

JURIJ SNOJ AND NEW APPROACHES TO STUDYING GREGORIAN CHANT IN SLOVENIA

FOREWORD

Scholarly investigation of medieval music in Slovenia, and above all the study of Gregorian chant, is inseparably connected with the name Jurij Snoj. The research he carried out on fragments of medieval chant manuscripts for his doctoral dissertation started him on the path, which was largely devoted to this liturgical monophony. His musicological handbook *Gregorijanski koral (Gregorian Chant)* (Ljubljana, 1999), which is known and held in high esteem by both musicians and music historians as well as everyone else with an interest in the history of liturgical music, offered the content and terminological foundation for discussing Gregorian chant in Slovenian, and opened new approaches to the study of chant. He also blazed new trails in musical terminology with his translations of fundamental European theoretical treatises on music: Snoj translated Descartes' *Musicae Compendium* (as *Kompendij o glasbi*, 2001) and Boethius' treatise *De institutione musica* (as *Temelji glasbe*, 2013), offering substantial commentary on each. There has been extensive international interest in his scholarly editions of a Kranj antiphoner from the fifteenth century: *Antiphonarium ecclesiae parochialis urbis Kranj* (Budapest, 2007) and *Two Aquileian Poetic Offices* (Ottawa, 2003). In addition to this, he has interests in many other areas of music, which include a variety of issues in music history and music aesthetics that go beyond chant, such as the topic of musical notation that he explored with his historical overview *Pisna podoba glasbe na Slovenskem (Music in Slovenia through the Aspect of Notation)* (Ljubljana, 2003), coauthored with Gregor Pompe. Another such interest is his ongoing enthusiasm for piano and the piano repertory, to which he dedicated much time during his undergraduate studies in musicology and piano, and in which he is still very active today. He examined the issue of artistic creativity and musical interpretation in a series of interviews with the composer Janez Matičič, *Portret skladatelja Janeza Matičiča (A Portrait of the Composer Janez Matičič)* (Ljubljana, 2012). Still other past achievements could be enumerated here, not to mention those occasional tantalizing hints about ongoing "projects in the works," which we look forward to enjoying in the years ahead.

Jurij Snoj, who works as a researcher and research advisor at the Institute of Musicology, is undoubtedly an important figure in Slovenian musicology in general. He has been the head of the only Slovenian national research program in musicology, Studies

in Slovenia's Musical Past, since 2004. He has been the editor-in-chief of the international scholarly journal *De musica disserenda* since 2005, and he also serves as the area editor responsible for music for the *Novi Slovenski biografski leksikon* (*New Encyclopedia of Slovenian Biography*). He is a scholar, but in his scholarly writing he always holds to one rule: clarity, comprehensibility, and reader-friendliness. During the writing process he always has in mind the reader as the end user, one who deserves as readable a document as possible, no matter how complex the subject matter or how great the amount of information. This felicitous combination of complex scholarly writing with clarity and comprehensibility is certainly fostered by his pedagogical sense as well. Jurij Snoj served many years as professor of early music history and later also musical paleography in the musicology department of the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts, where he was known as an outstanding but demanding teacher. He also selflessly shared (and continues to share) his expertise with everyone he works with as an advisor for undergraduate and graduate theses. One major affirmation of his scholarly and teaching work is represented by the Mantuani Award for lifetime achievement, which was bestowed upon him in 2012 by the Slovenian Musicological Society.

Jurij Snoj, who is responsible for the fact that scholarly study of medieval music in Slovenia has become as robust as it is, is in many senses also to "blame" for this volume. As the editor-in-chief of *De musica disserenda*, he dedicated a special issue to Gregorian chant – a relatively sparsely represented area in Slovenian scholarly periodicals – in 2008. He himself deserves most of the credit for this double issue, which serves as a humble *hommage* in recognition of his sixtieth birthday. The contributors in it responded to the call for submissions because of their years of scholarly cooperation with him, and no less because of the friendly ties they formed with Snoj at international meetings of Cantus Planus, a study group of the International Musicological Society dedicated largely to Gregorian chant. Thus fifteen articles in English, German, and Italian on the general topic of Gregorian chant were produced; the number of good wishes from all sides was naturally much greater.

This double issue of volume nine of *De musica disserenda* is thus special in several ways. It is dedicated to medieval Gregorian chant: it discusses various theoretical and methodological issues connected to studying it, ranging from the liturgical traditions in which it arose and developed to the manuscripts in which it was recorded, and also the variety of practices that took shape when it was performed. In a way, in terms of both methodology and content it is a reflection and cross-section of the diversity of Gregorian chant research in miniature. The article topics often deal with traditions and manuscripts that are connected in one way or another with Slovenia and its neighboring regions, and some also directly touch on work by Snoj (primarily the studies of the antiphoner from Kranj and the edition of the Aquileian Poetic Offices), which also shows his influence in the broader European framework "from the outside." Certainly this is recognition that speaks for itself.

