

Institution: City University London
Unit of Assessment: 35 Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts
Title of case study: Traditions of Eastern Orthodox Sacred Music – Cappella Romana
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Singing has been integral to the practice of Eastern Orthodox Christianity since antiquity. Its vast medieval repertoires of Byzantine and Slavic plainchant gradually developed into native musical traditions spread across a geographic arc from Southern Italy to Alaska. Thanks to emigration and missionary work, forms of Orthodox singing are now also cultivated in diasporic and missionary communities throughout the world. Despite the historical importance of Byzantine chant as a sibling to Gregorian chant, the richness of the historical record and the vibrancy of contemporary Eastern Christian musical practice, these musical traditions remain largely unstudied and poorly known in the geographic and cultural West, in part due to transmission in non-Western languages and forms of musical notation. Dr Alexander Lingas' research undertaken at City University London has nourished the global dissemination, understanding and enjoyment of these music traditions. Building on scholarship that embraces music philology, performance practice and liturgiology, Lingas' research has had a broad international societal impact, achieved largely through his role as Artistic Director of Cappella Romana, an American-based vocal ensemble with an international reputation for promoting Eastern Orthodox music. Through encounters with music that was often previously unknown or inaccessible, listeners from a variety of cultural and religious backgrounds have discovered the musical traditions of Eastern Christianity to be as historically significant, artistically rich and spiritually profound as its better-known masterpieces of iconography and architecture. This has in turn helped to broaden the repertoires of early and contemporary vocal music in Western Europe and America to include the musical inheritance of Byzantium and its Slavic commonwealth. Through his research Lingas has also supported the creation of new forms of artistic expression and reconstructed older forms of Eastern Orthodox sacred music; influenced attitudes and perceptions of musicians, scholars, viewers, readers and listeners on an international basis; enriched cultural lives and aesthetic experiences in a range of performance and multimedia contexts; enhanced knowledge and understanding among different beneficiaries through the close integration of performance and educational work; and contributed significantly to the preservation, renewal, interpretation and dissemination of Eastern Orthodox Christian musical heritage.</p> <p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Since his appointment at City in 2006 (now a Senior Lecturer), Lingas has covered the full chronological range of Byzantine Christianity musical inheritance through publications, invited lectures and conference papers in the fields of (ethno)musicology, Byzantine studies and liturgy. PhD candidate Spyridon Antonopoulos (enrolled as a student of Lingas in September 2009) has studied the 15th century Byzantine composer and theorist Manuel Chrysaphes while remaining active as a professional singer and teacher of Greek music. The impact of his research was recognised by an award of £15,561 from the AHRC's Cultural Engagement Fund in 2013. Lingas and Antonopoulos have extended their research through collaboration with colleagues based elsewhere. Dr Ioannis Arvanitis of Athens and John Boyer of Boston, MA, both members of Cappella Romana, presented scholarship on Byzantine notation and performance practice at City events in 2009 and 2013. Work on the sonic reconstruction of medieval worship in Hagia Sophia involving Cappella Romana and Stanford University Professors Jonathan Abel (Computer Auralisation) and Bissera Pentcheva (Art History) occurred in California in 2011 and 2013. The main categories of research findings underpinning the impact are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The texts and music of medieval services from the traditions of Constantinople and Jerusalem have been reconstructed from primary sources scattered across a broad geographic and chronological range.</i> Further study of their original interpretive contexts has informed impact achieved through selective modern performance. It also has served the pastoral goal of Eastern Orthodox liturgical renewal by informing the restorations in worship of the atrophied forms of responsorial and antiphonal psalmody of the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom. • <i>The elucidation of relationships between written and oral tradition in Orthodox Christian (especially Byzantine) singing and the transnational reception of particular performance practices.</i> This research supports both the practical revival of pre-modern Orthodox chant and the creation

of materials for pastoral implementation in received singing traditions (e.g., adaptation of received forms from Byzantine chant to English text and/or transcriptions into Western staff notation).

- *The illumination of historical points of musical contact between Eastern and Western Christianity, together with study of the confessional and cultural politics shaping their popular and scholarly understandings.* Particular musical results of such contacts (e.g., Greek Orthodox forms of polyphonic singing) have been edited, performed and recorded. Contextual study in this area has shaped directly the programming and performance practice decisions of Cappella Romana (e.g., for the CDs *The Fall of Constantinople*; and *Live in Greece: From Constantinople to California*).

