilage zur Wochenzeitung* Das Parlament 11, 40–46.

46 Cf. Grochulski, M., Kautny, O. & Keden, H.J. (Hrsg.) (2006). *Musik in Diktaturen des 20. Jahrhunderts. Internationales Symposium an der Bergischen Universität Wuppertal vom 28./29.2.2004. Tagungsband*. Mainz: Are; Keden, H.J. (2006). „'Jeder Sänger ist ein SA-Mann für das deutsche Lied!'. Ein Beitrag zur Ideologisierung des deutschen Männergesangs im 'Dritten Reich'". In: Grochulsky, Kautny & Keden 2006, 43–56; Keden, H.J. (2007). „'Kas tulemas on stiilituse stiil?' Motteid saksa meestelaulu repertuaarikaanonist Kolmanda Riigi ajal". In: U. Lippus (Hrsg.). *Meeskoor ja meestelaul*. Tallinn, 86–104.

47 Cf. id.: (2007). „'Deutsche Sänger sind Soldaten des deutschen Liedes.' Das Sendungsbewusstsein des Deutschen Sängerbundes im Dritten Reich gen Osten". In: E. Fischer (Hrsg.). *Chorgesang als Medium von Interkulturalität: Formen, Kanäle, Diskurse*. Stuttgart, 183–196.

I was also able to discern the effects of successive changes of nationalities in the government (German / Russian / Polish) based on a study of the multiethnic region of former West Prussia. For example, when I studied the topic of choirs in Lodz, I discovered that partially restrictive measures implemented by the respective governments were not entirely put into practice at the regional level. The ensembles in multiethnic areas were especially tolerantly towards other choirs. Frequent attempts were made to accommodate the ever-changing political circumstances as much as possible. There is evidence of numerous friendships between Polish and German male choirs, and Christian and Jewish ensembles despite the fact that, at the time, the larger German national federations were heavily propagating nationalistic German self-images in order to foster the adoption of a nationalistic German identity in the German colonies.[48]

The focus of two other studies was an examination of the processes of utilizing propaganda to create the "idea of a nation". Such propaganda could be regarded as the prerequisite for creating the societal conditions necessary to establish national socialist content. It was important for me to study the way German choir movements dealt with "cultures of remembrance" and "places of remembrance". In particular, I examined the contextualisation of "monuments", including those that had been exhibited during the 11th German Singers Federation Song Festival in Frankfurt – the last such exhibition in the Weimar Republic.[49]

Our research also showed that the people who planned the song festivals wanted to orchestrate the musical celebrations of the *DSB* as splendiferous historic events. Thus, they employed traditional festival rituals such as the "consecration of the flag" and the "festival procession". The venues for the most important events were historical places that had played an important psychological part in the development of the German Reich in the 19th century. These venues could be chosen a second time because the participants in the song festivals associated them with the glories of contemporary occasions, especially in the context of the later Weimar Republic. For example, two "national German events" were located in the historic Church of St. Paul in Frankfurt, where the first German National Assembly of 1848 that contributed to the foundation of the German Reich was held. The *DSB* exploited the historical significance of this place of remembrance by organizing events on a monumental scale to express its emotional attachment to German settlements and singers' associations. The location no longer belonged to the German Reich and had been conceded to other powers as a consequence of the Treaty of Versailles.[50] Similar ideological aims were pursued by the *DSB* in setting up the German Singers Museum in Nuremberg in 1926. Research into this aspect shows that this memory-laden location was politically and emotionally "charged" in several respects. Nuremberg is the "birthplace" of the *DSB*. Also, the museum was housed within the city itself in a former monastery, the Monastery of St Catherine, and until 1778 it was used by the Meistersingers' guild for competitions. Furthermore, the monastery was adjoined to a church that had been transformed into a memorial for the fallen soldiers of the First World War. This secularised place of pilgrimage shows that fallen "singing brothers" were commemorated in ceremonies that reiterated the demand for a return of the German territories lost at the end of World War I. Finally, the museum itself was regarded as a national place of pilgrimage where the over 3,000 items were on display as "the relics of singers" in order to underline the significance of German male choirs both in the past and the present. The fact that two of the museum departments were called "Germans and German Songs Abroad" and "The Song in World War I" made clear what the real purpose of the museum was.

These two examples demonstrate the significance of German male choirs in the Weimar Republic and show the fertile ground for the incipient national socialist movement.[51] The extent to which these identity-creating convictions could be transferred is also revealed by my study

48 Cf. Keden, H.J. (2010). „'Lied im Grenzlandkampf als Stärkung des Deutschtums' – Identitätsbildungen im deutschen Laienchorwesen Danzigs und Westpreußens während der Zwischenkriegszeit". In: E. Fischer (Hrsg.) (im Druck). *Die Geschichte der Musikkultur in Danzig und Westpreußen. Perspektiven einer transnationalen Forschung*. Stuttgart.

49 Keden, H.J. (in Vorbereitung). „'Deutscher Sänger, erinnerst Du Dich?' Überlegungen zu musealen Präsentationsformen ‚ostdeutscher' Chorkultur in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart einschließlich einiger museumsdidaktischer Überlegungen". In: E. Fischer & A. Kürsten (Hrsg.). *Das immaterielle Kulturgut Musik im Spannungsfeld von ‚Lebenswelt' und ‚Monument'*. Stuttgart.

50 Cf. Maenner, E. (1933). „Die volksdeutsche Bedeutung des Frankfurter Sängerfestes". In: Hauptausschuß des Deutschen Sängerbundes (Hrsg.). *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Sängerbundes 1933* 8, 83.

51 Cf. Brusniak, F. (1995). „Chor und Chormusik". In: L. Finscher (Hrsg.). *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. 2. neubearbeitete Ausgabe. *Sachteil* Bd. 2. Kassel, 766–824; Klenke, D. (1998). *Der singende „deutsche Mann". Gesangvereine und deutsches Nationalbewußtsein von Napoleon bis Hitler*. Münster.

that examines the way in which German choirs were creating identity at a time when choirs were just beginning to form in Namibia (a former German colony of "German Southwest Africa") during the "period between the wars". There, the content of ideology was adopted and adapted more or less tacitly because it was not subject to transformational processes.[52] Thus, it is remarkable how rapidly singers organised themselves in choirs in the fledgling German colony; first in the colonial armed forces from about 1890 onwards and from 1902 among the "civilian" settlers. This tendency is also noticeable after the dissolution of "German Southwest Africa" as a result of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1930, the percentage of singers active in choirs among the German settlers was 4.5 % – no less than in the Weimar Republic.

Socio-political developments in this area of southwest Africa constantly shifted. It was against this background it became clear that former colonists were required to undergo a permanent transformation of their self-image. Thus, in those rapidly changing times membership in a choir was the only thing that did not change and it was something to which people desperately clung. Here it is notable that in such times of socio-political explosiveness people looked to their fatherland for spiritual and national guidance. This is substantiated by original documents from the "period between the wars" which show that the choirs regarded themselves as the guardians of the German way of life and convictions as they were far from their German homeland. Thus the conservative and national worldviews known from the Weimar Republic were cultivated and were to some extent projected onto the situation in the German settlement in southwest Africa. Numerous documents on choral concerts illustrate these processes of adaptation and hint that a transfigured culture of remembrance was cultivated and kept alive on African soil. In this context of former colonialist connotations, the nationalist German component radicalised itself enormously. This discursive process of transformation was made possible by numerous contacts the German choirs had with the fatherland. On one hand, federal and club magazines played an important part as "channels" of cultural transfer in the process of identity creation. However, this exchange was also supported at administrative level by the founding of the "Southwest African Singers Union" in 1927. The fact that this union took part in the 10th Festival of German Singers in Vienna in 1928 also demonstrates how closely the expatriate singers were linked to their home country. In 1930, the first regional song festival took place in Windhoek and it was frenetically acclaimed in the German singers journals.

In conclusion, apart from discussing various phenomena associated with "culture transfer" and "identity creation", one of the main areas of interest has been research on how people attempt to keep alive the memory of prior musical culture places.

At the moment I am attempting to find answers to various questions relating to choir organisation and music in the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1933. Here my attention is focussed on the influence that the "young musicians' revival movement" had on middle-class lay choirs, and in male choirs in particular. Using hermeneutic methods, I intend to work out the discourses, reactions and correlations that laid the groundwork for the ideologisation of choirs and choir music in the Third Reich. Apart from analysing music politics and music teaching, my research also includes an examination of institutions, biographies and the repertoire, as well as a study of those identity concepts that shaped society at that time including the immediate consequences for choirs.

52 Cf. Keden, H.J. (2010): „'Deutschem Liede, Deutscher Art, stets in Südewest die Treue wahrt!' – Zu den Anfängen deutscher Chorvereinigungen im heutigen Namibia." In: F. Brusniak & D. Klenke (Hrsg.) (inVorbereitung). *Deutsches Chorvereinswesen – Aspekte transnationaler Einflussnahmen. Bericht der chorwissenschaftlichen Tagung im Rahmen des Ersten internationalen Chorfestivals der Zentrale für den deutschsprachigen Chorgesang in der Welt vom 12. – 17.10. 2009*. Solingen.

Nationalism and National Religiosity. The German Oratorio in the 19th Century

Linda Maria Koldau

English Summary

This project focuses on the political and cultural historical role of the oratorio in 19th century Germany. In this period, the genre became inseparably linked to the choral movement (*Sängerbewegung*) and thus to the national movement, seeking first a cultural and later a political unification of the numerous German states. Thus, traditional religious subjects of the oratorio are supplemented with historical themes and figures such as St. Boniface, Luther, Gutenberg, Hermann (Arminius), Elisabeth, Gustav Adolf and others that have national implications.

The oratorio provides the perfect vehicle for imbibing a national concern into music and to publicizing it via impressive public performance. The genre in the 19th century aimed at a performance by choral societies in public concert halls and at music festivals. This granted a minimal distance between performers and audience. The oratorio assumed considerable political significance since a notable part of the German middle class was organised in societies (*Vereine*) with a more or less explicit political coinage, and also since choral societies were one of the strongest sociological factors in the German national movement of the 19th century. This was strengthened by the fact that this genre was open to a far broader segment of society than the leading musical genres of the period: symphony and opera. Its performance in the context of regional and trans-regional music festivals, including the traditional religious hallmarks in the year (e.g., Christmas and Passion Tide/Easter) marked the climax of the choral societies' annual activities. At the same time, the performance of such large-scale choral work was a public demonstration of what could be achieved by people united in a common and idealistic purpose, especially since choir participation demanded considerable use of all vocal and instrumental forces. Accordingly, the oratorio, with its large scale and impressive vocal and instrumental dimensions, served as a representative of the musically sublime, adequate to express the fundamental issues of the nation and humanity.

In the project, the social and political dimension of this genre are examined with an analysis of both the libretti, their musical setting, the performance and the reception of selected works. The context of an originally sacred genre that takes on socio-political dimensions in a time of increasing distance to the institutionalised churches implies a special focus on the phenomenon of "national religiosity" (*Nationalreligiosität*) within the German national movement. The oratorio appears to be a perfect musical expression of this phenomenon. Accordingly, there is an unusually high number of oratorios to be found focusing on the "national heroes", St. Boniface as "Apostel der Deutschen" (15 oratorios) and Martin Luther as founder of the "true German" faith (9 oratorios). These oratorios are analyzed within their socio-political, cultural, literary and musical context. The resulting study aims at identifying the German oratorio in the 19th century as a musical genre of high political, social and cultural significance.

Bonifatius und Luther als Helden im deutschen Oratorium des 19. Jahrhunderts. Eine Arbeitsskizze

Zur Stellung des Oratoriums im 19. Jahrhundert

Das deutsche Oratorium des 19. Jahrhunderts bündelt eine Vielzahl von politischen, religiösen, literarischen und musikalischen Strömungen und bringt sie in eine Form, die eine – im Vergleich zu anderen künstlerischen Gattungen – ungewöhnlich große Menge von Menschen unmittelbar (durch Mitwirkung oder Zuhören) oder mittelbar (durch Rezensionen, Berichte und Verbreitung in Notendruck und Libretto) erreichte. Dadurch erweist es sich im Hinblick auf das Verhältnis von Religion und Nation als besonders geeignete künstlerische Ausdrucksform des gegenseitigen Transfers religiöser und nationaler Elemente.

