

Preface

We are now completing the editing and indexing of *RILM Retrospectives #3, Congress reports in music: An annotated bibliography*. . . . The work is divided into three parts: (1) systematic listing of the congress reports with tables of contents for each, (2) abstracts of the individual articles, and (3) indexes by author, subject, city, chronology, and sponsoring societies. . . . Much of our work has been completed. We have approximately 1500 abstracts, and the index is already underway.

In late 1978, the distinguished American musicologist Barry S. Brook (1918-1997) sent this optimistic letter to his many contacts among the world's music librarians. He could not have foreseen that this project would languish, not to be finished for another two and a half decades, nor that it would quadruple in size; and he could never have dreamed that its significance would grow far beyond the domain of bibliography. Reflecting myriad currents of thought—the twilight of Romanticism and the dawn of Modernism, the rise and fall of Marxism, and the advent of multiculturalism, to name just a few—this volume offers a fascinating window on intellectual history through the prism of music.

A farsighted innovator in bibliographic matters, Brook had established *Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale* (RILM) in 1966 under the joint sponsorship of the International Musicological Society and the International Association of Music Libraries, Archives, and Documentation Centers. This international bibliography aims at comprehensive coverage of writings on music published anywhere in the world, starting with publications from 1967. At the same time, Brook recognized the need for similar coverage of earlier materials; the *RILM Retrospectives* series is intended to fill this gap.

Pendragon Press published three volumes of the *Retrospectives* series. The first was Brook's *Thematic catalogues in music: An annotated bibliography* (1972; updated edition, 1997); the second was Jean Gribenski's *Thèses de doctorat en langue française relatives à la musique: Bibliographie commentée/French language dissertations in music: An annotated bibliography* (1979). In 1985, with the congress report project far from completion, *Guitar and vihuela: An annotated bibliography* by Meredith Alice McCutcheon became *RILM Retrospectives #3*. When Barry Brook died in 1997, those entrusted with sorting his papers found boxes of file cards and typed or handwritten lists, citations, and abstracts, in varying degrees of disorder: the congress report project. While this collection represented a great deal of diligent bibliographic work, it was unorganized, unwieldy, and certainly unpublishable. But whenever RILM's offices had moved, those boxes had been faithfully moved as well, and Brook's successors as Editor in Chief—Earl Terence Ford, Adam P.J. O'Connor, and Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie—had maintained the hope that somehow this daunting and enormous project would be completed. Finally, in 2001 the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation provided a generous grant toward that goal, enabling RILM to finish the job that Brook had begun a quarter-century earlier.

Brook's starting point was Marie Briquet's *La musique dans les congrès internationaux (1835-1939)* (Paris: Heugel, 1961), a compilation of citations of published congress reports. Brook

intended (a) to enrich her citations with more complete lists of individual papers and with abstracts of all papers, (b) to add citations and abstracts for publications that Briquet missed, and (c)—the biggest challenge of all—to fill in the escalating number of such publications between Briquet’s cutoff date of 1939 and the beginning of RILM’s listings in 1967. He addressed these goals by soliciting citations and abstracts from his international contacts (the letter quoted above is from the final stage of this process) and from his students at the City University of New York Graduate Center. The materials he gathered became the contents of the dusty boxes that RILM refused to part with.

By the time we were ready to finish the project, another source had appeared: *A guide to international congress reports in musicology 1900-1975* by John Tyrrell and Rosemary Wise (New York: Garland, 1979), an explicit continuation of Briquet’s bibliographic work. Yet another source for citations was *Appendix 1B: Conference reports* in volume 28 of the second edition of *The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians* (London: Macmillan, 2001), and a few additional citations came from Winifred Gregory’s *International congresses and conferences, 1840-1937* (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1938; reprint Millwood, N.J.: Kraus, 1980). Serendipity was also a factor: For example, one of our editors happens to own an impressive collection of conference reports that are nearly impossible to find outside of Eastern Europe. In a few cases, volunteers from the world of music librarianship helped us by locating books and writing abstracts. We tried to fill in the gaps ourselves, borrowing the books whenever we could to ensure full and accurate citations and writing many of the abstracts. We are grateful to the many colleagues who have helped us; our long list of abstractors spans nearly three decades.

Of course, there are omissions. We are already aware of some of them, and we hope that our readers will call our attention to others. At some point we had to draw the line, reassuring ourselves—as all reference publishers must—that there can always be a second edition.

Unpublished papers

Some of these conference reports include references to papers that were presented at a particular conference but were not published in the report. In some cases, abstracts were published there in lieu of the full papers; in others, only the titles and authors were listed. We decided to include all examples of both of these cases. When the conference report includes only the title, author, and an abstract, we have provided the citation and the abstract (edited according to RILM’s standards), accompanied by the indication “Summary of a paper”. When the report includes only the title and author, with no abstract, we have provided the citation and, in place of an abstract, the indication “The conference report provides only a citation. Neither the text nor a summary of the paper was published here.” Although the former points to a publication that provides minimal information on the paper’s topic and the latter points to one that provides none beyond the title, these entries have been indexed to the extent possible.