3. References to the research

1. Lingas A. (2011). Late Byzantine Cathedral Liturgy and the *Service of the Furnace*. In S. Gerstel & R. Nelson (Eds.), *Approaching the Holy Mountain: Art and Liturgy at St Catherine's Monastery in the Sinai* (pp. 179-230). Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols.
2. Cappella Romana. (2012). *Voices of Byzantium – Medieval Byzantine Chant from Mt Sinai* [CD]. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
3. Lingas A. (2006). Medieval Byzantine Chant and the Sound of Orthodoxy. In A. Louth & A. Casiday (Eds.), *Byzantine Orthodoxies, Papers from the 36th Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies* (pp. 131-50). Aldershot: Ashgate.
4. Cappella Romana. (2006). *The Fall of Constantinople: Byzantine and Latin Music of the Fifteenth Century* [CD]. Portland, Oregon: Cappella Romana.
5. Arvanitis I. & Lingas A. (2007). *Byzantium in Rome: Medieval Byzantine Chant from Grottaferrata* [CD]. Portland, Oregon: Cappella Romana.
6. Lingas A. (2008). Music. In E. Jeffreys, R. Cormack & J. Haldon (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Studies* (pp.915-935). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Evidence of Quality: Favourable published reviews by authoritative scholars and/or practitioners provide evidence in addition to the review processes prior to publication. Vasileios Marinis (now of Yale University) wrote of item 3 in *The Medieval Review* (2007) that '*Alexander Lingas is one of the most preeminent musicologists of Medieval Byzantine chant – and for good reasons. His essay is a pleasure to read, informative, and clearly set forth.*' Writing for the same journal (2009/10), Cécile Morrison (CNRS, Paris and Dumbarton Oaks) noted that among chapters '*presenting their respective complex and wide subject in as clear a form as possible*' this was '*a task achieved excellently for instance by A. Lingas for Byzantine music.*' Charles Brewer (Florida State University) hailed item 5 in *American Record Review* in 2008 as '*the perfect bridge. ...the performances on this release are among the best I've heard. The annotations are extensive and informative.... This offers a unique sonic view into the cross-cultural currents between East and West in the Middle Ages*', before selecting it in a later issue as one of his two contributions to the magazine's Critics' Choice 2008. A review of item 4 by Fabrice Fitch (Royal Northern College of Music) in *Gramophone* (April 2009) was headed '*A captivating recital as Greek Orthodox chant confronts Western polyphony*' and was highlighted within the issue as a notable recording (G* designation) with a sidebar interview with Lingas by its editor. The most recent items (1–2) are companion pieces arising from the same research. The programme of music on item 2 was commissioned for live performance in 2006 by the Getty Center to accompany its exhibition '*Holy Image, Hallowed Ground: Icons from Sinai*' ('*sung with strength and commitment*', *Los Angeles Times*, 12/12/06), performed first at the Smithsonian Institution ('*robust and intriguing music*', *Washington Post*, 2/12/06) and later recorded for release by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Item 1 was written at the request of co-curators of the Getty Sinai exhibition (Sharon Gerstel of UCLA and Robert Nelson of Yale) to be included in a volume of scholarly studies by eminent contributors that Henry Maguire (John Hopkins University) writing in *Speculum* 88.1 (2013) called '*a richly satisfying collection of essays*'.

4. Details of the impact

Lingas founded Cappella Romana (CR) in 1991. Today he continues to guide CR as its Artistic Director, the ensemble having since grown into a non-profit corporation based in the state of Oregon, USA with a current annual budget of around \$300,000 and total expenditure over the REF period of approximately \$1.4 million. CR generated revenue from earned income (tickets, hiring fees, commercial recordings and licensing), individual donations (232 households in the 2012/13 financial year) and grants from governmental agencies and private foundations.

