

ESF Exploratory Workshop on

***Music, Culture and Politics in Early Nineteenth-  
Century Europe***

**London, 6-9 May 2010**

Convened by

Roger Parker, Michael Fend and Michel Noiray

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**SCIENTIFIC REPORT**

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## **1. Executive summary**

This workshop took place at King's College London from Thursday 6 May to Sunday 9 May. In all there were twenty-two participants, from nine countries, eight of them European and the USA.

The primary purpose of the workshop was to aim towards establishing a large-scale international and interdisciplinary research project concerned with Music, Culture and Politics in Early Nineteenth-Century European Cities. The workshop brought together an interdisciplinary group of (mostly) European scholars working in this area; by means of focussed discussion, it sought to explore new research aims and objectives in the subject, discuss appropriate methodologies, and by these means develop a programme of future events, publications and funding applications.

Our focus was on the years 1815-1848, and on a number of European urban centres: Budapest, Leipzig, Lisbon, London, Milan, Paris, Vienna and Warsaw. We chose these dates because the political events marking them had important effects on the development of musical cultures, not least in new formulations of "national" culture following the defeat of Napoleon and then again in the wake of the 1848-9 revolutions. Our choice of cities was more pragmatic: it was guided primarily by the strength of the scholarly work taking place concerning them. Our central purpose was to ask a number of larger comparative questions about the tumultuous changes taking place in musical life during the period; our answers will, we hope, have an impact on how future music histories are written.

The workshop focussed discussions on three central "seminars". Each topic was introduced by a "position paper" by one of the workshop convenors. This was then followed by a series of responses from workshop participants; and then by general discussion. We began on Thursday 6 May in the later afternoon, with a welcome speech and dinner. On Friday 7 May we had the first two seminars, interspersed with lunch and dinner. On Saturday 8 May 2010 we had our third seminar in the morning, and then spent lunch, the afternoon sessions and evening dinner discussing more widely the conclusions of the seminar and the future of various aspects of the conference. Participants dispersed on Sunday 9 May 2010.

The structure of the programme meant that there was ample time for discussion and the exchange of ideas. Although the official discussion time began in a somewhat formal manner (with the prepared statements of the participants), it very soon moved into a free-flowing exchange of ideas, and this exchange itself then spread into the break times and lunches/dinners. Such interaction was aided, we believe, by the physical proximity of all the important venues (King's College and its various meeting rooms for lunch, etc.; the conference hotel in nearby Bloomsbury, only a fifteen-minute walk away; and our venues for the evening meals, which were also all nearby). This cut down the need for extensive travel time, and also meant that participants could easily move from one venue to another with each other.

The conclusions of the workshop were many and various. One thing we immediately decided was that the various responses were in themselves valuable and worthy of wider dissemination. Thus we agreed that the King's College Convenors (Roger Parker and Michael Fend) will work together to put up a website on which the responses can be collected together and disseminated to all participants and the wider scholarly community. This process of website creation is

already nearly complete. There was also much discussion concerning the best ways to take the project forward. One clear theme that emerged as especially valuable and contentious was that of musical nationalism, about which there is a huge variety of opinion through the continent and about which the majority of our participants chose to deliver their responses. Even the word “nationalism” is contentious, it seems, some scholars being of the opinion that the term itself now has too much “baggage” and should be replaced with less loaded terms. In light of this, one of the agreed priorities of the workshop was that a larger conference bid should be considered on this topic, and possibly also some large network established.

In general, the workshop was conducted in a most collegial and helpful manner. It was, indeed, generally agreed that the exchanges had been of the highest level, and that all participants had learned a very great deal from the experience.

## **2. Scientific content of the event**

*Thursday 6 May 2010*

This was mostly introductory. At 5:00 Roger Parker gave brief opening remarks, reminding participants of the structure of the workshop and its format. He also reminded participants of the need to speak slowly and clearly (something generally followed in the workshop) and went through the practical arrangements. At 5:40 there was a presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF) by Ewa Dahlig-Turek (Standing Committee for the Humanities), who spoke about the structures of the ESF and the possible avenues for future funding.

*Friday 7 May 2010*

10.00-13.00 was dedicated to the topic “Music: universal, national, nationalistic”.

The Introduction was given by Michael Fend, who stressed the general features of the “position paper” that had previously been circulated. He was followed by responses from eight participants:

Katherine Hambridge pointed out the still-contentious issue of “musical nationalism”, in particular the issues of the term that have been current in the past few years in Anglo-US scholarship.

Peter Bozo stressed the peculiar position of nationalist rhetoric in Hungary at the time, and suggested that the various definitions of the terms then in use were often incompatible.

Luca Aversano paid particular attention to the kinds of nationalist claims being made by publishers at the time, particularly those in Italy and Austro-Germany, and the international diffusion of their products.

Cornelia Szabo-Knotik discussed the term from the point of view of Vienna, and in particular the tensions that emerged in contemporary musical journals then active.

Barbara Boisits continued the theme of Viennese musical life, bringing the attention in particular to the situation in the city’s opera houses, which were by their nature cosmopolitan.

