

The History of the IMS

(1927–2017)

International Musicological Society

THE HISTORY OF THE IMS (1927–2017)

Edited by
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The artwork on the book cover and facing page 1 shows prominent figures from the early days of the IGMw (1928). *Left to right*: Peter Wagner (Fribourg, first President), Guido Adler (Vienna, Honorary President), Johannes Wolf (Berlin, Vice President), Knud Jeppesen (Copenhagen, Editor of *Acta Musicologica*), Higinio Anglès (Barcelona). Taken from *Basler Nachrichten*, Abendausgabe, 29 June 1949, supp. 2, "Basel" (artwork redrawn by Jan Buckard, Bonn).

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PREFACE

Musicologists without Borders: Ninety Years of “Collaborative Musicology”

The International Musicological Society (IMS) is the oldest international association of historical musicologists, and is still very active ninety years after its foundation in Basel in 1927, taking over the heritage of the previous Internationale Musikgesellschaft, founded at the end of the nineteenth century. This means that our history has continued to follow the same itinerary of the discipline of musicology established in Germany some 150 years ago as *Musikwissenschaft*. Of course the world has totally changed since September 1927, when a group of pioneers that included Guido Adler, Edward J. Dent, Henry Prunières, and others, decided to reincarnate the IMG into a new kind of musicological society under the German/French name of Internationale Gesellschaft für Musikwissenschaft/Société Internationale de Musicologie. The new Society was modeled after the utopistic League of Nations (Société des Nations), founded in 1920 as a consequence of the Paris Peace Conference after the First World War. Not by chance, the headquarters of the Society were established in Basel, in neutral Switzerland, and the first statutes are redolent of League of Nations' structure: the activities of the Society are managed by a President, a Secretary General, and by a Directorium composed of members representing different nations (these same rules remain in place for the IMS today).

The early history of the IMS was briefly summarized by the late Rudolf Häusler on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of its founding.¹ Häusler had served as longtime Secretary General. However, a complete historical summary documenting the crucial events of our Society's past has never been realized. When I first proposed compiling

1 Rudolf Häusler, “50 Jahre Internationale Gesellschaft für Musikwissenschaft,” *Acta Musicologica* 49, no. 1 (1977): 1–27.

this present collective volume for Tokyo 2017² I had in mind making use of this occasion to create a historical archive of the IMS, including original documents or reproductions, publications and photos, in the newly opened public research office of the Society at the historical building of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis in the Musik-Akademie Basel. Immediately I received an enthusiastic response from our Secretary General, Dorothea Baumann, who started working restlessly on the concept, and she succeeded assembling an impressive quantity of information, now available for students and scholars.

To be back in Basel, the original home of the IMS, is quite important: In fact, the same founders of the Schola Cantorum (in particular, Paul Sacher) were very active in the first decades of the IGMw.

It is interesting to observe that the pioneers who founded both institutions were not only active musicologists, but also composers deeply involved in contemporary music of their time. The case of Edward J. Dent is paradigmatic: he was the founder and first president of the International Society for Contemporary Music from 1922 to 1938, and co-founder, Vice President, and then second President of the IGMw from 1931 to 1949 (the longest standing President in the history of the IMS). His role, outlined in this volume in the contribution by Annegret Fauser and also in other articles, was “of a mediator and peacemaker” facing the big problems of his difficult age with connatural skills for diplomacy and a utopian vision of an international “collaborative” musicology. The latter is a fundamental aspect of the IMS project which emerges page by page from reading the present book.

Already in 1928, the published list of members of the IGMw was impressive, including 183 members from fifteen European countries (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, The United Kingdom including Ireland, Italy, Malta, The Netherlands, Austria-Hungary, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia), the United States of America, a sample of Latin American countries, and an interesting presence of Asia (represented only by Jaffa, Palestine) and Africa (limited to Egypt and Algeria). After the Second World War, the Society was in need of some form of rebirth, and again Basel, in neutral Switzerland, was chosen for the fourth congress of the IGMw in 1949, the first one held after the war. During the meeting, the General Assembly approved changing the official name of the Society to the English form in use today: International Musicological Society.

