

Music Documentation in Libraries, Scholarship, and Practice



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Musical sources in Estonian collections

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Abstract

In my presentation I will give a brief overview of the musical sources found in Estonian collections and talk about our future plans. At present, there does not actually exist a RISM working group in Estonia. Though it was founded in the mid-1990s, it could not succeed in contributing to the project because of a lack of both competence in describing old manuscripts and printed music, and all kinds of resources. Today, the situation has improved, and besides, international interest in getting information about source materials from online databases has increased in recent years. That is why it is very important to renew our working group and join the RISM project as soon as possible. However, some preparations, including special training, need to be made in order to start entering records into the RISM database.

Regarding the musical sources dated before 1850, a quite remarkable collection of printed music scores, including rare editions from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries, and some manuscripts of high interest have survived to the present day. A few examples can be mentioned: the two Gloria fragments by John Dunstaple from c. 1350 to 1450, and Mozart's autograph manuscripts of three solo cadenzas for the B-flat major piano concerto (K. 595). The more copious collections of printed music are stored in the Academic Library of Tallinn University, the National Library of Estonia, and the University of Tartu Library. The manuscripts can be found in the Estonian History Museum, the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum, the Tallinn City Archives, and the University of Tartu Library.

To introduce my topic, I would point out some historical circumstances to form the relevant context in which Estonian music collections have been established.

As you know, Estonia is a small country which was formerly dominated politically and culturally by more powerful neighbours. Located in the Baltic Sea region, the inhabitants of Estonia have lived within the German cultural sphere for hundreds of years. Looking back at earlier times, Baltic Germans formed the social, commercial, political and cultural elite in Estonia. German musical traditions dominated both in the organization of Estonian musical life and in duties and working conditions of the musicians as well as in the musical repertoire played. On the other hand, Baltic Germans maintained close contact with German cultural and spiritual movements and also brought new ideas from Western Europe to Estonia. Young intellectuals from German universities settled in the Baltics as teachers, pastors, and officials. At the same time local youth were sent to study at German universities. Likewise, most of the musicians and instrument makers came to Estonia

usually from Germany – from Gotha, Halle, Hamburg, Lüneburg, Königsberg, Breslau (Wrocław), Danzig (Gdansk), but also from St. Petersburg, Riga, Libau (Liepāja), and elsewhere. Many musicians remained employed in Estonia for many years. Therefore, regarding the historical collections of our libraries and archives, the majority of old books and music scores are in German and were published in Germany.

The more copious collections of printed music are stored in the Academic Library of Tallinn University, the University of Tartu Library, and the National Library of Estonia. The manuscripts can be found mostly in the University of Tartu Library, the National Library of Estonia, the Estonian History Museum, and the Estonian Theatre and Music Museum.

The oldest printed music collection can be found in the **Academic Library of Tallinn University** as it holds the collection of the Tallinn St. Olaf's Church Library, founded in 1552. In 1660 the church library was turned into the first public library in Tallinn – *Bibliotheca Revaliensis*. Its collection covers all subject areas from humanities to natural sciences; most of the books were received as donations. After the library closed in 1803, its holdings were transferred to other libraries in the 19th and 20th centuries. Fortunately, all items (more than 2700) have survived to the present day.

The collection includes music from the 16th and 17th centuries which contain mostly sacred vocal compositions in four or more parts like motets, madrigals, and sacred concertos by the well-known composers of that time, such as Hans Leo Hassler, Hieronymus Praetorius, Jacob Meiland, Orlando di Lasso, Georg Schwaiger, Jacob Regnart, and Melchior Vulpius. Besides this, there are few volumes of “new German songs”, that is *Newe Teutsche Lieder* in four, five and more parts by Orlando di Lasso, Jacob Meiland, Leonhard Lechner, and Alexander Utendal. The compositions are presented in separate partbooks, so that each voice (Cantus, Altus, Tenor and so on) has a separate book, as was the most common method of printing music in the 16th century. The partbooks mostly come from German printing houses like Nuremberg, Munich, Frankfurt am Main, Erfurt, and Hamburg. The holdings of the St. Olaf's Church Library also contain some music books, for example the works by Lucas Lossius: a collection of liturgical music for use by the Lutheran Church, entitled *Psalmodia hoc est Cantica sacra veleris ecclesiae selecta...* (Nuremberg, 1553), and a theoretical work, *Erotemata musicae practicae...* (Nuremberg, 1563).