Zofia Chechlinska moved the focus to Poland, and mentioned the multiple uses and appropriations of so-called “national” dances (particularly in Chopin’s music) that took place during the period.

Nicholas Mathew remained with Vienna, and stressed that there was a danger of becoming too caught up with the minutiae of the cultural context and forgetting the fact that the musical object could have a great deal of influence on practices of reception.

Helmut Loos took Leipzig as his centre of attention, and stressed the extent to which a certain stream of musicological discourse and reification of “classical” composers was very much a local tradition during the period in question.

As there were a comparatively large number of participants in this session, the presentations lasted until lunchtime, and general discussion continued at 15:00. This discussion was lively in the extreme. One of the chief points of contention was precisely what Mathew had mentioned: the status of the musical object. It was extremely difficult to find a mode of agreement about this, perhaps especially because of the institutional differences between various European musicological traditions. For some, insistence on the continuing power of music seemed to be backtracking to a much earlier idea of musical “transcendence”; but this itself seemed to others a position long since theorized and distanced. It was generally felt that there were very large issues behind this topic at this time: one particularly in need of further pan-European investigation.

16:00-17.30 (with some spill-over into the first session of Saturday morning) was dedicated to the topic “Performers, composers and institutions as shapers of repertory”.

The Introduction was given by Michel Noiray, who stressed the general features of the “position paper” that had previously been circulated. He was followed by responses from four participants:

Christophe Charle addressed the topic from the point of view of an economic historian, and was anxious to ensure that an adequate data-collecting operation took place before any conclusions were drawn.

William Weber offered a large overview of the issues that he has faced in compiling his recent history of concert life in Europe, and stressed that some frequently-used terms are still rather imprecise. He urged us to think again about such key terms as “cosmopolitan” and “metropolitan”, whose meanings are often confused.

Hervé Audéon was concerned specifically with the Parisian situation, and in particular the performance records of the Association des artistes musiciens, which give a particularly interesting slant on the tastes of the time.

Ben Walton talked about musical institutions in both Paris and London, but also stressed the extent to which we should take into account the fact that the repertory during these years was becoming global rather than merely European.

The discussion (which continued briefly into the morning of the next day) was much focussed on the issue of data-collecting. How essential was this at this stage of

research in this period? Although it is of course true that we do not have complete data for the vast majority of institutions, does such a lack invalidate those who would wish to draw larger conclusions from what data survives in readily-available resources? This was again a matter on which different national traditions of musicology had different views—and was exacerbated by the comparative ease of availability of funds for data-collecting.

*Saturday 8 May 2010*

10:45-4:30 was dedicated to the topic “Audiences and the music object”.

The *Introduction* was given by Roger Parker, who stressed the general features of the “position paper” that had previously been circulated. He was followed by responses from five participants:

James Davies was particularly concerned with musical life in Paris and London, and investigated the extent to which changes in material society effected the manner in which musical objects were viewed. He approached this partly through the lens of medical literature, and in particular on the various explanations offered during the period for the unusual physical attributes of famous composers of the past

Emanuele Senici concentrated on Milan, and through a close reading of various critics of Rossini attempted to suggest some of the hermeneutic tools that might emerge from a new “reception history”.

Mary Ann Smart examined the situation of Donizetti in his last years in Vienna, and in particular how the Viennese might have “heard” his opera *Linda di Chamounix* and *Maria di Rohan*.

Gabriela Cruz focussed on Lisbon, and in particular on the curious generic hybrids that took place in Lisbon concert venues during our period. The difficulty of dealing with comedy in historical contexts was one of her particular points: as was her suggestion that when comedy is clothed in musical language it may become even more opaque to the contemporary observer.

Flora Willson addressed the issue by discussing the possible connections between visual cultures at the time (much theorised of late) and what we might call “aural cultures”, which are still mostly ignored.

In some ways, and fruitfully, the general discussion of this seminar broadened out (and continued after lunch) into a discussion of the entire workshop. In particular the issue of the status of the musical object in our musicological work was revisited, and also how far contemporary methods of musical analysis were adequate to the task of the historian. This discussion was particularly enriched by the presence of Peter Mandler, who came only for this session, but offered many stimulating interdisciplinary points of view, in particular about how the latest research among historians of the period was revisiting some of the critical terms of the period, not least (again the word kept returning) “nationalism”.

5:00 The final discussion, concerning follow-up, was chaired by Michael Fend, and will be discussed below (in section 3).

### **3. Assessment of the results, contribution to the future direction of the field, outcome**

As mentioned at the start, the conclusions of the workshop were many and various. One thing we immediately decided was that the various responses were in themselves valuable and worthy of wider dissemination. Thus we agreed that the King's College Convenors (Roger Parker and Michael Fend) will work together to put up a website on which the responses can be collected together and disseminated to all participants and the wider scholarly community. This process of website creation is already nearly complete.

There was also much discussion concerning the best ways to take the project forward. One clear theme that emerged as especially valuable and contentious was that of musical nationalism, about which there is a huge variety of opinion through the continent and about which the majority of our participants chose to deliver their responses. Even the word "nationalism" was, it seems, contentious, some scholars being of the opinion that the term itself now has too much "baggage" and should be replaced with less loaded terms. In light of this, one of the agreed priorities of the workshop was that a larger conference bid should be considered on this topic, and possibly also some large network established. Michael Fend has agreed to take this aspect forward in the near future.