2 Cf. *IMS Newsletter* 1 (2014).

Again the Society seemed to follow the example of the organization which took the place of the old League of Nations, namely the newly created United Nations (1945), which still preserved UN offices in Geneva, although its headquarters were now in New York. At the same time, the collateral United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was founded in Paris. Not by chance, the two Presidents of the IMS following Dent—Knud Jeppesen and Friedrich Blume—, established a fruitful collaboration between UNESCO and the IMS, with the Society becoming a member of two international councils: CIM (Conseil International de Musique) and CIPSH (Conseil International de la Philosophie et des Sciences Humaines). Only a few years later, in 1952, with the backing of UNESCO, and with the newly founded Association Internationale des Bibliothèques Musicales (today IAML), the IMS contributed to the creation of the first international Répertoire (RISM). In the following years, and under the patronage of the IMS and the IAML, the other three current Répertoires were created (RILM, 1965; RIdIM, 1971; RIPM, 1980). In 1956, some thirty years after its foundation in Basel, the IMS had a total of 551 members from twenty-eight countries, including Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, and Algeria. Germany, however, with 103 “Mitglieder,” was outnumbered for the first time by the United States (148). If you consider that at the moment of its foundation the United Nations had only fifty-one members (today there are 193), the IMS was shaping its self-image toward becoming “the United Nations of Musicology.”

This meteoric rise to internationality, however, was overshadowed by the global reach of the International Council for Traditional Music which, founded in London in 1947 as the International Folk Music Council, emerged as the ethnomusicological counterpart of the IMS in Europe, morphed into the ICTM in 1981, and became a non-governmental organization associated with UNESCO in the 1990s.³ With a different mission, which included its role as an umbrella organization for research, performance, composition, and music education, the International Music Council (IMC) was established in 1949. In the years following, with the creation of few other international music associations, we reach the end of the epic age of the foundation of international societies and institutions based on the mutual collaboration of scholars from different countries. One significant feature of this

3 At the end of this long process, as a trinity of prominent international organizations, the IMS, IAML, and ICTM held its first joint conference in Abu Dhabi, in March 2017.

hyperdynamic period was the strategic use of international societies to blur the various types of walls built during the Cold War.⁴

Gradually, in the following decades, with the rise of other specific associations, the IMS seems to have minimized its engagement with non-Western music cultures, which by then were clearly the domain of ethnomusicologists. Networking with organizations created under the patronage of UNESCO was almost abandoned. And yet, only a few years later it was possible to open up a concrete dialogue—in Europe at least—between historical musicologists and ethnomusicologists, under the flag of a subdiscipline newly defined as “music anthropology”: the dream was now to realize the kind of interdisciplinarity preached by “New History,” as a peer dialogue among musicology and “sister disciplines” (this was not only by chance the title of the 1997 IMS quinquennial congress in London).

The simplistic definition of historical musicology as the study of the written tradition of Western art music has, for many observers, created a distorted image of the IMS as a “European” society, somewhat lagging behind the American Musicological Society, whose membership is three times larger. However, this was not at all the vision of the pioneers who founded the IMS, and certainly does not reflect its present status.

The really exciting, true story behind the IMS is told in the present book. The chapters, compiled by twenty-one collaborators, reconstruct the roles of the main protagonists of the IMS living and active even before 1927. For example, Kirnbauer, Fauser, and Kniazeva have written about the early innovators at the time of the IMG and the early years of our Society, the pioneers commemorated in the image printed in the *Basler Nachrichten* of 29 June 1949, used on this volume’s cover. Other authors have written about each term of the successive Presidents, from Guido Adler (Honorary President) and Peter Wagner to the present days. Thus there are contributions by Elisabeth Theresia Hilscher, Pio Pellizzari, Annegret Fauser, Thomas Holme Hansen, Petra van Langen, Christian Speck, Catherine Massip, Frans de Ruiter, Thomas Betzwieser, Zdravko Blažeković, and Klaus Pietschmann on the Presidents from 1927 to 1997, and by the Past Presidents László Somfai, David Fallows, Tilman Seebass, and Dinko Fabris on their own

4 I am not addressing here the proliferation of national musicological societies, even if many of them are older than some international institutions I have mentioned. Although their influence extends well beyond national borders, their organization does not involve international collaboration patterns.

individual five-year terms, up to the new President-elect, Daniel Chua. Dorothea Baumann has provided, in addition to several contributions in the first part of the volume, detailed information on the internal and administrative life of the IMS during its past ninety years (“The IMS Seen from the Inside”). Tilman Seebass explains the fruitful activities of Regional Associations and Study Groups he has strongly encouraged, while the Editors of *Acta Musicologica*, Federico Celestini and Philip Bohlman, have reconstructed a “Brief History” of the IMS journal. The present volume contains articles of interest for all musicologists, independent of their specializations or nationalities.