Tatsächlich entstanden im Laufe des 19. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland unzählige Oratorien von heute meist vergessenen Librettisten und Komponisten, die auf Musikfesten, zu nationalen oder kirchlichen Gedenktagen, in der Passionszeit, aber auch zu politischen Feiern aufgeführt und zum Teil über mehrere Jahrzehnte mit großer Begeisterung rezipiert wurden. Diese Werke sind fast durchweg vergessen und offenbar der Beachtung nicht mehr wert. Die Gründe dafür sind vielfältig: Das zentrale Interesse der deutschen Musikwissenschaft am 19. Jahrhundert gilt nach wie vor der Symphonik (und damit dem Konstrukt der „Absoluten Musik") und der Oper bzw. dem Wagnerschen Musikdrama. Dieser gattungsgeschichtlichen Gewichtung entspricht das dominierende institutionsgeschichtliche und somit musiksoziologische Augenmerk: Nach wie vor steht die Frage nach der Entwicklung des Konzertwesens und Musiktheaters im Vordergrund. Das Oratorium als potentiell „religiöse" Gattung hingegen erscheint suspekt – textgebunden und (angeblich) mit überkommenen religiösen Vorstellungen beladen, passt es weder in das Konzept der „absoluten Musik", noch in die Bestrebungen, eine autonome, den Menschen mit all seinen Sinnen erfassende Bühnenkunst zu schaffen. Zudem bewegt es sich zu dicht am Christlich-Religiösen, um den Ansprüchen einer Kunstreligion, in der Religion und Kunst ästhetisch verschmelzen, gerecht zu werden. Somit erscheint das Oratorium auch ästhetisch uninteressant, zumal die Texte und ihre musikalische Umsetzung dem Vergleich mit den Werken der „großen" Komponisten nicht standhalten können und für eine heutige Aufführung gar nicht mehr zumutbar wären.

Mit einer solchen Einstellung einer offenbar doch höchst erfolgreichen und breitenwirksamen Gattung gegenüber wird in der Musikwissenschaft eine Tradition fortgeschrieben, die im 19. Jahrhundert selbst ihren Ausgangspunkt hat. Ihr seien schlagwortartig einige Thesen zum deutschen Oratorium im 19. Jahrhundert gegenübergestellt:

- Das Oratorium ist weniger eine religiöse als eine hochpolitische Gattung: In ihm verschmelzen nationale und religiöse Momente. Aufgrund dieser Verschmelzung, gepaart mit der emotionalen Wirkung von Musik, entsprechenden Sujets und dem für Laien erhebenden Erlebnis einer gemeinsamen Aufführung, ist das Oratorium als bedeutender politischer Faktor in der Nationalbewegung des 19. Jahrhunderts zu betrachten.
- Das Oratorium hängt untrennbar mit dem Vereinswesen und den – wiederum stark politisch geprägten – Musikfesten zusammen. Dadurch erreicht es weit mehr Menschen – sowohl die mitwirkenden Laiensängerinnen und -sänger als auch das Publikum – als die weniger breit zugänglichen Gattungen Symphonie und Oper.
- Das Oratorium eignet sich besser als andere Künste und musikalische Gattungen, religiöse und nationale Helden zu stilisieren (und sich dazu des politisch so bedeutsamen national-religiösen Vokabulars zu bedienen). Dadurch wird es zu einer musikalischen Form der nationalen Mythenbildung mit enormer Breitenwirkung.

Die enge Verzahnung dieser Thesen untereinander lässt erkennen, wie komplex die musikalische Gattung Oratorium ist: Politische und religiöse, sozialgeschichtliche und künstlerische Momente bedingen einander und dürfen nicht isoliert betrachtet werden. Nicht die schiere Menge der deutschen Oratorien, die im 19. Jahrhundert komponiert und aufgeführt wurden, macht das Desiderat einer gezielten Erforschung dieser Gattung im 19. Jahrhundert so dringlich, sondern der Kontext, in dem diese Werke entstanden und dem sie ihren großen Erfolg verdankten. Dazu aber ist eine tiefgehende Verbindung von Musikwissenschaft und allgemeiner Geschichtswissenschaft notwendig; hinzu kommen kirchengeschichtliche, theologische und literarische Studien. Nur so können die Werke im Einzelnen, vor allem aber die allgemeine Bedeutung der Gattung in der deutschen Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts verstanden und gewürdigt werden.

Religion, Nation und Oratorium

Das enge wechselseitige Verhältnis von Religion und Nation im 19. Jahrhundert wurde und wird in der allgemeinen Geschichtswissenschaft bereits breit diskutiert.[53] Seit der Zeit des Frühnationalismus wurden in

53 Es wäre müßig, hier eine umfassende Literaturübersicht bieten zu wollen. Hingewiesen sei stellvertretend auf die Aufsatzsammlungen *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte* (H.-G. Haupt & D. Langewiesche (Hrsg) (2001), Frankfurt/New York), *Religion und Gesellschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (W. Schieder (Hrsg.) (1993), Stuttgart), *Religion im Kaiserreich* (O. Blaschke & F.-M. Kuhlemann (Hrsg.) (1996), Gütersloh) und *„Gott mit uns". Nation, Religion und Gewalt im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert* (G. Krumeich & H. Lehmann (Hrsg.). (2000), Göttingen); dort finden sich zahlreiche weitere Literaturangaben (vgl. auch die entsprechenden Titel in Dieter Langewiesches Forschungsbericht (1995) „Nation, Nationalismus,

auffälliger Weise – d.h. weit häufiger und betonter als bislang üblich – Elemente des Religiösen auf die Nation transferiert, umgekehrt wurde das Sakrale nationalisiert. Die Überblendung und gegenseitige Bezugnahme von Nation und Religion äußert sich, um nur einige wesentliche Grundzüge zu nennen, in der Konstruktion eines Nationalcharakters, in dem die Frömmigkeit zum „Grundzug *des* Deutschen" wird, in der Einflechtung der Religion in nationale Geschichtsmythen, in einem Gottesbild, das Gott als Beschützer der deutschen Freiheit darstellt, und in der Sakralisierung politischer Ansprachen, Akte und Feiern.[54] Durch die religiöse Überhöhung erhält das Ordnungsmuster Nation die Aura einer schon immer gegebenen Substanz; Bilder, Rituale und Symbole aus dem semantischen Umfeld der Religion werden als Versatzstücke für die nationale Konstruktion benutzt.[55] Umgekehrt fließen Konzepte von Vaterlandsliebe, patriotischem Märtyrertum und einer spezifisch „deutschen" Ausprägung der christlichen Konfessionen – bis hin zum Versuch, die christliche Tradition des Abendlands durch eine neue Heilslehre, einen „deutschen Mythos", abzulösen – in den theologischen und homiletischen Diskurs ein. Besonders ist hier auch die literarische Produktion des 19. Jahrhunderts zu berücksichtigen, die sich im allgemeinen sprachlichen Habitus und nicht zuletzt in den Oratorienlibretti niederschlägt: In der Lyrik der Befreiungskriege werden Christliches und Nationales amalgamiert, dadurch entsteht ein „musterartiges Ganzes in der Summe der geistigen Ansätze und Säkularismen, das, als solches tradiert und nahezu kanonisiert, eine kaum zu überschätzende Bedeutung für das deutsche Nationalbewußtsein und die Sprache des

Nationalstaat: Forschungsstand und Forschungsperspektiven". In: *Neue Politische Literatur* 40, 190–236). Erwähnenswert ist zudem Michael Salewskis knappe Zusammenfassung des Phänomens vor dem Hintergrund der Zeitgeistforschung ((1996) „Religiöser Zeitgeist und historisches Selbstverständnis". In: F.-L. Kroll (Hrsg.). *Neue Wege der Ideengeschichte, Festschrift. Kurt Kluxen zum 85. Geburtstag*. Paderborn, 173–190), die ihrerseits auf Kurt Kluxens Darstellung „Religion und Nationalstaat im 19. Jahrhundert" verweist (in: J.H. Schoeps (Hrsg.). *Religion und Zeitgeist im 19. Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart/Bonn, 37–57).

54 Vgl. J. Echternkamp (2001) „'Religiöses Nationalgefühl' oder ‚Frömmelei der Deutschtümler?' Religion, Nation und Politik". In: Haupt & Langewiesche, 142–169, hier besonders 146–151.

55 Ebd., 167, und F.W. Graf (2000) „Die Nation – von Gott erfunden? Kritische Randnotizen zum Theologiebedarf der historischen Nationalismusforschung". In: Krumeich & Lehmann, 285–317, hier 313.

Patriotismus erlangt hat."[56] Damit einher geht wiederum die eminente Bedeutung des Krieges oder, allgemeiner ausgedrückt, der Militanz als entscheidender Antriebsmotor für die Steigerung des Nationalgefühls in allen Lebensbereichen und speziell in den Künsten.[57]

So schließt sich der Kreis von Nation, Religion und dem Kampf um Vorherrschaft: Die spezifische Konstellation in Deutschland zeigt sich darin, dass das Ringen um die Definition von Nationen stets auch ein Ringen um die konfessionelle Hegemonie gewesen ist – und dass dabei, bedingt durch politische, gesellschaftliche und kulturelle Faktoren, protestantische Geschichtsentwürfe vorherrschten und sich nur in relativ geringem Maße an katholischen Gegenentwürfen rieben, bis sich nach der Reichsgründung 1871 die allmähliche Integration der Katholiken in die protestantisch definierte Nation vollzog.[58] Die nationale Geschichtsschreibung ist demnach protestantisch geprägt. Dies prägt sämtliche Kulturbereiche: In Analogie zur protestantischen Normierung des deutschen Literaturkanons war auch das Konzertwesen im 19. Jahrhundert – neben der Sängerbewegung das zentrale musiksoziologische Phänomen dieser Zeit – bildungsbürgerlich und somit in erster Linie protestantisch geprägt. Auch das Oratorium, das ursprünglich dem katholischen Kontext entstammte, wurde im 19. Jahrhundert vor allem in den protestantischen Gebieten gepflegt; ein spezifisch kirchlicher oder gar liturgischer Kontext erscheint mehr und mehr als Ausnahme.[59]

56 Zimmer, H. (1971) *Auf dem Altar des Vaterlands. Religion und Patriotismus in der deutschen Kriegslyrik des 19. Jahrhunderts*. Frankfurt am Main, 8.

57 Bei der Untersuchung der Oratorien wäre hier speziell zu fragen, wie weit Lieder und Choräle Eingang finden, die in anderem Kontext als Kriegslieder und militante Nationalhymnen gesungen wurden. Am prominentesten – und in zahlreichen Oratorien präsent – ist hier das Lutherlied „Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott".

58 Vgl. Haupt & Langewiesche (2001), 11–29, hier besonders: 20. Zu den Reibungen zwischen verschiedenen konfessionellen Geschichtsentwürfen vgl. Becker, F. (2001). „Konfessionelle Nationsbilder im Deutschen Kaiserreich". In: H.-G. Haupt & D. Langewiesche (Hrsg.). *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte*, 389–418.

