

Doctorandi musicae ex Pilsna et Confluentibus – About this volume

Doctorandi musicae ex Pilsna et Confluentibus gives insights into doctoral research projects from Czech Republic and Germany in the fields of music education, music theory and musicology. How inspiring and enlightening such a bilateral project can be – not only to learn about university life, music and research cultures in the partner country, but also to reflect on one's own standpoint and perspectives – has already proved at a bilateral digital conference in March 2021. This conference represented the inauguration of the Erasmus collaboration between the music department at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen and the institute of musicology and music education at the University of Koblenz-Landau, which had started in 2020. Due to COVID 19, the young partnership has not yet led to 'real' student and staff mobility and so the conference was a welcomed opportunity for a person-to-person exchange, even only via digital devices.

There are also older foundations to this partnership between Pilsen and "Rheinischer" academic music: When Lina Oravec, now professor of Music Education in Koblenz, was still a PhD student at the University of Cologne, her Institute already held an Erasmus partnership with the Pilsen music department. The physical exchange at that time, also organized by Romana Feiferlíková, Lina Oravec and others, focused on performing instrumental and choir music together in Pilsen and Cologne – and tasting Pilsener Urquell and Kölsch. The new Erasmus partnership started with a focus on research rather than on the performing arts, not only due to COVID 19:

In 2019 the University of Pilsen established under the direction of Jan Vičar a PhD program in Music Theory and Pedagogy, giving new wind to the sails of research. The doctoral students go through a four-year structured doctoral program – and so do the Czech contributors of this volume; some already in their second year and ready for a first publication, others still in early research stages. In Koblenz, research has also gained tailwind in 2020, when firstly three advanced doctoral students in the field of Music Education from other universities joined Lina Oravec' research group, and secondly, when Corinna Herr took up her professorship of Musicology and also brought along advanced pre- and postdocs to the institute.

Contributions by all these groups of young researchers can be found in this book. They have all been run through a double-blind peer-review organized by Romana Feiferlíková. Some of them are clearly shaped as musicological projects (Karpíšek, Philips, Žitný), those (co-)supervised by Lina Oravec are located in the field of music education (Recklies, Bubinger, Park, Steffens) and others address research questions of both disciplines (Keller, Gadžijeva, Sladký). Aside from this wide disciplinary spectrum the articles also represent the whole range of different stages of a PhD project: In this introduction we differentiate between "early stage research projects" on the one hand (Karpíšek, Sladký) and further or late state projects on the other hand – even involving an article about a dissertation project finished in 2017 (Keller).

The eight papers stemming from more advanced projects can be segmented into three sections, focusing on music education in general schools (Recklies, Bubinger, Oravec and

Steffens), papers on extracurricular music education (Park, Gadžijeva), and papers on higher education or music professionals (Žitný, Philips, Keller).

Research papers on music education in general schools

The issue is opened by three German contributions researching the perspectives of music teachers on general music education in German public schools. While Erik A. Recklies examines teachers' reflections and thoughts about classical music as a subject in music classes, Anne Bubinger asks for their experiences and reflections concerning intercultural music education. In their study about solfège in German primary class rooms, Lina Oravec and Julia Steffens not only take the teachers', but also the pupils' perspectives into account. Although the topics of the projects broadly differ, strong similarities concerning the methodological research approaches can be stated: all researchers have conducted qualitative interview studies following the Grounded Theory approach, which is well-established in German music educational research. These three research projects have already progressed to an advanced stage wherein central results can be identified and presented.

Research papers on extracurricular music education

As another part of the Koblenz music educational research group Yeo-Jin Park also follows the Grounded Theory approach in her interview study exploring how teachers at German music schools define quality of extracurricular instrumental education. In her article she focuses on methodological reflections, showing how the required openness of Grounded Theory research can even lead to an – at least temporary – change of the initial research question.

In German conference proceedings of many music educational research conferences within the last decade, these introduced empirical studies would be accompanied by many other empirical articles among some others. Instead, the next four articles focus on historical and biographical aspects, revealing different research cultures between not only musical and music educational research, but also between different European countries.

Elvira Gadžijeva presents an historical overview about Russian choral singing traditions and vocal methods in her article, including modern approaches. This founds the basis for the practical part of her dissertation project that aims at an adoption of such methods for Czech children's choir edited for non-music major school- and kindergarten teachers.

Research papers on higher music education and music professionals

After the two chapters focusing on music education in and out of general schools, the last segment focuses on higher music education and professional musicians. All three articles point out the importance of transnational and transcultural exchanges in music, both historically as well as today: be it through objects and ideas like patents for a clarinet, compositions between Western and Indian classical music or the migration movement of students between the United States of America and Germany of the 1800s.

In his article about Milan Kostohryz, Radek Žitný introduces this clarinetist, researcher and instrument maker and illustrates the multi-layered life of a Czech musician in the 20th century.

Another clarinetist, Shankar Tucker, is one of the examples Anna Amy Philips uses in her article. Here she discusses both the compositional as well as the instrumental challenges faced by collaborations between Western and Indian classical music and musicians.

The last article by Veronika Keller focuses on another aspect of the international music exchange, the migration of music students between the United States and the German countries between 1843 and 1918, and the influences it had on the US and the German higher education and music culture.

Early stage research projects

The last two articles rather represent the beginning stage of the process of writing a dissertation:

The double bass player and composer Tomáš Karpíšek plans to elaborate an overview of Czech contemporary compositions for double bass in the 21st century, cataloging them and reflecting on them in both an international and historical context.

Aleš Sladký plans to analyze pedagogical potentials of Blues lyrics in teaching music and Czech at grammar school. In his article he focuses on the question how typical American and Czech Blues songs differ concerning musical structure and especially concerning lyrics. As one of the results he finds the topic of alcohol more common within Czech than within American Blues songs.

Even if we will still have to wait for physical meetings in our Erasmus partnership, we can clearly state that the common online conference, further video meetings, visits in each other's online classes and the common publication project have already led to a remarkable and valuable exchange of ideas, expertise and experiences about music, musicology, music education, higher education, and research in these fields. May the readers of this volume also benefit from the outcomes.

Lina Oravec, Romana Feiferlíková and Veronika Keller, 5 December 2021