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The impact of Lutheran migration on music in Australia

The project examines the impact of Lutheran migration on music in Australia, from 1836 to the present day. It looks at the import of German vocal traditions, both secular and sacred, through historic documents, study of contemporary *Liedertafel* performances and church services and interrogation of the influence of Lutheran missions on indigenous music. The role of Lutheran institutions in shaping choral music in Australia will be examined by looking at a selection of commissioned pieces. The works of three leading Australian composers with significant Lutheran connections, Andrew Schultz (b. 1960), Graeme Koehne (b. 1956) and Ron Nagorcka (b. 1948), will be analysed in detail.

Research questions

- What were/are the modes of migration of German Lutherans to Australia, from 1836 to the present day?
- How was a German Lutheran musical tradition transported to Australia in the 19th century? How has it changed, and how have traditions been retained into the 21st century? How has the German *Liedertafel* changed through its immersion into an English-speaking community?
- How did two World Wars affect imported German musical traditions?
- How have Lutheran institutions such as St Peter's College, Brisbane, influenced musical practice?
- What has been the changing reception of 'The Song of Australia'?
- How did the movement of Lutheran missionaries into Aboriginal territory affect the cultures and languages of migrants and of the indigenous peoples they sought to convert? Specifically, what has been the impact of a white immigrant community on the musical language and performance of a black community in Hermannsburg, Northern Territory?
- What role has gender played in the creation and retention of Lutheran musical traditions in Australia? (Comparison will be made of the all-male white Australian *Liedertafel* and the all-female Aboriginal Ntaria women's choir).
- What has been the impact of a Lutheran background on the music of Andrew Schultz, Graeme Koehne and Ron Nagorcka?
- In his cantata *Journey to Horseshoe Bend*, how has Andrew Schultz worked closely with Aboriginal Aranda elders to create a complex interaction between indigenous music and language, Lutheran chorales

and his personal musical style? How does this work engage with the landscape of the Northern Territory in its orchestration and performance?

- What is the relationship between a Lutheran past and contemporary Australian musical identity?

Aims and Objectives

The project aims to examine the effect of the movement of German Lutherans on the formation of musical styles, genres and cultural practices in Australia, embracing a period from the first settlement in 1836 to the present day. The first Germans settled on Kangaroo Island, with subsequent migrations to Adelaide and to Bethany and surrounding parts of the Barossa Valley. Despite two World Wars in which German migrants were interned, these areas still have strong German Lutheran roots and traditions. An initial consideration of modes of migration, in particular to South Australia, will establish a context for an examination of the impact of this migration on musical practices, genres and styles.

There are a number of key areas that will be explored:

1. The earliest Lutheran migrants swiftly established German vocal traditions within their new environments. Specifically the all-male, four-part *Liedertafel* became an important part of South Australian musical culture, from the establishment in 1858 of the oldest surviving choir in Australia, the Adelaide Liedertafel, to its development in the Barossa Valley through the 20th century to today, where choirs still meet and perform, in small, local gatherings and in national *Sängerfest*.
2. The composer Carl Linger (1810-62), founder of the Adelaide Liedertafel, wrote the music for 'The Song of Australia', with words by an English woman, Caroline Carleton (1820-74). The changing role and reception of this song will be examined, from initial function as national song to a brass band work played at masonic gatherings.
3. Lutheran churches in South Australia have retained traditions and musical practices dating back to 17th and 18th century Germany which will be explored through documents, recordings and experience of current-day worship.
4. Lutheran institutions have played an important role in Australian musical culture. St Peter's College, Brisbane, for example, has an outstanding choir, the 'chorale', that has commissioned a large number of new choral works. The impact of these institutions on choral music in Australia will be examined by looking at works by contemporary composers Matthew Orlovich, Paul Stanhope, Sarah Hopkins, Iain Grandage, Stephen Leek and Vincent Plush. The way in which these

works explore 'identity' will be considered alongside the context for their creation.