59 Die Gattung entstand Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts als erbauliche musikalische Veranstaltung in den Gebetshäusern (Singular: oratorio) italienischer Bruderschaften. Als Opernersatz für die Fasten- und Adventszeit erlebte das Oratorium seine erste große Blüte im katholischen Umfeld Italiens und des Wiener Kaiserhofs; erst mit Händel (also im Laufe des 18. Jahrhunderts) begann die Verlagerung in den protestantischen Bereich. Die meisten deutschen Oratorienkomponisten des 19. Jahrhunderts schufen ihre Werke für einen protestantischen Kontext. In katholischen Gebieten war die Oratorientradition dagegen nur schwach ausgeprägt, da das Hauptaugenmerk auf der cäcilia-

In ihrer Einführung zur Aufsatzsammlung *Nation und Religion in der deutschen Geschichte* schlagen Heinz-Gerhard Haupt und Dieter Langewiesche Zugänge vor, um das Verhältnis von Nationalismus und Religion im Hinblick auf die Frage nach der kulturellen Konstruktion nationaler Ordnungsvorstellungen zu analysieren: Aussagekräftige Ergebnisse versprechen diskursgeschichtliche, symbol- und ritualgeschichtliche, organisationsgeschichtliche und wirkungsgeschichtliche Analysen – wobei wirkungsgeschichtliche Forschungen, die präzise nach dem Transfer der Wirkungsmächtigkeit des Glaubens, der Kirche und ihrer Zeremonien auf den Nationalstaat, nationale Organisationen und nationalkulturelle Ausdrucksformen fragen (also Studien, die notwendigerweise ins Alltagsleben führen müssen), noch sehr selten sind.[60] Das Oratorium mit seinen vielschichtigen Texten und seiner soziologischen Verankerung im Konzert-, Vereins- und Musikfestwesen bietet sich als facettenreiches Untersuchungsobjekt für sämtliche dieser Zugänge an. Besonders fruchtbar erscheint dabei die wirkungsgeschichtliche Dimension, die im Falle des Oratoriums tatsächlich weit ins Alltagsleben des Bildungsbürgertums führt. Das Oratorium scheint wie geschaffen für den Transfer von religiösen Elementen in eine nationalkulturelle Ausdrucksform, da es religiösen Kontext, religiös-nationale Texte und die starke Wirkungskraft der Musik in sich vereint. Der Appell an die Gefühle spielt dabei eine wesentliche Rolle, war es doch bereits im Frühnationalismus „erklärte Absicht der Prediger, Lehrer und Publizisten", das Potenzial religiöser Emotionen „freizusetzen und auf die weltlichen Mühlen des National*gefühls* zu leiten".[61] Da die Musik im Verständnis des 19. Jahrhunderts in einmaliger, von anderen Künsten unerreichbarer Weise die Gefühle anspricht und bewegt, bietet sich mit dem Oratorium das ideale Medium an, um den religiös-nationalen Appell zu potenzieren und gleichzeitig eine große, von der Begeisterung eines gemeinsamen Wirkens mitgerissene Menge an Musizierenden und Zuhörenden zu erreichen.

Nationalhelden im Oratorium: Bonifatius und Luther

Die skizzierte Verflechtung des Oratoriums in der Wechselbeziehung zwischen Nation und Religion im 19. Jahrhundert gewinnt an zusätzlichem Gewicht, wenn man sich die Entwicklung der Gattung in dieser Zeit vergegenwärtigt. Zwar überwiegen zahlenmäßig nach wie vor die traditionellen Oratorienstoffe: allen voran Christus-Oratorien bzw. Oratorien zu den wichtigsten Festen im Kirchenjahr (Weihnachten, Passion, Ostern, Himmelfahrt; selten Pfingsten), daneben die klassischen Stoffe des Alten Testaments, wobei auch hier eine Konzentration auf die „nationalen Volksführer" Moses und Abraham auffällt.[62] Neu im 19. Jahrhundert sind jedoch ausgesprochen patriotische Stoffe: Neben Bonifatius werden Martin Luther, Hermann, die heilige Elisabeth, Wittekind, Alarich, Otto, Gutenberg und Gustav Adolf zu Oratorienhelden stilisiert.[63] In Hinblick auf die hohe Bedeutung der national interpretierten Religiosität im 19. Jahrhundert fallen die beiden Gestalten, denen die meisten dieser thematisch neuartigen Oratorien gewidmet sind, ins Auge: Bonifatius und Luther, sozusagen die beiden konfessionellen Nationalhelden des 19. Jahrhunderts. Martin Luther steht im Zentrum der bereits erwähnten protestantischen Geschichtsentwürfe: Mit der Reformation, also mit Luthers Protest gegen die römische Kirche, sei ein nationales Selbstbewusstsein und damit das Bestreben der Deutschen entstanden, ihr Schicksal in die eigenen Hände zu nehmen.[64] Die Katholiken setzten diesem reformationszentrierten Entwurf Bonifatius als wahren Begründer der deutschen Nation entgegen; die Reformation wurde – nicht nur von Historikern, sondern auch in der kirchlichen Publizistik – als eigentliche Ursache für die verhängnisvolle Glaubensspaltung, den Dreißigjährigen Krieg und zahllose Fehden zwischen den Einzelstaaten gebrandmarkt. Zur Gegengestalt des Bonifatius wurde

nischen Reform der Kirchenmusik (und somit auf lateinischer a cappella-Musik für die Liturgie) lag.

60 Haupt & Langewiesche (2001), 18f.

61 Echternkamp (2001), 168 (Hervorhebung original).

62 Die beste Übersicht über das komplexe und auf Grund der schwierigen Quellenlage nur schwer zu erforschende Gebiet des deutschen Oratoriums im 19. Jahrhundert bietet zurzeit Smither, H.E. (2000) *A History of the Oratorio, Vol. 4: The Oratorio in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Chapel Hill/London. (Übersicht über die bevorzugten Oratorienstoffe ebd., 86–110).

63 Luther ist neunmal vertreten, Hermann dreimal, Elisabeth und Wittekind zweimal, Gutenberg, Gustav Adolf, Alarich und Otto je einmal (vgl. Smither, 104). Diese Werte sind jedoch nicht als absolut zu betrachten, da viele Oratorien sich nicht erhalten haben oder heute als vergessene Quellen an unbekannten Orten liegen. So weist Howard Smither nur neun Bonifatius-Oratorien nach, tatsächlich hat er eine Reihe von Bonifatius-Oratorien übersehen, die in Arnold Scherings immer noch grundlegender Darstellung *Geschichte des Oratoriums* (Leipzig 1911, Reprint Hildesheim/Wiesbaden 1966, 427) sowie in weiteren Quellenlexika zu Oratorien und Opern aufgeführt sind.

64 Becker (2001), 403, mit Bezug auf die Geschichtsentwürfe von Dreysen, Treitschke und Sybel.

wiederum Hermann (Arminius) erhoben, der gegen Rom für die Freiheit Germaniens gekämpft hatte – dieser Entwurf fand seinen nationalkulturellen Ausdruck am eindrücklichsten im Hermanndenkmal, das 1875 „an das deutsche Volk übergeben" wurde.[65]

In der deutschen Oratorienproduktion des 19. Jahrhunderts überwiegen freilich Bonifatius und Luther. Mit fünfzehn bislang nachweisbaren Oratorien steht Bonifatius – oder Winfried, wie er in dezidiert nichtkatholischen Oratorien genannt wird – an der Spitze dieser Gruppe.[66] Luther gerät dagegen mit nur neun nachweisbaren Oratorien ins Hintertreffen – ein Befund, der der überwältigenden Präsenz des Reformators im deutschen Geistesleben des 19. Jahrhunderts zu widersprechen scheint. Hier ist jedoch die Wechselwirkung von musikalischen, gattungsspezifischen, literarischen und gesellschaftlich-politischen Aspekten zu beachten, die das scheinbare Missverhältnis relativiert.[67]

Da die Bonifatius- und Luther-Oratorien über das gesamte Jahrhundert verteilt sind und die Komponisten und Librettisten aus katholischem wie protestantischem Umfeld stammen, stellen die Libretti und ihre musikalische Gestaltung aufschlussreiche Quellen für die verschiedenen Facetten der Stilisierung und Verehrung von religiösen Nationalhelden im 19. Jahrhundert dar. Die Untersuchung der Bonifatius-Oratorien etwa bietet ein Spektrum von der katholischen Heiligenverehrung über eine konfessionell neutrale Stilisierung des Heiligen zum deutschen Nationalhelden bis hin zu einer scheinbar anti-katholischen Interpretation der Bonifatius-Gestalt. Aufführungskontext und begleitende Publizistik lassen wiederum eine Einordnung in das oben beschriebene Dreiecksverhältnis von Religion, Nation und repräsentativer musikalischer Gattung zu. Die Interpretation der Oratorien als Geschichtsquellen wird allerdings in mehrfacher Hinsicht erschwert. Die Quellenlage ist

65 Zur nationalen Symbolik dieses Denkmals vgl. ausführlich Tacke, C. (1995). *Denkmal im sozialen Raum. Nationale Symbole in Deutschland und Frankreich im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen (= Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft; 108).

66 Vgl. Koldau, L.M. (2007). „Apostel der Deutschen: Bonifatius-Oratorien als Spiegel einer patriotischen Bonifatiusverehrung im 19. Jahrhundert". In: D.R. Bauer, K. Herbers & G. Signori (Hrsg.). *Patriotische Heilige. Beiträge zur Konstruktion religiöser und politischer Identitäten in der Vormoderne, Kongressbericht Weingarten 2004*. Stuttgart (= Beiträge zur Hagiographie; 4), 337–395.

67 So korreliert die „Blütezeit" der Luther-Oratorien, die das Leben des Reformators episodenhaft nachzeichnen, in auffälliger Weise mit dem Aufkommen von historischen Festzügen nach 1871; hinzu kommt die gattungsspezifische Entwicklung des Oratoriums.

grundsätzlich problematisch, da der – an sich schon schwer auffindbare – Notentext und das Libretto nur als Ausgangspunkt dienen können. Erst der breite Entstehungs- und Aufführungskontext sowie die Rezeption und Wirkung des jeweiligen Werks können Aufschluss über dessen intendierte Zielrichtung und politische Bedeutung geben. Da die meisten Librettisten und Komponisten heute völlig vergessen sind, ist hier eine tiefer gehende Archivrecherche vonnöten. Um dies leisten zu können, ist wiederum eine Beschränkung auf bestimmte Oratorien notwendig, die ein besonders aussagekräftiges Ergebnis versprechen. Vor dem Hintergrund einer allgemeineren Gesamtdarstellung der jeweiligen Oratoriengruppe ist es möglich, bei diesen ausgewählten Werken mehr in die Tiefe zu gehen. Die Untersuchung von Kontext und Wirkung geht dabei einher mit einer darauf basierenden Interpretation des Librettos; Aspekte der musikalischen Gestaltung (in Ausnahmefällen auch der detaillierteren Musikanalyse) werden einbezogen, wo sie der Frage nach der national-religiösen Bedeutung des Werks dienen.

National Songs in the German-Danish Conflict

Linda Maria Koldau

The choral movement and individual, politically motivated songs played a major role in the German-Danish conflict regarding the duchies of Slesvig and Holstein in the 19th and 20th centuries. In the 1830s, regional choral societies were systematically instrumentalised in order to propagate a "national" spirit on both sides, with Danish nationalists supporting an annexation of the duchy of Slesvig into the Kingdom of Denmark and German nationalists advocating a joint incorporation of the "inseparable" duchies of Slesvig and Holstein into the German Confederation. The movement gained momentum in the 1840s, especially with the Slesvig music festival in 1844, where the "Schleswig-Holstein-Lied" was first performed and then spread quickly as the "national" hymn of both duchies. The changing fortunes of the duchy of Slesvig, with two wars and a long period under Prussian government until the plebiscite of 1920, engendered a high number of political songs and song parodies on both sides that focused on various incidents in the decades between 1848 and 1920.

So far, the project is in the planning stage and involves several institutions and individual scholars (Sønderborg Slots Museum; Arkiv af det Danske Centralbibliotek). Cooperation is planned with the "Visecenter" at the University of Southern Denmark (Odense) and its director, Peter Nissen. Several public lectures have shown that there is a strong interest in this issue especially in Southern Denmark (Sønderjylland).