The series of articles in this issue commences with Rudolf Flotzinger's theoretical considerations, a "thought experiment" in which the author analyzes the basic concepts of medieval music and its main sources, musical manuscripts, from an entirely personal

viewpoint. Robert Bernagiewicz's contribution deals with historical and theoretical aspects of Gregorian chant: specifically, the beginnings of Gregorian chant semiology. Gábor Kiss' article examines sources of Ordinary chants in Aquileian and other Italian sources from the viewpoint of the distribution of their melodies; the extensive material was handled with the aid of systematic databases. Eva Veselovská's article also uses a large number of sources, but her article does not address melodic comparisons but rather the interpretation of the basic structure of medieval notation systems in the area of Slovakia within the European context.

Moving away from broad issues in theory and repertory in connection with Gregorian chant, which seek in various ways to establish clarification systems within a large repertory, the next articles turn to specific cases. First there are individual manuscripts, which in the large pool of sources occasionally seem to be lost within the broader historical picture, but which reveal themselves to a careful observer as unique individuals, each with its own characteristics and stories. Hana Breko Kustura writes about an interesting Roman missal that was used by the Dominicans in Dalmatia, presenting new theories about its origin. Ágnes Papp deals with a Ritual that originated in the seventeenth century in southern Hungary and indicates that a medieval Gregorian tradition was still a living tradition in that area even around 1650.

Not only individual manuscripts, but also individual groups of chants or the history of one individual chant within the Gregorian repertory can be very informative. Gabriella Gilányi thus writes about a series of Proper invitatories in mode 2 with Biblical texts for the autumn period, which are connected with the Sanctorale Office cycles in a special way. Anna Vildera's contribution deals with melodies for singing the Genealogy of Christ for Christmas Eve and for the subsequent chants in light of their liturgical context. Debra Lacoste then presents new findings regarding the liturgical placement of the trope *Quem non prevalent* from one of the Klosterneuburg antiphoners.

Medieval Gregorian chant is (and was) more than just music. It is an essential part of the liturgy and liturgical tradition; a given liturgical tradition is the framework in which it is bound, and changes to the liturgy often also affect the music. Robert Klugseder writes of a movement to revive the Benedictine order in southern Germany and Austria, known as the "Melk reform," which also had an impact on the use of chant in the reformed monasteries. Some individual liturgical traditions were also characterized by various special Offices for particular saints or liturgical events. Roman Hankeln shows how medieval saints were characterised as "heroes" of faith and suffering in Offices to saints by analysing selected Office chants. David Hiley's contribution discusses the diversity of medieval chant forms based on examples of text and music in two chant Offices for St. Theodore of Amasea. Zsuzsa Czagány discusses Offices for the feast of Our Lady of the Snows, which was sung in the Middle Ages in Passau, Aquileia, Bohemia, and Hungary, focusing especially on melodic variations in particular chants.

Examination of individual chants' characteristics is only one step away from entirely practical and individual views of Gregorian chant. This double issue concludes with some thoughts on the music itself and the sound of Gregorian chant, and the question of its interpretation. Articles in this area were contributed by two scholars who work with chant as performers and as teachers. Stefan Engels writes about performing Gregorian chant in

various contexts in the past decades. Franz Karl Prassl's article, which touches somewhat on the psychology of music, focuses on our listening and recognition of chant, which is also conditioned by experiencing chant during a particular spiritual time, that is, in the context of the liturgical year. Each time the liturgical year repeats itself and the same chant is sung again within it, the music becomes more deeply rooted and, along with it, the content that it communicates.

It is true: everything that people repeat for a long time, or with which they work long and carefully, becomes deeply rooted within them. Only from such deep roots can a tree grow its highest branches and produce its sweetest fruit. So it is in scholarship as well, as shown by the work of Jurij Snoj – and as will surely still continue to be shown, because on the occasion of the sincere congratulations expressed by this issue of *De musica disserenda*, we are already looking forward to the new green shoots of enthusiasm, ideas, words, and music in his works.

The editor

Da neigt sich die Stunde und rührt mich an
mit klarem, metallenen Schlag:
mir zittern die Sinne. Ich fühle: ich kann –
und ich fasse den plastischen Tag.

Now the hour bows down, it touches me, throbs
metallic, lucid and bold:
my senses are trembling. I feel my own power –
on the malleable day I lay hold.

Nichts war noch vollendet, eh ich es erschaut,
ein jedes Werden stand still.
Meine Blicke sind reif, und wie eine Braut
kommt jedem das Ding, das er will.

Until I perceived it, no thing was complete,
but waited, hushed, unfulfilled.
My vision is ripe, to each glance like a bride
comes softly the thing that was willed.

Nichts ist mir zu klein und ich lieb es trotzdem
und mal es auf Goldgrund und groß,
und halte es hoch, und ich weiß nicht wem
löst es die Seele los ...

There is nothing too small, but my love for it paints
it large on a background of gold,
and I prize it, not knowing whose soul at the sight,
released, may unfold ...

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Das Stunden-Buch*

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Book of Hours*
(adapted from a translation by Babette Deutsch)