5. The Lutheran migration north from Bethany to central Australia established a mission in Hermannsburg near Alice Springs. The musical impact on the indigenous community was significant, with the community taught Bach chorales translated into their own Aranda language. Today the members of the Ntaria ladies choir perform no pre-Lutheran music, but sing chorales in a highly emotive manner, importing fluid aboriginal vocal styles into the metrical structures of the chorale.
6. Three major Australian composers, whose works will be studied, have different but important links with the Lutheran migration. The son of a Lutheran minister, Andrew Schultz (b. 1960) has strong connections with a German musical tradition, making use of chorales and contrafactum techniques within his compositions. The most important work for analysis within this project, his cantata *Journey to Horseshoe Bend* (2003), is a unique blend of different Australian cultures, brings together three languages, the Ntaria chorales and a contemporary Australian orchestral sound. Adelaide composer Graeme Koehne (b. 1956) has also worked with German musical genres and structures, for example in his organ piece *To His Servant Bach, God Grants a Final Glimpse: The Morning Star*, and Ron Nagorcka (b. 1948), brought up in a small Lutheran town in Victoria, combines the sounds of organ and didgeridu, natural forest sounds and the just intonation of the 18th century.

Research context

This is an extremely rich topic for exploration, yet also sufficiently confined to be achievable in the time span indicated. Although scholars have investigated the history of the German Lutheran emigration to Australia, there has been no significant work to date on its impact on Australian music, and the project will therefore break new ground both in its coverage of the subject and in the application of the AHRC programme to a musical repertory. A current Melbourne University project includes a study of the Melbourne *Liedertafel* as part of a database recording performances in Victoria, 1876-1901, but does not refer to the South Australian Lutheran tradition and does not consider the impact of German music on 20th century Australian music. Andrew Schultz and Graeme Koehne are two of Australia's most exciting composers, yet there currently exist very few examples of scholarly writing on their music. This project will thus extend the understanding of the Lutheran music tradition in Australia as well as establishing a basis for study of a number of the country's composers.

The project will build on two areas of completed work - my monograph on the life and music of English composer John Ireland, which included a substantial chapter on church music, and a recently completed book, *The Soundscapes*

of *Australia: Music, Place and Spirituality*, an edited 16-chapter volume that considers a range of musical responses to the Australian landscape. A period of 8 months from 1 December 2005 to 31 July 2006 will be spent as research leave working on a monograph on the Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe, for publication in 2007, and an article on music related to the Illawarra region of New South Wales, consolidating my recent work on Australian music.

Research methods

The project uses documents and other primary sources within an interdisciplinary study that is both historical and interpretative. The questions will be answered by consulting a range of sources, viewing and listening to live performances, interviewing composers and analysing musical scores. There exists a rich documentation of Lutheran worship and music-making in South Australia in the 19th and early 20th centuries, through concert programmes, posters, archive recordings, hymnbooks, songbooks, historic photographs and newspapers, specifically the *South Australian* and *Die Deutsche Post* (from 1847). Contemporary Lutheran worship and *Liedertafel* and band performances will be viewed and in some circumstances recorded, specifically in locations in Adelaide and the Barossa Valley as outlined under 'Management' below. Composers will be interviewed in person (Andrew Schultz and Ron Nagorcka have already been interviewed as part of a different project).

Management

The first six months will be spent exploring the context for the project and analysing musical scores. An Open University colleague, Professor Donald Burrows, is an international authority on the music of Handel and will assist with questions relating to 18th century Lutheran musical practice.

1. September to November: contextual work;
2. December to mid-March: close analysis of musical scores and recordings;

Late-March to mid-April: research trip to Australia as detailed under Section 7. The purpose of this trip is to (a) interview composers with Lutheran connections, (b) pursue archival research and (c) experience performances and services during the Easter period. The trip has to take place during Easter 2007 in order to tie in with German festivals in the

The principle outcome of this project will be academic articles and conference papers as follows:

1. 'The impact of Lutheran migration on music in Australia'. Broad-ranging article, 10,000 words, aimed at *Musicology Australia*. An academic audience.
2. Lutheran influences in the music of Andrew Schultz'. An academic audience.

3. Conference papers for the British Australian Studies Association, the Gender in the Humanities Research Group at the Open University, the Royal Musicological Association and the Menzies Centre for Australian Studies seminar series. The audience will be primarily academics from disciplines other than music, but with an interest in Australian Studies.
4. Open University online teaching material for the MA in Music, module A871, which has a section on Australian music.