

**Summary**  
**Music and the printing revolution.**  
**Transformations in the musical culture**  
**of the sixteenth century**

The book provides a comprehensive view of the influence of printing on musical culture in the sixteenth century. In the introduction ('Prologue. From parchment to paper') the author points to the developments which prepared the ground for Gutenberg's invention: the spread of the use of paper in Europe, and the dynamic development of writing dating from the fourteenth century. The first chapter ('The origin and development of music printing') describes, among other things, the technical problems which the first printers had to overcome and the close dependence of the early prints on manuscript practice, as well as the key significance of the invention of single-impression printing. The second chapter ('Types and volume of print production') is devoted to the typology of sixteenth-century music editions and the quantitative aspects of publishing: edition sizes and the volumes of print production. During 1501–1600 at least 6 200 prints with polyphonic music were published, which, given that editions would consist of about 500 copies, means 3 100 000 copies. Print production, which started to grow from about 1540, was closely dependent on external economic and social conditions. That period saw no less than 10 000 different publications devoted to music, which included forms unknown in fifteenth-century manuscript practice (e.g., cantionals, loose prints, occasional prints). The price of prints, initially high, fell significantly with the arrival of single-impression printing; even so, alongside cheap editions we also find luxury choir-books (chapter 3: 'From the printing-house to the user'). The most important item in printing production costs was paper (around half of the costs); profit margins, which reached over 100%, were also significant. Thanks to reasonably efficient distribution, for which fairs and the network of contacts between booksellers were of vital significance, inexpensive editions had a chance of reaching a large circle of users, among whom of great importance were the middle classes and individual customers. This encouraged the development of music collecting on a scale not encountered previously.

In the fourth chapter the author presents the emergence of the music market which took place in the sixteenth century ('Printing and the emer-

gence of the music market'). He points to the close relationship between the external form of publications and technological and marketing considerations. It manifested itself in such developments as the standardisation and simplification of music notation, as well as the widespread use of partbooks. Inexpensive music editions came onto the market; they made economical use of paper, with densely printed pages and volume size limited to 12–20 folios (per each partbook) in *quarto* or *octavo* format. In the case of large editorial projects the printed material was divided into many volumes – creating such series made more sense from the marketing point of view. In the early music prints the title page had a purely identifying function (e.g. Petrucci), but already by the 1530s the amount of information contained in them was increasing. They then became advertising pages, boasting of the uniqueness and novelty of the printed music, and the reputation of the composers. An analysis of the repertoire appearing in print shows that the most popular music was that intended for a wide circle of recipients, with a local emphasis, where compositions by well-known authors were placed next to new works. Printers and publishers emphasised the virtues of their publications on the title pages, sometimes quoting information which was not true; this happened because they had to work in a competitive environment, with competition partially regulated by a system of printing privileges. However, printing monopolies, supported by the rulers, were formed in some centres (England, France, Ducal Prussia). The sixteenth-century printing trade would not have developed so successfully if it were not for the support of protectors, who not only granted privileges (where they were entitled to do so), but also contributed financially to the publication of individual works. Composers tried to attract the favour of such protectors – having compositions appear in print brought tangible benefits both to the authors and to the addressees of the dedications. Printing thus activated new forms of music sponsorship, at the same time bringing changes to the social conditions under which composers worked.

In the fifth chapter ('The significance of print for musical culture') the author begins by demonstrating the role of print in increasing music literacy: the accessibility of cheap textbooks, increasingly published in national languages, as well as simple, didactic repertoire, led to growth in the numbers of users of written music. This phenomenon should be regarded as linked to Humanism and the Reformation, generally accepted as the main beneficiaries of typography. In the sixteenth century one may also observe opposing tendencies in the development of culture. The arrival of printing meant that the world of music became unified, and some of the best examples of this are provided by the European success of the madrigal, or the

availability of some music prints not only throughout the whole of Europe but also in America. On the other hand, it became possible to confront different styles; this was aided by, for example, various kinds of anthologies of compositions, or musical 'polyglots', containing works in different languages and genres. Another pair of conflicting tendencies involved the confrontation of the old and the new. Although printers and editors attached great importance to the repertoire being new, and theorists praised contemporary composers, even as early as the sixteenth century music historicism was beginning to take shape. The popularity of the works of Josquin long after his death, and the later cult of Palestrina, can serve as examples here. The history of music became longer, but, characteristically, its beginnings rarely reached further back than to the time of the first prints: typography, which so strongly promoted the present, also had powers of conservation. In the sixteenth century printing also became an ally of propaganda, and this development can be observed in music publications as well. This concerns not only songs with political and social content, distributed as loose prints, but also printed dedications, laudatory poems, portraits and coats of arms used to build the image of the patron.

Of particular importance, however, is the fact that printing influenced composers and their works, and this is the subject of the sixth chapter ('Composers and the new medium'). In the sixteenth century we see a growing sense of authorship: it very quickly became the norm to place composers' names next to their works, in lists of contents and on title pages, a practice not quite as widespread in the fifteenth century. Initially, this was aimed at identifying the author, but very quickly became a form of advertising, both for the author and for the edition carrying a well-known name. The composer became an object in the print market, jealously guarding his property with increasing frequency. We can discern the beginnings of copyright in the early privileges granted to composers, although this related not so much to the works themselves as to their circulation in print. Typography also increased the artists' sense of their individuality. The publication of poems praising such musicians as Lasso or Handl Gallus, the inclusion of composers' portraits, the placing of laudatory epithets next to composers' names, all contributed to creating images of masters with clearly delineated personalities. Composers had an opportunity to become more closely involved in their compositions, since print gave them greater control over the text of their works than had been possible in the fifteenth century. It also enforced the use of specific creative strategies, such as composing closed cycles of works. The power of print is best conveyed by the change in the direction of influence: while early prints were modelled on manuscripts, al-

ready by the mid-sixteenth century we find many manuscripts modelled on prints ('Epilogue. From print to manuscript').

In conclusion, the author observes that the significance of the printing revolution for musical culture affects two areas in special ways: the emergence of the music market and the expansion of social and aesthetic horizons of musical culture. Clearly, some of the observed phenomena only provided the yeast for certain tendencies which, with varying intensity, were fermented in centuries which followed. This allows one to see the printing revolution as one of the harbingers of the arrival of the modern era in the history of musical culture.

*Translated by Zofia Weaver*