Since the Estonian Literary Society (Estländische Literarische Gesellschaft) took charge of the St. Olaf's Church Library in 1842, the collecting focus shifted to Baltic literature, that is books concerned with Estonia and its neighbouring territories and books printed in the Baltic countries. During the following decades the library incorporated some more collections into the former St. Olaf's library. As a result, the Academic Library of Tallinn University has created a collection of *Baltica* which is exceptional in the whole world for its completeness and rarity.

Some titles of earlier Estonian music prints can be found in the *Baltica* collection, for example the first book containing musical notation and text in Estonian printed in Reval (Tallinn), the *Hand- und Hauszbuches Für die Pfarherren und Hauszväter Esthnischen Fürstenthumbs, Ander Theil, Darinnen das Gesangbuch...*, published by Heinrich Stahl in 1637. In addition to various hymnbooks and choral books from the 18th and 19th centuries, there are several compositions by Baltic Germans from the 19th century, published in Reval (Tallinn), for example the vocal score of the oratorio “Wir haben sie wieder, die theure Staette” (1840) composed by Johann August Hagen (1786-1877), organist and choral conductor at St. Olaf's Church. Along with the printed vocal score, the autograph score of this work was presented to the library by the author himself.

Next I'll give you a summary of the music collections held in the **University of Tartu Library**. The library was opened in 1802. Professor Karl Morgenstern (1770-1852), born in Magdeburg, a graduate of the University of Halle, was appointed the first director. With great enthusiasm he collected literary and historical rarities, manuscripts, autographs, and works of art and music, proceeding from the principle that the library should possess all the pathbreaking and valuable publications in the spheres of literature, science, and the arts. In his will, he left his 11,536-volume library which was the biggest private library in Tartu of its time, including music manuscripts, printed scores and books, to the university library. A considerable part of the rarities library was received as donations since it was a widespread custom in the 19th century to bestow books and art objects upon cultural establishments. The items were also bought or received in exchange from Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Scandinavia, and Russia. The older pieces were bought in old bookshops, at sales, and from individuals. The provenance of many rarities is rather doubtful; there have been abundant sources for purchases, and the destinies of the books and manuscripts themselves have been surprisingly complicated.

The music collection of the Tartu University Library contains printed scores, books and manuscripts mostly dating from the 19th and 20th centuries (about 4,000 titles, 6,000 copies in total), but there are also some old rarities from the 16th and 17th centuries. Examples are the treatises by the German publisher and cantor Georg Rhau (1488-1548), published in Wittenberg, and the Danish scholar Marcus Meibom (1620/21-1710), published in Amsterdam by Louis Elzevir.

Concerning the area of RISM, a valuable sub-collection of Karl Morgenstern's memorial collection is of interest as it contains rare first European publications of music and music literature from the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, about 40 titles in total. Examples are piano sonatas by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, published in Berlin in 1763, sacred songs by Johann Heinrich Rolle, published in Leipzig in 1775, the vocal score of Georg Benda's melodrama *Medea*, published in Leipzig 1778, the vocal score of Carl Heinrich Graun's passion oratorio *Der Tod Jesu*, published in Breslau (Wrocław) in 1785, and others.