Reflections upon Choir Research from my Individual Perspective

Linda Maria Koldau

Choir research is a highly complex field covering areas as disparate as cultural-historical and socio-historical research on past centuries, empirical field studies of current choir practice, manifold questions of choral practice (e.g., conduction, technique and tuition), past and current musical repertoire, and music education (also involving socio-cultural questions presented by Martin Ashley). While the general topic of past and current choral practice is the same, the gamut of research interests is extremely broad. This offers possible insights and synergies between fields that usually do not come together, despite the common general topic.

For me as a cultural historian, choir research plays a decisive role in my studies on music and nationalism. Beginning in the late 18th century with the Handel societies, the choir (or choral society; there is no appropriate English term for the German "Gesangverein") as a musical institution began to play a decisive role in the emancipation of a politically active *Bürgertum*; a development that culminated in the political role of the choral movement in 19th-century nationalism. This role and the corresponding influence of choral societies can be studied both from an institutional perspective (i.e. choir as a sociocultural phenomenon), and with a focus on musical and literary sources (i.e. the repertoire and its interaction with the sociopolitical context). So far, both sides of the choir movement have been largely neglected by historical musicology, resulting in a view from the 19th century that ignores essential aspects of general musical culture.

These phenomena are not restricted to Germany which has been the focus in my research so far. They can also be observed in other European

countries with their individual national movements and an often corresponding political role of choral societies. A comparative study conducted by musicologists from various European countries could yield important insights into both commonalities and characteristic differences that result from varying sociopolitical contexts.

However, research in a network such as the one founded in Malmö/Lund can offer much more than the networking of a specific group within the academic world. There are at least three groups with a specific view of and interest in choir research as became evident at the network meeting in October 2009:

1. Music education: contemporary topics relating to recruitment and choral practice
2. Choral practice: tuition, repertoire, and technique (especially choir leading and conducting)
3. Cultural historical research about the choral societies' history and role in society

Although the representatives of these groups work with widely differing methods and theoretical foundations, the approaches and results from one group can give important impulses and insights to the others. It will hardly be possible to coordinate all groupings under one specific aim unless we operate with an umbrella title that has the concomitant risk of being too vague and thus not constructive for a common research agenda. It might, however, be conceivable to formulate a common theme such as guideline, under which various groups could formulate their own research agendas, connect individual research projects, and enable a close cooperation between members. In a plenum, the presentation of research under a common guideline would give other groups insight into various methods of choir research. Members would also gain motivation to apply learned methods to their own research if relevant.

Come, Let us Sing! Choirs, Music and Identity in the History of Modern Mass Society

Peter Nissen

It is an important condition for modern humans to be part of a mass society. This is partially due to a fragmentation of values and loss of common meaning in a pluralistic society. It is important that individuals search for and define their identity. Music plays an important part in this. Choirs and their repertoire with deep roots in Western history have become one of the most common ways to find community and identity through music, especially before the industry of sound media became the dominant provider of music for most people.

There was a tremendous migration from towns to cities in the Western world during the period of the great urbanisation from 1820 to 1940. People left small village communities in favour of urban environments. This was also the heyday of the choir movement. Many choirs were founded in various kinds of institutions all over Europe. There is a connection between this demographic development (i.e. urbanisation) and the organisation of new choir practices. One of the important issues for new city dwellers at that stage of modern society was to define a personal and collective identity. Choirs played a part in this. The practice of seeking identity through choir has yet to be investigated from a broader international perspective in music history. Many choir societies have been established and choir songbooks have been published. However, few scholars have investigated the organisation and repertoire with a perspective to defining identity in modern Western society.

In this presentation of my choir research, I will give various historical examples of identity making through choirs and choir music taken from

Danish music history in comparison to other countries. I will focus on both the cultural context and individual works.

Shaping Identity through Choir Life
The Male Choir of the Copenhagen YMCA at the Beginning of the 20th Century

An important project has been investigating the history of choirs in the Copenhagen Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) around 1900. By focusing on social and cultural processes, I have discovered a relationship between the ideology of the organisation and repertoire of the choir. It is also a story about moving from the provinces to the city and the role of the choirs in this process.

I have chosen the YMCA because it is an international Christian organisation which aided young settlers in the big cities. The YMCA was an institution located in large cities with various social activities for young men, including choir activities. From its foundation in 1878, the YMCA in Copenhagen advertised a choir for men. It was not easy to garner much interest; however, a permanent choir was established in 1911. The choir existed until 1957, when it was transformed into a choir for mixed voices with a weaker connection to the association. There are good documentation sources for the choir and I investigated how the association struggled to develop a male choir of high standards.

First, I looked at the problems of establishing the choir from 1894 to 1911. The choir was organised as a society within the association. The men developed a strong independent social culture with picnics and participation in weddings and other celebrations. The repertoire consisted of short and well known Danish songs from a local songbook with an emphasis on Christian revival songs and national anthems. At the great celebrations of the YMCA (e.g., the inauguration of a new community house in 1900 and the 25th anniversary of the association in 1903), the YMCA organised an alternative choir for the official celebration with singers recruited primarily from the leading and oldest male choir in the city, the University Choir. The board of the YMCA defended this rejection of the YMCA male choir by pointing to poor musical standards and to the fact that the social life of the choir was too independent and disloyal to the YMCA. This resulted in a break-up between the choir and the association. The leadership tried later to establish a new choir by engaging a conductor with better education and higher ambitions. His introduction of German art music did not succeed as the choir preferred more simple Danish songs.

This clash of ambitions and repertoire is an example of two different kinds of cultural horizons. On the one hand, choir members focused mostly on their social activities and well-known repertoire. On the other hand, the board of the association was ambitious and wanted the organisation to be a presentable leading organisation for young men in the city. This was an indication of the movement's ideology. The YMCA emerged in a time of a great religious awakening where social aspects of the Christian gospel became central. At the same time, economic growth in the United States produced optimism about the future and this impacted YMCA thinking. A successful image would strengthen the status of the organisation in the city. Therefore, the board looked at the practice and repertoire of other choirs nearby.

Second, I investigated a conflict concerning the choir's repertoire around 1930 about which there was much internal discussion. This was similar in many ways to the conflict 25 years prior, but this time the struggle was internal. The point of contention was the level of ambitiousness. The choir's repertoire was divided into two kinds of songs: short spiritual songs from the religious revival tradition (mostly American), and concert works of high artistic quality. Some of the members wanted the choir to be more ambitious and distinguished as in Copenhagen's concert culture. Others preferred simple Christian songs. Longstanding debate in the journal of the choir depicts both sides of the debate. One member argued that the level of the choir would be raised through a better repertoire. In an article from the choir's newsletter in 1918, choirmaster Kristian Ribers refers to the music of the Salvation Army and argues that while it creates a space for singing and music where people gather, the Salvation Army is not a "bearer of song culture" from a critical point of view. Later, Ribers defended the increasing use of German art songs by referring to the lack of good spiritual songs arranged for male choirs.

When the choir was reorganised as a mixed choir in 1957, it had become a pure concert choir. From an international perspective, there was a clash between music originating in American revival culture and music stemming from urban German culture. We can also view it as a process of educating people from the country to an urban society dominated by bourgeois ideals. My conclusion is that the struggle regarding the repertoire of the choir was not solved until the choir found a choirmaster who could bring the choir together and give it a new social identity. He was later characterised as "the father of the choir".

Third, from a work-focused perspective, a part of this research has been connected to the work and performance of the inauguration cantata *Kantate ved Indvielsen af K.F.U.M.s nye Bygning (September 1900), op. 7* (1900) by Christian Geisler (1869–1951). It was performed at the inauguration of the YMCA's new building in Copenhagen in September, 1900. An important aspect of the work has been depicting the cultural status of the YMCA in Copenhagen. The Danish organisation underscored its visual presence because it was inspired by the grand houses of the Anglo-American YMCA. The leaders saw the house as a gift to the city where young men could be cultivated to become good members of society. For the same reason, the celebration had to be a demonstration of their suitability for the task. The cantata was performed by some of the best musicians in the city – singers from the Philharmonic Choir and a soloist from the Royal Opera. The music created an important identity in the organisation via a solemn and 'liturgical' setting. The musical text focused on the importance of giving young men the right Christian upbringing, character formation and providing a place where this might happen. The music is consistent with musical ideals of the time since it has a moderate expressive character that emphasises words. The male choir has a crucial role in this work since it represents the association. The text emphasises the importance of having good young men to lead the nation as well as having good role models for young men. In the cantata, these words are sung by a quartet which was a significant part of the choir. The cantata expresses emotional aspects of the YMCA's new era as was confirmed by the description of the event in local newspapers. All these examples demonstrate the role of music in the association's attempt to become part of the local educated culture in Copenhagen. Good quality music was essential in the university male choir and the target group was to some extent the same. Education and good taste were seen as crucial elements in the spiritual growth of young men and the salvation of the nation. The association's musical culture was an important part of achieving this goal.

The Ongoing Project

The YMCA's project has been a step towards developing a more general musicological analysis of the role of music in the public life of modern democracies. Choir and choir societies have been an important part of various ideological and social institutions. By examining works, genres, and the organisation of societies and their performances, we will know more about the role of choirs in modern Western society. Another important component will be investigating the incorporation and interaction of music among nations and regions.

I will investigate the history and practice of Danish choral societies as a part of my current project on music and song in Danish public movements from 1850 to1950. An important theme in this study will be the role of choirs in expressing a culture of identity during this important phase of democratic development in Denmark. This research cuts across ideological differences and state institutions, and also cuts across the distinction between 'serious' and 'popular' music in musicological research. A portion of this examination will include comparisons with the development of choral societies in neighbouring countries.

I intend to make an investigation of songs and musical works in relation to both traditional and art music from this time. Choirs sang both genres and until now musicology has paid little attention to this fact. Choir music will be investigated through a historical analysis of style and genre in this project. This study will be part of a discussion about cultural development in modern democratic countries and will consider the use of foreign music repertoire in cultural development. It is also a story of the role of choirs in public life and their impact on modern communication.

The musical analysis will examine published scorebooks with choir arrangements and greater works written for the various organisations of the movements. Occasional music was written for such movements and these works (many by highly regarded composers) tend to be ignored by traditional musicology. Both cultural and analytical works (exemplified by the cantata presented by Christian Geisler to the YMCA in 1900) show how these pieces can be relevant in a broader cultural history of music and also in the greater history of music.

The use of musical genres and the organisation of choirs have been surprisingly uniform despite great ideological differences. Parallel institutional and educational processes may have occurred which gave a common basis for living in a society with a democratic culture of decision making. This also influenced the organising of music in important public institutions, such as schools and churches. The goal of the project is to find relationships between establishing identity in society, organising choirs, and their choice of musical repertoire. I will discuss this as a general practice among different political, religious and cultural movements during that period.

The result of this research will constitute part of a discussion about recent constructions in music criticism, such as the musicology of 'high' and 'low' music, or traditional versus artificial music which are often viewed as two different worlds with weak connections. There is no doubt that the question of specific kinds of music as a personal choice has had a large impact on finding one's identity. However, a study in the history of choirs seems to question an overly strict categorisation of music. Musical identity can be created by using many kinds of genres for different purposes.

Identity Making through Choir Works. The Role of Choir Music in Christian and Spiritual Music in Copenhagen 1840–1920

Another interesting area of research is the role of the choir in music used in the church. The Christian church was and still is the main institution in which choir music is performed in European culture. A strong relation between the sacred and choir music is fundamental in the cultural semantics of the Western world, and this continues in our modern secular context. The church still remained the central institution for choir performance even though several secular choirs were founded outside the church at the time of the big choir explosion from the 18th century onwards. Many historical studies of the relationship between church choirs, their music, and musicians remain to be conducted before it will be possible to describe this very important part of modern European music culture.

