

General Examination in Historical Musicology

August 2007

<i>(Wednesday, 8/22, 9-11 a.m.)</i>	Topic 1: Johannes Ockeghem
<i>(Wednesday, 8/22, noon-2 p.m.)</i>	Topic 2: Bach's Passions
<i>(Wednesday, 8/22, 3-5 p.m.)</i>	Topic 3: Haydn's early symphonies
<i>(Friday, 8/24, 9-11 a.m.)</i>	Topic 4: Art Music in 1920s New York and Paris
<i>(Friday, 8/24, noon-2 p.m.)</i>	Topic 5: The notation of polyphonic music through the "Ars subtilior"
<i>(Friday, 8/24, 3-5 p.m.)</i>	Topic 6: Russian Bardic Song, USSR 1960-Pennsylvania 2007
<i>(Thursday, 8/30, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)</i>	Analysis (Vocal)
<i>(Friday, 8/31, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)</i>	Analysis (Instrumental)

Instructions for long essays and short answers:

For essays, it is best to organize your answers around a thesis statement, primary question, or core idea. Please be specific, mentioning pieces of music, dates, names, and historical movements (as applicable). Try to think as well about the implications of the points you raise and their significance within a larger context. Since it is impossible to cover every aspect of these topics in the limited time, try to focus on what you believe to be the most important features and to write a clear, well-organized essay. It is often useful to take a few minutes before writing to jot down some main points. Good luck!

For short answers, please write the main portion of your answer in complete sentences, but you may add keywords and sketch brief outlines if you run out of time.

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Wednesday, August 22, 9-11 a.m.

Topic 1: Johannes Ockeghem

*Essays: Please choose **one** (1) of the three essay topics below (suggestion: 1 hour and 15 minutes).*

1. Discuss characterizations of Ockeghem's music in theoretical and historical writings from the 16th through the late 19th century. What impact have these characterizations had on Ockeghem research since the 1920s?
2. Discuss the salient features of Ockeghem's *Missa Caput* and how these relate to its historical and compositional contexts.
3. "Of all his works, it is Ockeghem's chansons that reveal the most about his aesthetic and compositional priorities." How might one make the case for such an assertion?

*Shorter answers: Please choose **three** (3) of the terms below (suggestion: 45 minutes).*

1. aesthetics of concealment
2. Johannes Tinctoris
3. *Ut heremita solus*
4. Dijon Chansonnier
5. *Missa Mi mi*
6. Chigi Codex
7. *S'elle m'amera/Petite camusette*
8. Jean Gerson
9. mensuration canon
10. *Prenez sur moy*

Wednesday, August 22, noon-2 p.m.

Topic 2: Bach's Passions

Please answer the following essay question (2 hours).

What do Bach's St. John and St. Matthew Passions have in common and what are the major differences in libretto design and musical conception? Please take into consideration the history of the genre and the context in which both work originated.

Wednesday, August 22, 3-5 p.m.

Topic 3: Haydn's early symphonies (2 hours total)

Write two essays, choosing one topic from each group below (1 hour each).

A.

1. Please describe the audience for Haydn's symphonies, and the occasions on which symphonies were performed.
2. Please choose two early Haydn symphonies and describe them, noting their differences and the significance these differences may have for the development of Haydn's style.

B.

1. Please describe the stylistic context of Haydn's early symphonies: what other symphonies were there, and what other ensemble instrumental music was there?
2. Haydn's special circumstances permitted him a close observation of the orchestra; please describe Haydn's orchestration and use of the orchestra in his early symphonies.

Friday, August 24, 9-11 a.m.

Topic 4: Art Music in 1920s New York and Paris

*Essays: Please choose **one** (1) of the three essay topics below (suggestion: 1 hour and 15 minutes).*

1. Many modernist composers of the 1920s enjoyed vital transatlantic exchanges. Choose at least four figures (half European and half American), and chronicle their connection with ideas and artists from the other side of the ocean. Then consider one work from this period by each, arguing for specific ways in which it was (or was not) affected by these interchanges.
2. During their post-war fling, many European and American composers challenged traditional genres and notions of cultural hierarchy. Choose a cluster (perhaps 4-6) of key figures and works, charting specific ways in which they enacted these challenges. Explore scholars and critics who also grappled with these issues.
3. Explore the complex blend of internationalism and nationalism that defined the post-war artistic scene. Consider these issues in relation to broad cultural and political trends. Discuss specific composers and pieces, both European and American.