The other remarkable collection, titled *Estica*, comprises original Baltic-German music and music literature – about 300 titles in total. It was collected systematically in the 1920s and 1930s under the leadership of the historian, organist, and librarian Otto Freymuth (1892-1953). The earlier publications are, for example, the collections of sacred songs by Gustav von Mengden (1625-1688), the major general in the Royal Swedish Army and the land marshal of Livonia, *Sonntages Gedancken eines Christen*, and *Der Verfolgete, Errettete und Lobsingende David*, published in Riga by Georg Matthias Nöller in 1686. Most of the Baltic-German music items are considered rarities because only one or very few copies have survived. Examples are a collection of chorale melodies compiled by Georg Michael Telemann (1748-1831), and compositions by Johann Friedrich La Trobe (1769-1845), August Heinrich von Weyrauch (1788-1865), Georg Grindel (1810-1845), Woldemar von Bock (1816-1903), and others.

The music manuscript collection of the Tartu University Library contains 23 fragments of medieval liturgical chant manuscripts from the 13th-16th centuries, and also some autograph manuscripts of compositions by local musicians, for example Friedrich Brenner (1815-1898), music director at Tartu University.

Another plentiful music collection is the one at the **National Library of Estonia**. The library is as old as the Republic of Estonia, established in 1918. As a State Library, it took over the collection of the Estonian provincial administration, mostly containing Russian-language law literature, and started to collect books on other subjects as well, mostly in Estonian and German. The first years were good for purchasing valuable and rare books as there was a lot of ownerless libraries in Estonia then. A copious donation was received in 1939-40 when thousands of Baltic Germans had to leave Estonia because of the *Umsiedlung* and also left behind most of their belongings, including their home libraries, also containing music. Therefore, the music collection of the National Library contains some valuable and rare music items by Baltic German composers and Western music editions from earlier centuries as well. I would like to mention for example rare copies by Christoph August Gabler (1767-1839), printed in Leipzig, Johann Friedrich La Trobe (1769-1845), printed in Dorpat (Tartu), Mitau (Jelgava), and St. Petersburg, Anton Ludwig Ohmann (1775-1833), printed in Mitau (Jelgava), and August Heinrich von Weyrauch (1788-1865), printed in Dorpat (Tartu). The list of the Western European composers printed and published before 1850 comprises more than 30 names, including Ernst Wilhelm Wolf, Otto Carl Erdmann Kospoth, Johann Mattheus König, Emanuel Aloys Förster, Ignace Joseph Pleyel, Johann Rudolf Zumsteeg, Johann Friedrich Reichardt, and Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and others.

There are few old manuscripts in the music collection of the National Library of Estonia. The oldest and most valuable is a copy of the score of George Frideric Handel's first version of the opera *Rinaldo* – "Arie dell' Opera di Rinaldo", dated 1711. The manuscript was written by the composer's copyist and it contains the overture and arias of the opera along with notes of the original cast from the first performance.

Finally I should mention a few unique music manuscripts that can be found in Estonian museums. First is the parchment sheet with two *Gloria* fragments by John Dunstaple, stored at the **Estonian Theatre and Music Museum**. One of the fragments partially duplicates the four-part *Gloria* known from the Aosta manuscript, but the other fragment, *Gloria* canon (recto page of the same sheet) is unique, as this is Dunstaple's only canonic composition – a very early case of canon four-in-one, dated ca. 1390-1450. The other remarkable manuscripts are Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's autographs of three solo cadenzas for the B-flat major piano concerto (K. 595), preserved at the **Estonian History Museum**.

Concluding my talk, I would say a few words about the current situation of our work with the music collections. The process of entering records into the Estonian online catalogue is still going on. The online catalogue, named ESTER (<http://tallinn.ester.ee>), is the shared catalogue of the Consortium of Estonian Libraries Network. Today, ESTER is supplemented by 13 libraries, all of them using the integrated library system Millennium (the software is developed by the US company Innovative Interfaces). Thus, the online catalogue does not yet reflect all the holdings of member libraries. Therefore, today I can't give statistics about our music collections, since online cataloging is in progress. However, much work is done already, so, I hope, we could start contributing to the RISM project soon.