In terms of the other, smaller themed sessions, there were several more limited conversations about possible collaborations. A group of scholars working on Paris have begun tentative negotiations about writing a book together on that theme. A number of scholars made connections that will be useful in terms of data-collecting projects (in particular those at present under way by Charle and Noiray).

In short, we collectively believe that the workshop succeeded in raising a large number of questions that had possibly been thought less contentious than they proved. The workshop also demonstrated the relative isolation of many European musicologists, who all too rarely have the opportunity to discuss broad historiographical issues (rather than those connected to the life or works of a particular composer) with scholars from other countries.

## 4. Final programme

### Thursday 6 May 2010

Afternoon	Arrival
5.00-5.40	Welcome: Roger Parker
5.40-6.00	Presentation of the European Science Foundation (ESF) Ewa Dahlig-Turek: Standing Committee for the Humanities
19.00	Reception and Dinner

### Friday 7 May 2010

10.00-13.00	<b>First Seminar: Music: universal, national, nationalistic</b>
10:00	Introduction: Michael Fend Katherine Hambridge Peter Bozo Luca Aversano Cornelia Szabo-Knotik Barbara Boisits Zofia Chechlinska Nicholas Mathew Helmut Loos
11:15-11:45	Coffee / Tea Break
11:45	Discussion
13.00-15.00	Lunch
15.00-17.30 shapers of repertory	<b>Second Seminar: Performers, composers and institutions as</b>
15:00	Introduction: Michel Noiray Christophe Charle William Weber Hervé Audéon Ben Walton
16:15-16:45	Coffee / Tea Break
16:45	Discussion
19.00	Dinner

### Saturday 8 May 2010

10.00-13.00	<b>Third Seminar: Audiences and the music object</b>
10:00	Introduction: Roger Parker James Davies

Emanuele Senici  
Flora Willson  
Mary Ann Smart  
Gabriela Cruz

11:15-11:45	Coffee / Tea Break
11:45	Discussion
13.00-15.00	Lunch
15.00-16.30	Afternoon Session: Summing-up
16:30-17:00	Coffee / Tea Break
17.00-18.30	<b>Discussion of follow-up activities/networking/collaboration</b>
19.00	Reception and closing dinner
<b>Sunday 9 May 2010</b>	
Morning	Departure



## 5. Final list of participants

### Convenor:

1. **Professor Roger PARKER**  
Music Department  
King's College London, UK

### Co-Convenors:

2. **Dr Michel NOIRAY**  
IRPMF, France
3. **Dr Michael FEND**  
Music Department  
King's College London, UK

### ESF Representative:

4. **Ewa DAHLIG-TUREK**  
Institute of Arts  
Polish Academy of Science and Humanities

### Conference administrator:

5. **FLORA WILLSON**  
Music Department  
King's College London, UK

### Participants:

6. **Dr Barbara BOISITS**  
Kommission für Musikforschung  
Oesterreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Austria
7. **Professor Cornelia SZABÓ-KNOTIK**  
Institut für Analyse, Theorie und Geschichte der Musik  
Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst,
8. **Dr Hervé AUDEON**  
IRPMF, France
9. **Christophe CHARLE**  
UFR d'Histoire  
Université Paris 1, France
10. **Professor Dr. Helmut LOOS**  
Institut für Musikwissenschaft  
Universität Leipzig, Germany
11. **Dr Peter BOZO**  
Institute for Musicology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

- 12. Dr Luca AVERSANO**  
Dipartimento di Comunicazione e Spettacolo  
Università di Roma Tre, Italy
- 13. Professore Emanuele SENICI**  
Dipartimento di Spettacolo  
Università di Roma La Sapienza, Italy
- 14. Professor Zofia CHECHLINSKA**  
Osiedle Przyjaźń 126
- 15. Dr Gabriela CRUZ**  
Centro de Estudos de Sociologia e Estética Musical  
Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas  
Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal
- 16. Ms Katherine HAMBRIDGE**  
Faculty of Music  
Cambridge, UK
- 17. Dr Peter MANDLER**  
Faculty of History  
University of Cambridge, UK
- 18. Dr Benjamin WALTON**  
Faculty of Music  
Cambridge
- 19. Professor James DAVIES**  
Music Department  
UC Berkeley, USA
- 20. Professor Nicholas MATHEW**  
Music Department  
UC Berkeley, USA
- 21. Professor Mary Ann SMART**  
Music Department  
UC Berkeley, USA
- 22. Prof. William WEBER**  
History Department  
California State University, USA

6. Statistical information on participants (age bracket, countries of origin, M/F repartition, etc.) The statistics to be provided under section 6 can also include repartition by scientific specialty if relevant.

Participants over 50/under 50: 10/12

Participants male/female: 14/8

Countries:

UK 6 (NB one was conference administrator)

Hungary 1

Italy 2

Austria 2

Poland 2

France 3

USA 4

Portugal 1

Germany 1

Total 22