One of my studies has been on church music in Copenhagen from 1840 to 1920 and its relationship to nationalism and cosmopolitanism. Most Danish composers wrote church music as a minor part of their activities and there seemed to be small stylistic differences between the idioms of church music and secular music. This has to do with the fact that the church lost its authority and position as an artistic trendsetter in the previous century. The spirituality of church music was connected to the expression of sound and that of the composer more than of the words. Many spiritual works for choir and orchestra were composed and performed in the Philharmonic Society of Copenhagen. The church had to share the role of spiritual centre with the concert hall. Since Denmark is such a small country, composers travelled to trendsetting musical centres including Leipzig, Weimar and Paris for musical inspiration. Niels W. Gade (1817–1890) stayed in Leipzig where he learned the value of choir music from composers including Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Another composer, Victor Bendix (1851–1926) went to Weimar and visited Franz Liszt to be inspired by modern tendencies and as an attempt to renew the music of the city. He composed church music for choir and orchestra where stylistic experiments were more easily accepted than in philharmonic music. When the Cecilian Movement became an international phenomenon in the second half of the 19th century, the organist and composer Thomas Laub (1852–1927) went to Rome and studied the works of Palestrina and other Italian church composers. With help from the German church musician Otto Kade (1819–1900), Laub became a reformer of church music in Denmark at the beginning of the 20th century. Choir music was an integrated part of the representation of a romantic aesthetic and of modern renewal in music, especially because of the following change of spirituality within and outside the church.

The Choir Music of Vagn Holmboe

An additional study has been the choir music of Danish composer Vagn Holmboe (1909–1996). Holmboe has written several works for choirs and the theme of believing in God in an evil world (a dominant modern issue) is present in his music. Holmboe's family was heavily involved in World War II. Thus, Holmboe uses texts about war and the absence of God in his works. These issues are dealt with in his fourth symphony, *Sinfonia Sacra, op. 29* for orchestra and choir (1945), and in his great collection of vocal settings for texts from the Book of Psalms, *Liber Canticorum*, which was gradually composed in movements over four decades (1951–84). His choir music became the tool with which he worked to deal with these issues. Holmboe was inspired by Igor Stravinsky in his way of dealing with musical heritage and the way in which choir becomes a symbol of tradition.

Conclusion

Several factors must be included in research about identity, music and choirs. An analysis of historical, social and cultural processes as well as an analysis of choir works will present a better overview of the relationship between identity and music. This is because music itself and the cultural activity around it are deeply integrated with each other.

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My Thoughts about Choir Research

Peter Nissen

Our network is important because there is a common European choir culture that has yet to be sufficiently investigated. I think choir research could be viewed from the two classical perspectives: historical and systematical musicology. However, it is important to find a bridge between the two areas. We should also find ways to include performance studies if we want musical academies to contribute to our network. It is also important to locate transnational areas of interest in our international network. Below is a list of systematic themes that could also be included in historical studies:

- Choir and identity
- Choir and nationalism / national identity
- Choir and ideology
- Choir and gender
- Choir and genre
- Choir and education (*Bildung*)
- Choir and choir music as a semantic symbol in Western culture (e.g., film music, cultural and institutional representation, etc.)
- Performance studies

Ideas about Common and Future Projects on a Transnational Level:

- Cultural border regions (e.g., Slesvig, Øresund)
- Choirs in cities and provinces
- Choir societies (Eva Öhrström): identity, ideology, genre, performance, and gender
- Performance studies of historical works (practical and academic) – concerts with lesser known historical choir music

Shaping Musical Performances – A Social Semiotic Study of Choir Conductors' Multimodal Communication in Choir

Ragnhild Sandberg Jurström

The purpose of my thesis is to identify and describe how musical interpretations and performances are semiotically designed and realised by choir conductors in their interaction with choir singers during rehearsals and concerts. The purpose is also to find methods for how these actions can be analysed and described. In order to achieve the objective, the following research questions are addressed:

- How do choir conductors use different semiotic resources for interpreting and performing a musical composition during rehearsals and concerts?
- What functions do these resources have and how are they rhetorically organised and realised in the interaction that takes place with choir singers?
- How can the actions of choir conductors and choir singers be represented, analysed and described?

My intention is to more closely examine the activities of different choirs in order to study what happens in the communication between choir conductor and choir singers when they work with music that will be performed. An additional matter of great concern to me is how the processes of interpreting and performing as well as processes of learning take place in different choirs.

From Sign to Design

The study uses a multimodal and social semiotic theory as a tool of investigation, which implies that communication and learning are seen as a social process of transformative sign making. In the communication that occurs between individuals, meanings are created and constructed by means of socially and historically determined meaning-making semiotic modes, such as speech, gestures, gazes, various bodily actions, images, or technical devices. Human beings always use several different modes, all of which exist simultaneously in their communication with the surrounding environment. Semiotic modes are in constant and transformational interplay with each other; they offer individuals the opportunity to rhetorically organise different ways of representing the world and, accordingly, create meaning in various ways. Furthermore, meaning making is seen as a motivated activity that is dependent on individual interest and on how the latter wishes to form their own expressions in a given context (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Kress et al., 2001; Jewitt & Oyama, 2001; van Leeuwen, 2005; Jewitt, 2006).

How choir conductors design their work in choir is therefore dependent on which modes they use, how the modes are used, and how the conductors shape their own expressions and interpretations of music. The design is also dependent on how choir singers react to different situations and on the traditions surrounding the music.

A Video-based Investigation

I consider it necessary to use video registration as a collection method (Lomax & Casey, 1998; Kendon, 2004; Jewitt, 2006) in order to investigate how bodily, visual, auditory and linguistic resources are used in the communication that takes place between individuals. Video will also show how these resources work together to make meanings and it will make a detailed transcription of this communication possible. When video recordings are used, it is possible to look at taped actions several times and at a slow pace in order to visualise the complexity of choir members' actions in the choir practices studied (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984; Goodwin, 1994; Jordan & Henderson, 1995; Rönhult et al.; 2004, Goldman & McDermott, 2007; Lemke, 2007).

The data consists of approximately five hours of video-recorded rehearsals and concerts with six Swedish professional choir conductors and their choirs. The repertoire the choirs worked with during the study consisted of classical music as well as gospel music and jazz. In the detailed transcriptions, different semiotic resources such as speech, singing, printed score, piano playing, gestures, gazes, body movements and bodily positions have been viewed and described. Transcriptions also show how these resources are used during rehearsals and concerts. The aim of the data analysis is to shed light on how different semiotic resources are used as representations of how choir conductors express the music, how relations are established and maintained, and how different designs are produced in order to create different conditions for the ways in which music can be learned and performed. Data analysis is conducted on the basis of Halliday's metafunctions (1973, 1994, 2004) and also on the basis of concepts discourse and design (The New London Group, 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Selander & Rostvall, 2008). The analyses also focus on the conventions that surround occurring actions. The analytical work is an attempt to describe and contribute to an understanding of a musical practice where actions based on bodily movements and non-verbal actions are extensively used.

Performing Music Semiotically

The results of the study show how musical communication during a number of rehearsals and concerts is expressed between choir conductor and choir singer. Variations in the modes of procedure that choir conductors use when they interpret, express and mediate a piece of music, using different semiotic resources, have been termed the conductors' repertoires of action.

Different repertoires of action express the choir conductors' ways of interpreting and mediating music. They each contain a set of different interacting modes such as speech, gazes, gestures and other bodily expressions. All of the repertoires of action can be said to function as representations of the choir conductors' musical ideas, their intentions and feelings, or as representations of the characteristic style the music belongs to (expressed in a visible or audible way). At the same time, the repertoires of action are also expressions of how choir conductors want choir singers to perform the music using their own voices. Together, these repertoires of action create variations in the modes of procedure for how a musical interpretation and performance can be carried out and learned, especially since choir conductors approach the music in various ways.

Different types of conductor's repertoires of action function as demonstrations that illustrate the music indirectly in the form of dramatisations and performances using resources other than those intended. They also illustrate the music directly using the same resources as the choir singers. These demonstrations include (1) the pantomimic repertoire of action, based on a dramatised, figurative and soundless representation of the music and its expressions, (2) the performative repertoire of action, made up of illustrations of different musical passages in sounding form, and (3) the prototypical repertoire of action, which gives the singers both a visual and auditory performance picture of how the choir conductor, with his or her own voice and bodily movements, interpret and express the piece of music.

Choir conductors give indications and suggestions of how the music can be interpreted and performed through expressive appealings by using the associative repertoire of action. In this repertoire of action musical interpretation and performance are about expressions that are associated with something emotional and experiential outside the actual music and with other non-musical tools and emotions.

In contrast to the demonstrative and appealing attitudes of the previously mentioned repertoires of action, the conceptual and evaluative repertoires of action are based on descriptions of the structure of the music with musical concepts and also on evaluations of the sound qualities of the choir singers' song. Musical meaning is created by means of explanations of the structure and form of the music through these repertoires of action.

Creating Designs for Musical Performances

The results show how the choir conductors use repertoires of action in different ways. The wide variety of choir conductors' repertoires of action is significant because it indicates the vast array of possibilities in which a conductor can communicate with choir participants during rehearsals and concerts. The situation indicates what frames and conditions apply as well as what should be encouraged and chosen to communicate the music. It also indicates which attitudes should be given priority with regard to musical learning and performance.

In the design for figurative demonstrations, the function is to create an environment where practical illustrations and prototypes of musical expressions are central. Choir conductors give a prototype of different musical elements with the direct help of their own singing voices and bodies since they are located at the center of the choir's activities. Conductors also indirectly illustrate musical elements with gestures, gazes, piano playing, and other bodily movements. Therefore, a choir conductor's own actions are a model for choir singers. The conductor's actions demonstrate that choir singers are able to perform the music with their own voices. The choir conductor's explicit and detailed instructions of how they want the music to be expressed indicate that the choir's singing and bodily movements should imitate the choir conductor's own singing and bodily expressions. This leaves the choir singers little opportunity to make their own interpretations or versions. When choir conductors illustrate music by means of gestures and piano playing, choir singers are then forced to reinterpret and transform the choir conductor's more implicitly expressed versions. This enables the choir singers to make their own interpretations and expressions to a certain extent. In this design, an environment is created in which the act of imitating and reshaping the choir conductors' figurative demonstrations is central.

With the design for expressive appealings, an environment is created where the choir conductor's associations and the way he or she appeals to choir singers produce musical expressions that move choir singers in an emotional and experiential way and that enable them to make their own expressions of the music. This occurs because choir conductors enable choir singers to include their own experiences and commitment in the interpretation of choir conductors' expressions that are mediated by implicit, emotional and associative descriptions and bodily actions. Thus, choir conductors surrender their dominant right of interpretation and decision-making to a certain extent. In this design, an environment is created where the choir singers can reshape the conductor's expressive appealings and make their own interpretations of the music.

The function of a design for pragmatic explanations is to produce an environment where practical and factual information and evaluative aspects should be transformed into practical action in the form of the choir singers' voices and body movements. Even if choir singers, composers and musicians are invited to take part in conversations where they have the opportunity to exert an influence, it is predominantly the choir conductors who have the most action space. They are in charge of most of the music interpreting and also have the final decision with regard to musical performance. One of the consequences of this design is that choir singers' translations of the choir conductors' conceptual explanations of musical terminology and musical signs are dominant.

The three designs mentioned above show how choir conductors create three different ways to work with and present the music to the choir. The use of these designs is not clearly and distinctly demarcated in rehearsals. Rather, a mixture of different designs is used by choir conductors during rehearsals. This means that the different ways of relating to music are constantly changing since the designs offer different conditions for how choir singers learn and perform music. However, the position of choir conductors does not vary much since they mostly occupy a dominant position as choir leader.

Cultural Framings – Discussion about the Use of Semiotic Resources

The results show different attitudinal dimensions that indicate opposing forces between different musical aspects and modes of procedure. It is unclear in this study if these forces should be regarded as opposites or dichotomies, or if they should be considered as different aspects of the same phenomenon. If they are different aspects of the same phenomenon, they may complement or negate each other. The discussion revolves around contrasting pairs: music as a phenomenon with its own expressions and/or music as an expression of something else (e.g., visual learning and/or auditory learning, learning and/or interpretation and performance). The discussion also comprises how different repertoires of action result in a collective musical language with local variations, how choir leadership can be seen as productive leadership, and also how the results of the study can be designed into a multimodal and social semiotic model for musical communication.