Lingas' research has been fundamental to CR's operation throughout the period, shaping its concert programming of ancient and modern repertoire, informing its approaches to vocal

performance practice and guiding its educational and outreach efforts to cultivate Orthodox musical traditions in both public and ecclesiastical settings. CR has thereby served members of ethnic communities (Greeks, Russians, etc., whether in their homelands or in diaspora) and converts to Orthodoxy wishing to preserve and transmit their musical heritage. At the same time it has promoted widely experiences and understanding of Orthodox musical traditions amongst people from other cultural and spiritual backgrounds. These have included individuals drawn to the history, aesthetics and spiritual qualities of Eastern Orthodox art and liturgy, as well as devotees of classical and world genres of vocal ensemble music. Recognising this, Metropolitan Gerasimos, Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of San Francisco, wrote in a 2011 letter that the ensemble '*is more than just a choral group; they are ambassadors of our Holy Orthodox faith through music*'. Glen W. Bowersock offered another perspective in *The New York Review of Books*, noting that '*The success of the contemporary Cappella Romana chamber ensemble, ably directed by Alexander Lingas of London, introduces modern listeners to the sounds that filled the churches of Byzantium no less than the light of their lamps*' (25/9/08). Specific impactful activity since 2008 includes:

1. *Presenting an Annual Subscription Concert Series in Portland, OR and Seattle, WA, USA.* Seasons consist of four or more concerts performed at least once in each city with total attendance during the impact period of 16,902. The series gives the ensemble a laboratory to expand its repertory before a loyal 'home' audience and therefore often includes world or American premieres. A lecture precedes nearly every concert and approximately 25% of events feature guest artists. Audience diversity is reflected in the range of media outlets praising the performances. Describing a concert of Byzantine Christmas chant, Rod Parke of *The Seattle Gay News* (1/15/10) wrote '*the passionate intensity with which they sang, combined with the exotic nature of this unfamiliar music, had at times an almost erotic feel. To ears that gradually opened to the unaccustomed harmonies and pitches, it was anything but dull.*' In *The Oregonian* (the main Portland newspaper), James McQuillen noted that during a 2013 performance of Rachmaninoff's *Divine Liturgy* '*the sensual appeal was inescapable, and it carried through the evening with crystal clarity, gentle cadences and phrases as natural as breath*' (12/1/13).
2. *Touring.* CR presented over 50 non-series concerts at locations including Oxford (2009), London (2009 and 2013), Regensburg (2013), Boston (2012), Yale University (2009 and 2011), New York (2009 and 2012), San Francisco (2011), Los Angeles (2012), Vancouver, BC (2009) and Stanford University (2009 and two concerts in 2013) and in Greece (two concerts each in 2011 and 2013). Listeners have often found CR performances of previously unheard early Orthodox music revelatory. Upon hearing medieval Constantinopolitan chant sung at Stanford in the acoustics of a virtual Hagia Sophia in 2013, Jason Victor Serinus of the *San Francisco Classical Voice* wrote '*It is impossible to describe the experience objectively.... Throwing all caution to the winds, as it were, the "performance" was the closest to lift-off I have experienced short of chemically enhanced listening sessions or the final hours of a seven-days meditation intensive*' (1/2/13).
3. *Broadcasting.* Experience and understanding of Orthodox music was mediated to wider audiences through broadcasts on national, local and internet media of live and recorded CR performances, as well as interviews with Lingas and/or other CR colleagues. These included: BBC Radio 4 (*Byzantium Unearthed*, a documentary by Bettany Hughes, 2008 and *Something Understood*, 2013), BBC Radio 3 (*The Choir*, 2012), Bavarian Radio (2013) and Greek National Radio and Television (2011 and 2013) in Europe; in the USA on National Public Radio's *Weekend Edition Sunday* (segment on Orthodox Easter in 2012, carried on nearly 600 stations), American Public Media's *Performance Today* (2008, 2009, 2010 with 1.3 million listeners on 260 stations), Indiana Public Media's *Harmonia* (2009, 2011 and twice in 2012 on over 150 stations) and repeatedly on local stations of the Pacific Northwest. Interviews have appeared on internet radio services sponsored by the national churches of American Orthodox jurisdictions (the Orthodox Christian Network and Ancient Faith Radio), which also feature CR on music playlists.
4. *Recording.* During the REF impact period CR was featured on 19 CD titles of early and modern vocal music (most of it previously unrecorded) with total sales of over 19,000 hard copies (most including substantial booklets featuring texts, translations and notes), plus downloads and streaming via iTunes, Amazon, Spotify, etc. bringing US\$28,890 in revenue for the digital delivery of 4,094 complete albums and 77,202 individual tracks. Two titles were marketed under the brand of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, while a third was a compilation commissioned for the Royal Academy of Arts (RAA) exhibition 'Byzantium 325–1453' (25/10/2008 to 22/3/2009). The RAA