Our rationale for including these entries is threefold. First, they contribute to a fuller picture of who was present and what took place at each conference. Also, they constitute biographical information about the authors, indicating where they were at a given moment, and what they were presenting or discussing. Finally, they provide potential aids to those researching the topics of these papers, since the reader is at least led to an author’s name, and perhaps to a keyword, which may suggest further avenues of inquiry.

A window on intellectual history

As we worked on this project, we discovered that it was becoming much more than the sum of its parts: We began to realize that this collection of published papers illuminated matters of intellectual history in unforeseen ways. Here are a few observations; readers will no doubt make many more.

Conferences in musical life

As we point out in “Notes on using this book” (p. xvii–xix), entries are divided into classes as they are in RILM’s other publications. We have moved our usual class 16, “Congress reports and symposium proceedings”, to the front of this book and ordered it by year (secondarily by city); it therefore serves as an index by year as well as providing a full listing of all the conferences and papers covered here.

Patterns and currents emerge from a perusal of this section. For example, the changing nature and frequency of conferences over time can be tracked. The only 19th-century conferences devoted solely to music focused on Gregorian chant, and were held under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church; otherwise, musical topics arose only in conferences devoted to history, folklore, psychology, or questions of public and private property. The first conferences devoted to miscellaneous studies in musicology were held in 1900, in Paris.

France’s dominance in musicology gradually gave way to a preponderance of German work, mirrored by an increasing proportion of conferences in German-speaking countries; this trend becomes apparent by the mid-1920s, and conferences in general become more frequent. Their number declines during the social upheavals of the 1930s, and conferences with overt political agendas begin to appear. The picture becomes particularly bleak during World War II and its aftermath. In the 1950s, however, music conferences become more frequent than ever; for our time frame, the density of events peaks in 1963, with the presentation of some 600 papers on musical topics.

Other patterns in the role of conferences in musical life may be traced through two specialized indexes in this volume. **Conference locations** (p. 589–592) is organized geographically, showing where conferences were held and what their topics were; and **Conference sponsors** (p. 593–596) lists their sponsoring organizations and individuals by geographic affiliation, along with the conferences’ years.

The advent of ethnomusicology

Before World War II, papers on non-Western and traditional Western musics largely came from the field of folklore—a rather woolly domain at that time, whose denizens ranged from wide-eyed dilettantes to rigorous collectors and cataloguers—or from the young sciences of ethnology, anthropology, and psychology. In the 1950s, attempts to synthesize the particular challenges and insights involved with all of these studies began to coalesce under the term “ethno-musicology” (so coined by Jaap Kunst; the hyphen was soon abandoned). Beginning around that time, several of the scholars involved were trying to define their field and its dynamics. The relative prominence of RILM classes 19 (**Universal perspectives**) and 31 (**Ethnomusicology: General**) in this volume attest to that process. (Metacultural topics that include consideration of Western classical music are in class 19; class 31 groups metacultural

and intercultural topics—diffusion and acculturation, for example—that only involve traditional musics.) In this volume, the percentage of entries in classes 19 and 31 is more than twice that found in recent RILM volumes.

The social turmoil surrounding World War II is also reflected in the large proportion of ethnographic studies being done in Europe, often in response to explicit nationalist agendas. The preponderance of such studies in this period is reflected by the unusually large size of class 34 (**Ethnomusicology: Europe**) here. Again, the percentage of entries in class 34 in this volume is more than twice that found in recent RILM volumes.

By contrast, during our time period musical scholarship—be it termed musicology or ethnomusicology—had yet to embrace jazz and popular music. In this volume, classes 38 and 39 (**Jazz** and **Popular music**) comprise only a handful of entries; RILM's 1998 volume alone includes over 1300 entries on these topics.

The prism of music

From the abstract domain of philosophy to the concrete world of ethnography, music has long helped to illuminate general cultural attitudes and intellectual currents. The topics and approaches documented here illustrate a history of relationships between music and ideas; they also suggest developments that are less easily perceived, but no less compelling. These developments belong to more symbolic realms, such as those of affect and connotation.

The emergence of musicology, formalized in the first international music conferences in 1900, indicated the increasing importance of studying the history of Western music. Analyzing the achievements of master composers enhanced appreciation, and authenticity in performance practice became an issue. While pride in one's national compositional heritage was still a factor, the idea of a shared multinational foundation of aesthetics and practices was increasingly attractive and relevant.

Similarly, the importance of the social Darwinist perspective that inspired many early studies of non-Western musics—the notion of “primitive” cultures representing lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder—began to wane, as perceptions of world cultures broadened. Studying the music of other cultures increasingly involved an opening of the mind and spirit, and contributed to an expanded understanding of human potential that held implications for composers as well as for scholars.

As cultural perceptions widened, metacultural consciousness beckoned. Broad applications of theory and technology heralded liberation from the limitations of a culture-bound past. Microtonal musical instruments, for example, were not just mathematical exercises—they had an almost metaphysical import, promising to free us from the prison of equal temperament in a cleansing of music that mirrored a utopian cleansing of souls.

This volume documents an ever-expanding intellectual universe, not a straight line of progressive development. Looking back across the arc of history, we can begin to see how outlooks were formed, and we can assess the roles of the various currents and sidetracks that have shaped the disciplines that we pursue. The unique place of music in human life is salient at every turn.

James R. Cowdery