With regard to a choir conductor's different repertoires of action, there are differences between relating to the music on the basis of representations that are based on conventions (where established musical concepts, terms and bodily resources are used), and where the music itself can be said to have value and expression. The latter is in opposition with relating to music on the basis of representations where the music is expressed with the help of other everyday ways of expression. However, from a social semiotic perspective, these ways of relating to music can be understood as constructed representations shaped by cultural conventions (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Kress et al., 2001; Jewitt, 2006) that consider the ways in which music can be notated, described, interpreted and performed. No opposition should be created between musical expression related to musical concepts and musical expression related to other phenomena in this study because the social semiotic perspective argues that all of these forms of musical interpretations are socially and culturally constructed representations. Instead, these representations can be regarded as multiple variations in the way that expressions of a piece of music can be constructed.

Together, these multiple variations of how music can be communicated are related to visual, aural, oral and other bodily expressions. That is, they are related to listening and seeing as well as to speaking and doing. The semiotic resources that choir conductors use in their repertoires of action (on the basis of a printed score) provide an example of the type of singing to be performed. Conductors do this using gestures and bodily movements, including gazes and other facial expressions. These inform the singers about the structure of the music and appeal to other feelings. Thus, they are always auditory, visual, verbal and kinaesthetic. In this context, musical notation is only a small part of the many resources that are used.

According to Lilliestam (1995), learning music is always made up of visual, auditory, verbal and kinaesthetic memories, either with the help of a musical score or by ear. This is in accordance with the conditions that the choir singers are offered in this study. In accordance with the theory of social semiotics (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000a; Kress et al., 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Lemke, 2006), the process of meaning-making is unavoidably multimodal due to simultaneous interactions of several different resources in the making of musical meaning. Learning according to a musical score is opposed to learning by ear since a choir conductor always makes use of several interactive resources that are simultaneously combined and integrated with each other. Thus, an audiovisual culture is produced in the observed choir practices. Interactive auditory and visual resources make musical meaning (verbal and kinaesthetical expressions are also auditory and visual). Instead, discerned polarities exist between choices made by choir singers and how they make use of offered resources.

In this audiovisual culture, choir conductors and choir singers use common norms and conventions for how the participants of a choir can speak and behave. Since different choir conductors work with the same components as in musical structures, they all make use of a verbal language that is composed of musical and everyday concepts and terms. This includes body language consisting of gazes, gestures and a musical sounding language in the form of piano playing and singing. All actions are context-bound and influenced by cultural framing (Kress et al., 2001;

Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; van Leeuwen, 2005; Jewitt, 2006). Therefore, the choirs studied seem to adhere to conventions of what is customary to do and they talk about what they have agreed upon when working with a certain music genre. Therefore, a choir specific collective musical language is created that is culturally constructed and culturally situated for choir singing alone. A genre specific collective music language is also created depending on the genre choirs work with (e.g., gospel, jazz or classical). Different ideals arise concerning vocal timbre, vocal expression, how to use one's body in relation to the music, and how it is possible to talk about music when working with a specific genre. At the same time, the resources that are used in choirs are organised in various ways in different choirs depending on the choir and the choir conductor. In this way, choirs use a collective musical language that is locally constructed by each choir conductor and choir collectively. This language has different norms for how actions and expressions can be used and understood. Local variants exist that are also based on the individual choir leader's way of working, the design they choose, and the choice of music.

In the studied practices of choir singing, choir conductors adopt a complex usage of different interacting semiotic resources in order to mediate a musical performance. Depending on the choir conductor's choice of semiotic modes, repertoires of action, and acting spaces and designs, choir singers are offered a variety of procedures to choose from in order to arrive at the desired musical result. On the basis of the employed theoretical perspective, musical interpretation and performance is a question of how choir conductors translate and transform different signs in musical scores for their own performance interpretations using several interacting modes, such as gestures, body movements, speech, singing and piano playing. These different repertoires of action provide explanations, demonstrations and associations as to how music can then be translated, reshaped and imitated by choir singers in their own singing and body movements. The finished production (i.e. the joint effort between choir conductor and choir singers) is sung to an intended audience. The intended audience can be the choir conductor who repeats the process until everyone is satisfied with the singing. The audience can also be a concert audience that has the opportunity to listen to the choir's finished production. Choir singers can make their own choices regarding how they want to receive and transform the information that choir conductors mediate. An alternative way for choir singers is to transform and translate the notation on the printed score directly into their own sung translations. The social semiotic, multimodal model for musical communication described portrays the complexity and multiplicity of the processes of musical interpretation and performance. This is especially the case when using different resources in the practice of choir singing. The aim of this model is to provide an understanding of what happens in musical communication between participants of the observed choirs.

Communication in choirs can be described both as a question of learning and as a question of interpretation and performance, especially with regard to the perspective that communication and learning are considered social processes of transformative sign-making (Kress et al., 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; van Leeuwen, 2005; Jewitt, 2006). Interpretation and performance thus impart form and a character. The question is whether, from these perspectives, there is a difference between learning to sing a piece of music and interpreting and performing a piece of music when both processes include a change based on action (in the form of translation, reshaping or imitation of different modes). It is difficult to decide what would be the learning part and what would be the interpretative and performance parts of the process from the way a song is sung after a transformation of this kind. According to Kress et al. (2001), if the choir's performance is an improvement from an earlier performance, then learning is a process of reshaping and change and learning has taken place. A change and an improvement in a learning perspective also include a change and improvement in an interpretative and performance aspect that is also confirmed by the choir conductor's frequent words of praise. This process where learning is equated to interpretation and performance could be described by the term ongoing interpretation and performance – an interpretative and performance process that is on its way to becoming a final product.

With regard to the observed choirs, it is apparent that social framing has an influence on who has the right of interpretation in different matters (Selander & Rostvall, 2008). Most commonly, choir conductors take a dominant position and steer the course of musical events during rehearsals and during concerts. Choir conductors do this on the basis of their interpretations of notation and how they want the music to be expressed. Choir singers and musicians adapt to the expressions the choir conductor wants to produce. Choirs and musicians can contribute to a considerable part of the resulting sound because they take part in collective music-making and use previous experiences, a great knowledge of music, and highly developed skills in singing and playing. In this respect, choir singers become assistants, collaborators and decision makers with regard to various musical questions. Choir conductors can therefore be regarded

as productive musical leaders because they steer the choir into a direction that enables the latter to achieve a high quality result which employs the choir singer's and musician's own experiences and knowledge.

Final Conclusions

An important starting point for discussion is the different implications for learning and performing that ensue as a result of the great variation in a choir conductor's way of communicating as well as a variety of options choir singers can choose from when learning to sing a piece of music. Learning, interpreting and performing imply the design of different environments where choir conductors illustrate different musical aspects on the basis of different points of view, or as Selander and Rostvall (2008) describe the process, with the help of a repertoire of signs, resources, attitudes and techniques. For choir conductors this means, in accordance with The New London Group's (2000) definition, that choir conductors can be regarded as designers of environments who offer alternatives to choose from instead of being regarded as authoritarian leaders that select determined methods.

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Choir in Focus Network.
Personal Reflections upon Choir Research

Ragnhild Sandberg Jurström

My interest in the field of choir research is about the communication between choir conductor and choir during rehearsals and concerts. A matter of great concern to me is what choir conductors and choir singers do in the communication that occurs between them during rehearsals and concerts, and how the processes of interpreting and performing as well as the processes of learning take place in different choirs. I am very interested in the differences and similarities between choirs in different cultures and nations, between choirs with different styles and genres, between vocal ensembles and choirs, and how vocal ensembles without choir conductors work.

I am also very interested in *how* to study these types of communication processes. In a research project of this kind it is important to use methods that are relevant in order to be able to study particularly non-verbal communication that takes place by way of bodily actions and musical sounds. The multimodal and social semiotic field has the potential to enable us to gain new insight into interpretative and performance processes. It can also elucidate different artistic processes where the body and its expressions are important components of music making (Sandberg Jurström, 2009). Video recording is an important method to study how choir conductors and choir singers express themselves with their body, language and other resources.

I think that the network *Choir in Focus* can be a very good ground for joint work in order to discuss questions about choir. However, I think it is necessary to work in smaller groups with similar research questions and methodological approaches. Since we are interested in different areas, it would be acceptable to find various themes that incorporate our individual interests, such as (a) aspects of communication and leadership, (b) historical aspects, and (c) education aspects. I think we can reflect and discuss in smaller groups when we meet again. It would be beneficial to have a common theme for all of us and for our different interests, including the choir conductor's role in musical communication, in the music education system, or in the history of choir singing.

Musical Learning – Learning in a Choir. How do Singers in a Choir Cooperate, Learn Together and Learn from Each Other?

Sverker Zadig

Introduction

My interest for this study is based on my experiences both as a choral singer and a conductor. I have noticed that in choirs someone often functions as an informal leader with respect to hitting notes, intonation, phrasing, or just by being the most musically advanced. Earlier studies on choral music and choral singing have mostly centered on socialisation within the choir, reasons for singing in a choir, or the rehearsal situation, especially with aspects of interpretation and rehearsal technique in focus and mainly from the conductors point of view. The field of studies focusing on informal leadership and collective learning has been largely unexplored.

Aim of the study

The aim of the study is to examine the role of informal musical leaders in choirs. Perhaps it will also be possible to evaluate and compare results from different choral formations. In addition, it may be possible to present and discuss pedagogical solutions in the future.

Method

The study I present in this text is based upon two different projects which I intend to include in my dissertation. The first project is a series of interviews with long established choral conductors regarding their understanding of how singers in a choir cooperate and learn together. Conductors were chosen from both professional and semi-professional choirs and from Swedish college choirs.

In the second project which has not yet begun, I will graphically examine differences between the singers by taking multi-track recordings of individuals with a focus on choral voices, hitting notes and intonation. I will also examine if it is possible to notice if someone is ahead and "pulling" others to follow. These recordings will be done with choirs in Swedish colleges. I have already concluded a few pilot studies.

Theory

There are several theories regarding learning and performing skills. I will discuss some of these with regard to formal or informal leaders in the choir.

Polanyi introduced the term "tacit dimension" and compared "knowing what" to "knowing how" (Polanyi, 1966, 7). He also stated that there is a "functional structure of tacit knowing" in the body (Polanyi, 1966, 10). A common example is the way muscles have the capability to remember, to have perfect pitch, and to train the ear (Sundberg, 1980, 46).[68] This means that the body subconsciously knows what it feels like to sing a particular tone or phrase in the throat and mouth by repeatedly singing a certain tone or phrase. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, whom Polanyi also mentions, talks about "phenomenology of the body" – how we turn body movements into a memory by using the body muscles (Merleau-Ponty, 1945 and 1997, 106).

Another way to understand the capacity of the immediate singing moment is to look at it from Molander's perspective as "knowing in action" ("kunskap i handling") (Molander, 1996). He talks about instantly adapting to surroundings without thinking – just by acting with instinct and intuition. He also refers to the Dreyfus brothers and their five steps of knowledge where an "expert" reacts without thinking

68 The term 'perfect', or 'absolute pitch' has a variety of meanings. However, in this example, Professor Sundberg talks about the phenomena of singing a certain tone by heart without an instrument playing a related tone.

or reasoning on the fifth step. This is what Dreyfus and Dreyfus have termed a "holistic situation" in which a person acts instinctively and directly without analyzing and reasoning, yet understanding the whole. Thus, Molander talks about embodied knowledge and embodied learning (Molander, 1996, 46).

These abilities can be discussed in classical terms from Aristotle to the Nichomachean ethics. Gustavsson (2000) describes a choral singer's knowledge of music and a printed score during performances as "knowing", "episteme", "knowingness" and ability or "techne". These abilities also include the choral singer's decision to incorporate and transform this knowledge into singing (i.e. "cleverness" and "fronesis") (Gustavsson, 2000, 33).

