

Editorial: *Musica Sacra*

The reconstruction of medieval and post-medieval sacred musical practices – especially European ones – still represents a true challenge to contemporary musicologists and liturgists. The studies undertaken in this field during recent decades by scholars across the world have opened new perspectives not only in this area of investigation, but also in the research directions of other connected disciplines.

In parallel, the creation of departments specialized in the study of these musics within universities and research institutions in Europe and abroad and their adjustment to the new opportunities that digital technologies offer in the study and dissemination of liturgical chant have facilitated the access to the variety and beauty of musical traditions which nowadays represent not only a part of the European cultural heritage, but also of humanity as a whole.

This is the main reason why *Musicology Today* inaugurates, starting with this issue, a new section entitled *Musica Sacra*, the current issue being dedicated to the liturgical chant of Byzantine Christendom.

The first article (*What is a Troparion?*) is signed by the well-known medieval scholar and refined connoisseur of Orthodox music **Dimitri Conomos** (University of Oxford & University of London) and investigates the evolution and dynamics in the musical-liturgical practice of the Byzantine Church of one of the oldest, simplest and most important hymnographical forms that the Eastern religious poetry produced: the *troparion* (τροπάριον).

The mechanisms of memory and the construction of mental sound archives, the master-apprentice relationship seen as a unique and exemplary model that shaped the dissemination of songs in Byzantine and post-Byzantine music are some of the main ideas which the study of **Achilleus G. Chaldaeakes** (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) – *The Greek-speaking Instruction of the Psaltic Art. Past, Present and Future* focuses on.

The last article is signed by **Michail Stroumpakis** (University Ecclesiastical Academy of Herakleion, Crete) and represents a monographical research on one of the most important musicians of the Athonite monastic tradition of the first half of the nineteenth century (Nikolaos Docheiarites) preoccupied with the phenomenon of interpreting Byzantine and post-Byzantine musical repertoires in the analytical semiography proposed by the Patriarchal School in Constantinople since 1814.

I am convinced that along with the two reviews at the end of this issue, the aforementioned studies will enrich and heighten the perception of the reader – more or less knowledgeable – on a complex sound history inscribed in the most enduring musical semiography in the world, a history that belonged to a refined Byzantium, still subtly disputed in the academic world.

Nicolae Gheorghiță

English translation by Simina Neagu