What has especially impressed me while checking the different contributions was the clear consistency of the mission of our predecessors toward supporting a “collaborative” musicology, based on conceiving IMS members as a community of “musicologists without borders.” This was declared by the founders in 1927, but also reaffirmed by Presidents such as Knud Jeppesen (1949–52), Edward Reeser (1972–77), and Christoph-Helmuth Mahling (1987–92). Nevertheless, many scholars continued to consider the IMS as mainly a European domain. The reinstitution of “internationality,” which has always been a unique requisite for the oldest association of musicologists still active, was made possible thanks to two main initiatives inaugurated by my predecessors: the creation of the Study Groups and Regional Associations.

Many new events have confirmed the centrifugal displacement of the IMS from Europe to other parts of the globe: for the first time in ninety years, the quinquennial congress of the Society will not be held in Europe or the United States, but in Asia (Tokyo). Also, in 2017 the IMS elected its first President from Asia in the person of Daniel KL Chua, chair of the Department of Music at the University of Hong Kong. The topic for the Tokyo congress was also “geographically” conceived: “Musicology: Theory and Practice, East and West.”

I wish to thank the many extraordinary persons who have contributed to making the dream of this book become reality. First, in order of energy and enthusiasm, is Dorothea Baumann, the living memory of the IMS. My grateful thoughts also go out to Malena Kuss, exuberant Vice President and personal adviser during my five-year term, and principal booster of growth in IMS membership in Latin America. The same supportive role for Asia has been performed by my other Vice President, Ryuichi Higuchi from Japan, also representing the marvelous organizers of Tokyo 2017. The generous Treasurer of the IMS during the last three decades, Madeleine Regli, was also instrumental in covering

the financial needs of this publication and in initiating the new administrative position of Executive Officer, taken over by Lukas Christensen, who immediately began work by editing this volume with full commitment. My extraordinary predecessors, Presidents László Somfai, David Fallows, and Tilman Seebass, created a praiseworthy and sustainable model, which I have made use of in sharing our common visions for the Society's future with the new President, Daniel Chua.

With *The History of the IMS* we offer a new series of essays from members of the IMS, in collaboration with our historical publisher of *Acta Musicologica*, Bärenreiter. We are firmly convinced that this series will clearly demonstrate the multiple musicological competencies of the IMS members from all over the globe.

Dinko Fabris

President of the IMS, July 2012 – March 2017

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The IMS is grateful and indebted to many people who contributed their help and support in preparing this book: Dinko Fabris, President of the IMS, for taking the initiative to write a “short” history of the IMS; the Bureau of the IMS for its support of the project; all the contributors, among them three former Presidents, the President, and the President-elect, for their texts and the copies of documents and images for the archives of the Society, and for additional information often going beyond their own chapter contributions. We also wish to express our thanks to Pedro Memelsdorff, former head of research at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, and the librarians of the Schola Cantorum and Musik-Akademie Basel, Markus Erni and Martina Wohlthat, for information on Paul Sacher's folders from his time as Treasurer of the IMS (1936–48), preserved at their library. We also thank Thomas Drescher, the director of the Schola, for his organizational support. Cordial thanks go out to Madeleine Regli, Treasurer of the IMS since 1983, for her and her predecessors' activities, and for the information on documents of the IMS preserved at the Staatsarchiv of canton Basel-Stadt. These documents proved to be of invaluable importance for understanding the history of the IMS before 1972, since a folder with the original minutes and *IMS Communiqués* in 1977 unfortunately was misplaced to a site still unknown. We wish to acknowledge the kind

services of many colleagues and institutions not named here. Grateful acknowledgment must be made to John Christensen, Dornbirn, for his translations into English of the German texts by Martin Kirnbauer, Jeanna Kniazeva, Elisabeth Theresia Hilscher, Pio Pellizzari, Christian Speck, Thomas Betzwieser, and Klaus Pietschmann, and for his proof-reading of the other English texts. Special thanks go out to the new Executive Officer of the IMS, Lukas Christensen, for his constant editorial help and for the accurate layout of the book.

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Dorothea Baumann
Secretary General