The singer obviously knows a lot and has many resources that work together regardless of eventual influence from singing neighbours. First, the singer gets impressions from the printed music, the score and the conductor – all visual impressions. Second, the singer receives audible sounding impressions from the conductor, from instruments (the conductor playing the piano or other instruments), musicians, and from the singers in the full choir, as well as from those singing in the same choral voice (Sandberg Jurström, 2009, 107).

Singing in a choir is a social project to many people with the goal of belonging to a community with a group of friends that have similar interests. According to socio-cultural theory, singers also react to and learn from each other by doing the same activity together, such as singing in the same choral voice. This also has an important influence and impact on the singers. The more experienced singers will affect the less experienced and the less experienced can also influence more experienced singers to make mistakes by hitting the wrong notes. Säljö (2005) asserts that the process of learning varies due to different tools that give certain possibilities. He describes how different kinds of mathematic counting tools (e.g., marble frame, counting stick and pocket calculator) have changed people's relation to math over time (Säljö, 2005, 172). If a vocal score can be a tool, it would be interesting to know if it could be used by people who do not read music.

Undoubtedly there exists learning within choirs since singers improve through rehearsals over time. Is there a transformation of learning from the lead singer to others? To examine this, I would have to measure the progression of learning, or in some way register when and how the process of learning takes place. This aspect of choral singing has not been investigated thus far. In her study *Lärande i kör* ("Learning in Choir"), Stenbäck (2001) discusses this mostly from a socio-cultural perspective using the master-apprentice relationship as a frame. She is interested in what happens between singers as well as within them. However, the focus is mostly upon how the teacher (i.e. the choral conductor) helps pupils to learn. Different experiences among singers in the choral voices naturally result in a learning process for the group. Stenbäck points out that her research has not focused on whether it is possible to know if the process of learning from pupil to pupil is necessary for less experienced singers to learn. However, she states that there are students with greater choral training and experience and that they are motivators. She writes that:

> It is obvious that to some of the pupils, choir lessons are merely a waiting period with few moments of music making. They already know how to sing in a choir and their earlier experiences go beyond what is being rehearsed and performed by the school choir. To other pupils the repertory seems so difficult that the only way to learn is to listen to how others sing and then trust that you'll remember – and then repeat. To wait inactively or mimic without finding strategies that will bring about your own learning are two kinds of commentaries that constantly appear in stories of less choir-minded pupils.
> (Stenbäck, 2001, 92)[69]

There is a natural reaction to mimic each other in human nature. This is how children learn language and behavior. Gunnar Heiling (2000) describes this in his thesis about music making in an amateur orchestra (among other situations of playing together). He borrows the saying "Sitting next to Nellie" from Finnegan (1989) in his description of how sitting together makes it easier for newcomers to play in the orchestra. Heiling writes that, "As a newcomer in the orchestra, the musician has a place close to someone who is more experienced and he manages to develop his playing over time by listening, imitating and adapting to the conductor as well as to those who are more closely placed near him in the orchestra" (Heiling, 2000, 29–30)[70]. Heiling also refers to Lave and Wenger (1991) who observe a hierarchy of roles between musicians

69 This is my translation of the original text.

70 This is my translation of the original text.

and members in the orchestra using their model that analyzes legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) to understanding and learning.

The concept of *master–mpprentice* can also be applied in this example even though it is often understood as the master first demonstrating a "skill" and then the apprentice observing and mimicking the skill (Nielsen and Kvale, 1999, 20–21). However, this is not a common situation in a choir where the apprentice imitates or learns almost instantly as the master or expert performs.

Ljungar-Chapelon (2008) discusses the process of learning both in Gadamer's perspective, according to interpretation, and Vygotsky, with an understanding of inner language. He also uses the connection to mimesis by discussing imitation in the process of musical learning (Ljungar-Chapelon, 2008, 29). Additionally, Ljungar-Chapelon examines intuition using Larsson's work where he shows the difference between comprehension through (1) a discursive approach in which each piece is connected to the other, and (2) the impact of intuition in combination with a hermeneutic understanding of the sum and its parts (ibid.: 43). Thus, an experienced choral singer can combine many impressions in the blink of an eye by acting intuitively in combination with reading a score.

Results

First part of the study, the interviews

Two categories of choral conductors have been interviewed and some of them represent both categories.

1. Well experienced with a well-known reputation (including internationally), choral leaders with many years of active professional experience conducting and rehearsing with choirs.
2. Teachers of music with many years of experience in choral leadership who work with young adults and students at Swedish colleges (ages 16–18).

All of the informants mention that in one way or another there are some people in choirs who act as concertmasters or leaders – rarely in a formal way, but rather from their own competence. I would like to quote a few phrases.[71]

71 These are my translations of the original quotations.

Anders Eby says:

> "A leader will certainly appear, I believe, unspoken and subconscious; a kind of choral leader, a concertmaster in each voice."

Dan-Olof Stenlund uses almost the same expression:

> "Someone will always appear. You only have to wait and see. If there are two people of that kind [leaders], you mustn't let them sit by each other or else there would be a total struggle."

Eric Ericson says:

> "… even if you say everyone is equal there is usually someone who is a bit more … who takes more; it can come from courage or skill. But of course it happens that someone goes a little ahead of the others, not in terms of time, but in terms of taking the initiative and hitting the notes."

Many of the informants talked about leaders not only in terms of hitting notes and taking initiative, but also in terms of how these singers give colour to the whole choral voice or entire choir by their own voice and timbre. Many of the conductors (i.e. informants) also talked about how a single voice can make the others blend together, and how important singer placement can be in some situations. Whether or not a singer is comfortable with the neighbouring singers is just as important as singer placement for the sound quality of a choir.

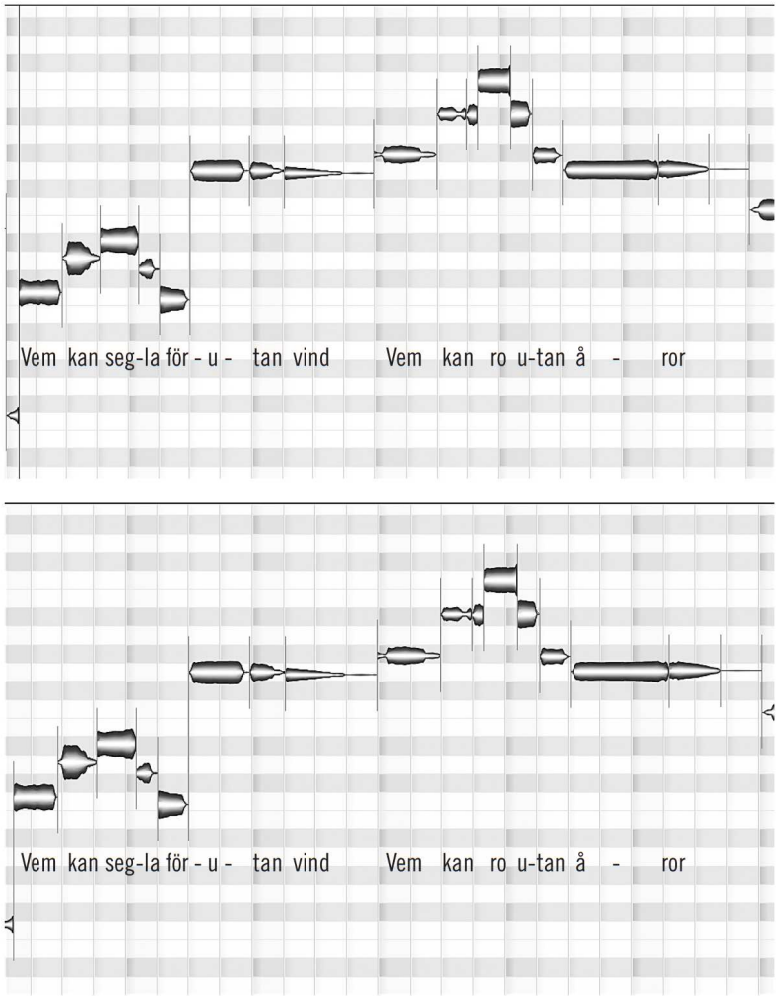
Some of the informants said that "if you don't feel well with the singer closest to you" or "if you have a personal problem and a tension between you, you won't be able to sing well together either." While these types of questions are not the focus of my study, they must be mentioned. Singing in a choir undoubtedly involves socializing in a community that also has an impact on singing. Other researchers have done choral research from more sociological perspectives.

Second study; recording voices singing parallel on multi tracks

I will also conduct a second study to determine if there are formal or informal leaders within choirs that often function as concertmasters. The purpose of these interviews is to record the full voice of singers in a choir with each pair of headset microphones connected to a separate channel. By examining the recordings graphically, it will be possible to visually see differences between singers in hitting notes, timing and intonation.

This study has not yet begun, but I will present results from pilot studies using a few voices that have been recorded. The voice diagrams clearly show differences between singers' voices with respect to hitting the notes and intonation by using recordings of two singers who are either standing face to face or side by side.

The goal of this pilot study was partly to learn the technique employed for future recordings and to become familiar with the computer program I used to record the two colleagues who are also voice teachers. Participants were told to sing a familiar Swedish folk tune "Vem kan segla förutan vind". When I told this to the singers I did not clarify that their singing was supposed to resemble choral singing, so both singers spontaneously faced each other in order to sing as close as possible and to coordinate rhythm and articulation. This particular song has traditionally been articulated in different ways. Thus, I never let the singers decide which version they would sing.



Two voices singing together at the beginning of the folk tune "Vem kan segla förutan vind"

After this, I asked the singers to face the wall and stand side by side in order to imitate the choral singing style and to sing the song as it is most commonly performed. I then made a second recording. The singers were not guided by any accompaniment or conducting with pulse or tempo. They had to depend on each other's singing. Since the participants were both trained voice teachers, they easily adapted to the situation and sounded fairly well together. Nevertheless, I could clearly observe differences in their voice diagrams; in each case one or the other was a bit ahead of the other. This was also observable in the first recording even though the singers looked into each other's eyes. However, their slight dissonance was more evident in the second recording.

The figures to the left shows the two voice diagrams at the beginning of the song. It is clear that the first voice begins ahead of the second one on the first note, but the second voice hits the top note first. It is also possible to observe slides when the notes are hit. The top note has the text "U-tan vind", and it is obvious that the first voice dips on the vowel "a". This pilot study gives an idea of what can be examined in future recordings using a full choral voice.

Discussion

This research study is still in progress and I continue to consider what kind of learning takes place. What I can clearly discern is that my informants, who are experienced choir leaders, are all certain that some singers in choirs lead and take the initiative ahead of others. It remains to be seen whether or not the information and communication transferred from one singer to another creates a kind of learning process. It is necessary to take into consideration all aspects of a singer's capabilities and resources. It is also important to clearly identify the ideals of choral singing on which this study focuses. My informants have the so-called Swedish or Scandinavian choral tradition as guidance even though some of the professional conductors perform choral music from other traditions for

some projects, especially in the gymnasium choirs. Yet, we can speak of a specific "Swedish" sound and choral tradition as a foundation:

> Shimmering in the tree tops a specific sound is generated; probably the most important factor underlying the so-called Swedish choral miracle. It emerged from the cultivation of mixed unaccompanied choral singing from the middle of the 19th century onwards. "Accompanied" by many socio-cultural contexts, it became deeply connected with the Swedish choral music pedagogy of our century. (Reimers, 1993)[72]

To sing in a choir, in a choral voice, is hereby understood to sing with other singers at the same time using the same pitch and rhythm which includes articulation and text, as well as to blend together timbre and vowels in order to sing in tune and intonate with other voices. In addition, the "expression" is the ability to move and touch the audience while articulating the text and other aspects that will not be considered here.

The capability to tackle all this falls back on the individual singer and his or her experience, potential and skill. In order to discuss the process of learning between singers it is important to look at a single chorister. Many different resources are used to sing in a choir and to learn music or other aspects of choir singing.