*Shorter answers: Please choose **three** (3) of the terms below (suggestion: 45 minutes).*

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| 1. Dada | 5. Hyperprism |
| 2. W. C. Handy | 6. player piano |
| 3. New Music Society | 7. Serge Koussevitsky |
| 4. Stravinsky's Octet | 8. Vitebsk |

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Friday, August 24, noon-2 p.m.

Topic 5: The notation of polyphonic music through the "Ars subtilior"

*Essays: Please choose **one** (1) of the three essay topics below (suggestion: 1 hour and 15 minutes).*

1. What has the idea of an "ars subtilior" contributed to our understanding of 14th-century polyphony and its notation? What has it potentially obscured?
2. Describe the distinctive features of 14th-century French and Italian notation as reflected in Vitry's *Ars nova* and the writings of Marchetto da Padova.
3. What were the major developments in notation during the 13th century? Discuss the principal texts in which these changes were formulated.

*Shorter answers: Please choose **three** (3) of the terms below (suggestion: 45 minutes).*

1. *Quatuor principalia*
2. *Garrit gallus*
3. *copula*
4. Johannes de Muris
5. *fractio modi*
6. *brevis altera*
7. Johannes Wolf
8. *cum proprietate et sine perfectione*

Friday, August 24, 3-5 p.m.

Topic 6: Russian Bardic Song, USSR 1960-Pennsylvania 2007

*Essays: Please choose **one** (1) of the two essay topics below (suggestion: 1 hour and 15 minutes).*

1. Discuss the musical style of Bulat Okudzhava and this performer's position and impact as a 20th century "bard" in the USSR and Russia. In what ways does Okudzhava's legacy endure among Russian immigrants in the US?
2. Izaly Zemtsovsky, speaking of Russian lyrics songs, observed "Lyric songs, more than other genres, have a one-to-one linkage between text and melody, and variants of a single song are recognizable; however, when given texts pass from one social stratum to another or from one genre to another, they move beyond melodic variants to new versions or entirely different tunes." Using at least three musical examples (and their variants/versions), illustrate characteristic relationships between text and melody in lyrical ("bardic") songs and consider the issues of transformation raised by Zemtsovsky. Does his statement about change hold also for many songs carried and performed overseas in the US? What might constitute a "new version" or "different tune" as opposed to variant?

*Shorter answers: Please choose **three** (3) of the terms below (suggestion: 45 minutes).*

1. protiazhaia pesnia
2. narodnost'
3. popevki
4. Zhanna Bichevskaya
5. chastushki
6. versification in "bardic songs"
7. Kontinent
8. avtorskie

Thursday, August 30, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Analysis

(Vocal Composition)

Comment analytically on the attached work by William Byrd, the Agnus Dei from his Mass for Four Voices. Your discussion should include brief reference to such broad aspects as style, genre, and historical context, but should focus primarily on providing an analysis of the work as a whole and its structure. No reference to secondary literature is expected for this part of the exam, nor is use of library materials. A recording of the work is on reserve. You may of course use a piano in the process of studying the score.

Friday, August 31, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Analysis

(Instrumental Composition)

Comment analytically on W.A. Mozart Violin Sonata, K.526 in A major, Andante (score attached). Your discussion may include references to aspects of style, genre, and historical context but should focus primarily on providing an analysis of the work. You should take into account all relevant aspects of the work (rhythm, melody, texture, harmony, form) and their interaction. You are encouraged to make use of annotated musical examples wherever they help clarify your argument or substantiate your observations. No reference to secondary literature and no use of library materials is expected for this part of the exam. There are several recordings of the work on reserve. You may also use a piano in the process of studying the score.