also licensed tracks for the audio guide to its exhibition, the attendance for which was 342,726. Praise by professional reviewers for CR's discs of unfamiliar pre-modern music has been noted above, but similar themes appear also in published reviews of contemporary works, e.g., '*Richard Toensing...has written a spellbinding Christmas choral concerto in traditional Orthodox style....stunningly realized by Cappella Romana*', Kyle MacMillan, *Denver Post* (7/12/2008); and '*The liturgical music of Greek-America composers is barely known outside the USA...the addition of this English-texted Liturgy...by Peter Michaelides...is very welcome indeed. ...Cappella Romana... produce what I imagine to be an ideal performance of Michaelides's music*', Ivan Moody, *Gramophone* (October 2010). Fans of CR recordings have communicated their enthusiasm through both traditional and social media. For example in 2008 science fiction author Neal Stephenson wrote in a playlist for *The New York Times* (17/9/2008) that '*My favorite style of chant is Byzantine, which I learned about by attending concerts by...Cappella Romana. The single most powerful piece of music I've heard in recent years is the "Lament for the Fall of Constantinople." Close your eyes and you can almost see the Blachernae Walls...*'; while a Communion chant from CR's 2008 recording *The Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom...* uploaded by a fan to YouTube in 2010 had been viewed over 60,000 times by 31st July 2013.

5. *Outreach: Education and Pastoral Work.* In addition to pre-concert talks, CR members regularly offer lectures and workshops on Orthodox liturgical music open to the general public. The range of organisations for which Lingas himself has presented such events includes the Royal Academy of Arts (2008), Stanford University (2009 and 2013), the Canterbury Gregorian Music Society (2010), the Yale Institute of Sacred Music (2011), the Axion Estin Foundation of New York (2008, 2010 and 2012), the Border Marches Early Music Forum (2012) and the Hellenic Centre of London (2013, excerpts later broadcast on Hellenic TV). A participant describing the 2010 Canterbury workshop later wrote: '*Alexander showed that both Gregorian Chant and Eastern Chant were historic musical forms with a living tradition today. ...Our great triumph was actually reading and singing the whole Orthodox Saturday Evening Vespers from start to finish.*'

CR also works directly with Orthodox churches to serve their pastoral needs. It does so in part by offering its skills and repertoires in worship, singing for services in such locations as London (2009), San Francisco (2011), St Vladimir's Seminary (Crestwood, NY), Los Angeles (2012) and Athens (2013). CR's flagship pastoral project is a cooperative venture with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain to set its English liturgical texts to traditional Byzantine chant. This has been supported financially by the A.G. Leventis Foundation, the National Forum of Greek Orthodox Church Musicians (USA), the Virginia H. Farah Foundation and the [Anglican-Orthodox] Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. Its first milestone was the release of the 2008 *Divine Liturgy* mentioned above, a two-disc recording accompanied by a 40-page booklet with an introduction by Greek Orthodox Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain, in which he writes '*I commend it...with the confidence that it will increase the understanding and appreciation of both the spirituality of Orthodox worship and the heights of musical expression to which its chanting aspires.*' Its musical settings were subsequently released as free PDFs in both Byzantine neumes and Western staff notation, facilitating transmission of the musical patrimony of Byzantium across notational, linguistic, ethnic and religious boundaries through their use in liturgical and educational contexts such as those listed above. In recognition of his scholarly and pastoral work, Lingas received the highest musical award of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America in 2010.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. Letter to Dr Lingas from His All-Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, New Rome
2. Letter of His Eminence, Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco to the patrons of Cappella Romana
3. Address of the Alternate Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, Culture and Sports of the Hellenic Republic, Mr Kostas Tzavaras on the occasion of CR's 2013 tour of Greece
4. Portfolio of materials related to the CR chant project undertaken in cooperation with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain
5. List of CR performances (including concert ticket sales), outreach events and broadcasts
6. Portfolio of print/internet coverage of CR concerts and recordings
7. Sales figures of CR recordings and statistics on donations and grants to CR
8. Financial reports of Cappella Romana.

All items available on request.