According to the Dreyfus brothers and their understanding of an "expert" (i.e. reacting without thinking or reasoning), what would you as an expert on choral singing react upon by using your intuition while singing in a choir? In several of the interviews my informants describe the character of the informal leader as "sure", "secure", "goes ahead", "takes initiative", and "the concertmaster", among others. This corresponds with an informal leader's ability to "lead" both with respect to melody and rhythm, as well as by producing a sound quality that spreads throughout and settles in the entire choral voice.

Conclusions

My thesis will focus upon what a singer hears and reacts upon from fellow singers in the voice, and what they learn from that. Through my interviews with choral conductors, I have established their knowledge of informal and formal leaders in choirs and the impact they can have on choral work and the process of learning in the choir.

I will also try to find out what cooperation between choir conductors and informal or formal leaders might look like through simultaneous recordings of individual singers in choral voices. This may display the process of learning from one singer to another. To do this I must take into consideration other impressions and influences that might have an effect on the process of learning within the choir.

72 This is my translation of the original text.

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Suggestions for Further Research

The following section gives an overview of the range of suggestions for further research that have been discussed in the network during and after the meeting in November 2009.

- How do new choirs arise with different interests (e.g., football choirs, complaining choirs, television choirs, feel-good choirs, and OAP-choirs)? How can we find a method to describe this new phenomenon?
- Transnational and interdisciplinary aspects of sound space over history, as well as aspects of monuments and architecture.
- Definitions of choir, ensemble, chorus, band and singing group.
- Psychological aspects of choir singing.
- Ear training of choir singers and singing.
- Educational aspects and questions of genre.
- Singing and training the body.
- How could methods be developed to describe new ways of teaching choir singing?
- Spontaneous choirs and *feel-good choirs* require new kinds of choir conductors.
- Voice as a kind of identity marker.
- Youth culture and leisure activities have changed over time. This is important to take into account especially when conducting historical research on choirs and singing movements.
- Transnational aspects of choir singing and paradigm changes at different times in different European countries. How and why do they change?
- Visual aspects of choir singing.
- How does a repertory change with different choirs? How will a changing repertoire transform choir education? (Oratorio choir vs. musical choir)
- History(ies) of choral singing – history of choirs.
- Phenomenon of made-up choirs or show choirs with famous leaders who are not choir conductors (i.e. someone arranges and conducts the rehearsal). Project choirs in Sweden.
- Mapping different practices in different countries – from very structured (Germany) to highly unstructured (England). Different practices are rooted in national traditions. How to get this overview: (i) mapping situations, (ii) case studies, (iii) studying the nature of communication between singer and leader.
- Look at case studies of what might be seen as successful choirs in each country and in each genre. What are the similarities and differences in good practices? Where do the conductors come from?
- Looking at the conductors, singers and the communication between them. What determines if a singer will return to a rehearsal the following week? What is the nature of musical communication and verbal communication?
- What is the impact of research?
- National research teams could meet and present the 'Swedish' picture, 'English' picture and 'German' picture, etc.
- Choir life and practices in border and multicultural regions (challenges).
- Context of choir life in cities and provinces.
- Choral societies as an international phenomenon with sub-aspects of repertoire, singing practice, gender aspects, identity, etc.
- Choir music and ideology.
- Connect musicological projects and performance practice projects.
- Institutional parallels in and between different countries.

- How is choir music organised?
- What is the specificity of choir music from a European perspective?
- Which choral aspects are similar between countries and regions: ideology, framing organisation, training tradition, history?
- Concept of cultural transfer.
- Is choir still a representation of society? In the ancient world, a choir represented the *polis*. In the 19th century, choir indicated a social stratum (e.g., students and *Gesangverein*). What does choir represent in today's society?
- What kinds of functional choir music do we have today? How do we bring the question of individuality within the collective into the discussion again? What ideas do we have for children? Are contemporary children's choirs used to compensate for a guilty conscience?
- Is there a European choir sound?
- The purpose of the choir in film score.
- Choir music as a representation, not metaphor of European culture. Choir music as an example of the crisis of European culture in a postcolonial and postmodern world.
- How does choir or choral music express national traditions and the conflicts inherent in a culture through individuals?
- Representation of the individual in choir.
- Why do we need to have choir(s)? We currently have a museum of culture, 'Musicmuseumsculture'. Can we talk about a European cultural heritage with respect to *choir culture*?

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Martin Ashley is currently Director of the Centre for Learner Identity Studies and Head of Research in the Faculty of Education at Edge Hill University, near Liverpool UK, for which he holds an institutional chair. His research career includes publications on childrens' spirituality, environmental sustainability and Steiner education. His current main research focus is boys and singing. At Edge Hill, he develops accreditation for the school singing workforce including professional doctorates in choral education and primary school arts.

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Anne Haugland Balsnes has taken a major study in music at University of Oslo supplemented by a major study in choral conducting at the Norwegian Academy of Music. Her Ph.D.-degree in music pedagogy from November 2009 was based on the thesis, *Learning in choir – Belcanto as a community of practice*. She has many years of experience as college teacher in music and conductor of several choruses. She is also a practicing singer, and is presently member of the professional Kristiansand Soloist Ensemble.

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Friedhelm Brusniak's thesis focused on the choir composer Conrad Rein (ca. 1475–1522). In 1998 he wrote his habilitation about the beginnings of the amateurs' choir movement in Bayerisch-Schwaben in the 19th century. From 1989–1999 he was the first scientific Director of the Singers Museum (Sängermuseum) in Feuchtwangen. He is an outstanding researcher of the German choir movement with many publications (Art. "Chor und Chormusik" in *Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 2).

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Gunnel Fagius is a research co-ordinator at the Choir centre at Uppsala University and Music Advisor at the National Council for Church of Sweden. Her publications include two books on childrens' singing and a study of Swedish choral singing in the 1930's. For the Swedish Music History on Fonogram, Musica Suecia, she has been the author of historical commentory texts on choral singing in the 19th and 20th century. In 2009 she has published an overview of Swedish Choral History, *The Swedish Choral Miracle. On choir life in Sweden. Why, how and where do people sing in choirs?*

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Ursula Geislers thesis *Gesang und nationale Gemeinschaft. Zur kulturellen Konstruktion von schwedischem ‚folksång' und deutscher ‚National-*

hymne' (Nomos 2001) focused on transnational aspects of singing. In this Swedish-German perspective several choir and chorus aspects in Europe were included from the French Revolution until the end of World War II. In her research she focuses mainly on transnational music aspects and the history and development of musical ideas as well as music transformations in society.

Dr Karin Johansson
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Karin Johansson finished a thesis on organ improvisation in 2008 and has published articles on improvisation, discourse analysis and organ playing. In connection with Körcentrum Syd, Dr Johansson conducts a qualitative study of high-ranking choral conductors' definitions of musical quality and artistic value. The study aims at capturing and translating tacit dimensions of practicebased knowledge and experience.

Dr. Helmke Jan Keden
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Helmke Jan Keden's previous research concentrated on the use and abuse of German choirs and choir music in the Third Reich. Currently he is working on the influence of the "young people's movement" on German male voice choirs in the first thirty years of the twentieth century. In this research he aims to apply mainly hermeneutic methods to examine the discourses, reactions and correlations in German choirs and to relate them to the ideologisation that occurred later on in the Third Reich. He is also working on modern concepts in the promotion of music-making in German education.

Prof. Dr. Linda Maria Koldau
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Linda Maria Koldau works together with Danish colleagues on an interdisciplinary project on choral music and national identity in the context of the German-Danish conflict 1830–1930. This project focusses on the political significance of choral societies in nationalism and on the role of specific German and Danish songs in the establishment of national identity. Apart from this project, Linda Maria Koldau has been working on the oratorio in the 19th century, preparing a book on national heroes and the formation of national identity in this genre.

Guillaume Lurton
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Guillaume Lurton is currently doing a Ph.D. in sociology, with a focus on the development of choir music in France since the 1940's. This issue is tackled from the perspective of sociology of culture, and of economic sociology. The monographic approach of the French choral world includes both amateur choral groups and professional choirs. A combination of methodological approaches is used, including sociological interviews, ethnographic observation, and quantitative data.

Peter Edlef Nissen
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Peter E. Nissen is musicologist, and he has done research in the history of Danish choir culture in the 19th and 20th century. Main focus has been on the musical repertoire and culture in the choirs of the bourgeois society, where aspects of education, internationalism and urbanism are crucial. He is now working on a project about the role of choir societies in the development of modern Danish culture.

Dr Ragnhild Sandberg Jurström
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Ragnhild Sandberg Jurströms research interest is in the field of musical communication and learning in different contexts. Her doctoral thesis had a focus on musical communication in choirs during repetitions and concerts. This issue was tackled from the perspective of a social semiotic and multimodal theory. She is now involved in a study of musical communication in a multicultural context, with a choir conductor and folk musicians from different countries and traditions. She is also studying the musical communication between teacher and students in singing-, choir- and didactic lessons in higher music education.

Professor Graham Welch
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Graham Welch is the Established Chair of Music Education and is formerly Deputy Dean of the Institute's Faculty of Culture and Pedagogy. He is elected Chair of the internationally based Society for Education, Music and Psychology Research (SEMPRE), President of ISME (2010–2012) and past Co-Chair of the Research Commission of the International Society for Music Education (ISME). Publications number over two hundred and fifty and embrace musical development and music education, teacher education, the psychology of music, singing and voice science, and music in special education and disability.

Sverker Zadig
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Sverker Zadig has been working as a choral conductor for about 35 years and as a teacher of music at different levels in Swedish schools. His experience as a choral conductor involves working with children's choirs, adult co-ed choirs, chamber and symphonic choirs, company and community choirs, and smaller singing groups or vocal ensembles. He currently teaches two choirs with young students at a college; one vocal ensemble with 12 men and a folk choir that sings mostly in Yiddish, Hebrew or Ladino. He participates in "Lärarlyftet" – a Swedish state-supported plan that enables teachers to study within their ordinary employment for a period of time – and has thus the opportunity to research at the National Research School of Music Pedagogy.

AKTUELLA BÖCKER FRÅN BO EJEBY FÖRLAG

KIM FUPZ AAKESON **LÄSAREN**
OLLE ADOLPHSON **ÄLSKAR INTE JAG DIG DÅ**
KJELL ALINGE **KYSS**
PETER BASTIAN **IN I MUSIKEN**
JAN BRUÉR & LARS WESTIN **JAZZ**
RUNE CARLSSON **PRECIS I TIDEN**
TONE BIANCA DAHL **KÖRKONST**
ALLAN EDWALL **GROVDOPPA**
JAN FAGIUS **HEMISFÄRERNAS MUSIK**
STEFAN FORSSÉN **GONATT, EVIGHETEN!**
GLENN GOULD **BORT MED APPLÅDERNA!**
GREIDER & STRÖMBERG & PIRINEN **MEN FÖRST LITE MUSIK!**
HANS GRUNDBERG **VISHARMONISERING**
BJÖRN HELLSTRÖM **NOISE DESIGN**
PAUL HINDEMITH **JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH**
TEDDY HULTBERG (RED) **LITERALLY SPEAKING**
JAN LENNART HÖGLUND **ERICSKRÖNIKAN**
JAN LENNART HÖGLUND **WALLNERIANA**
MARGARETA JERSILD & MÄRTA RAMSTEN **LA FOLIA**
LARS LILLIESTAM **MUSIKLIV**
LARS JOHANSON LUCIDOR **WÄRLDSLIGE & ANDELIGE WISOR**
IAN MACDONALD **EN REVOLUTION I HUVUDET**
STEPHEN NACHMANOVITCH **SPELA FRITT**
CARL NIELSEN **LEVANDE MUSIK**
DANIEL NOLGÅRD **JAZZPIANO**
KARL AAGE RASMUSSEN **DEN KREATIVA LÖGNEN**
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GUNNAR TERNHAG **VAD ÄR DET JAG HÖR?**
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