

Institution: City, University of London (City)		
Unit of Assessment: 33 Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies		
Title of case study: Cappella Romana: Bringing Ancient Orthodox Musical Traditions to Modern Audiences		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 1 Jan 2006–31 Dec 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Alexander Lingas	Role(s): Professor	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 1/1/06–present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 1 August 2013–31 December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Professor Alexander Lingas's research into Eastern Christian sacred music from its origins in Late Antiquity to the present has generated impact of exceptional reach and significance. As founding Musical Director of the critically acclaimed and commercially successful vocal ensemble Cappella Romana, he has illuminated and extended the musical inheritance of the ancient East Roman (Byzantine) Empire to the benefit of audiences, performers, business partners, and congregations. His work has yielded new ways of thinking about neglected historical repertoires, co-created new cultural artefacts, and enhanced the preservation and transmission of the historical and received traditions of the contemporary Eastern Orthodox (especially Greek and Russian), Byzantine-rite Catholic, and Armenian churches.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Throughout the REF period, at City, University of London, Lingas has pursued research on the music of Eastern Christianity, ranging from the sung worship of Late Antiquity to the received traditions of the modern Eastern Orthodox and Byzantine-rite Catholic churches. He has produced not only traditional scholarly publications but also modern editions of historic repertoire, bringing to life music that might otherwise be lost or remain unheard. All of this directly underpins performances and recordings produced with Cappella Romana (CR), the professional vocal ensemble he founded in 1991. As Musical Director he oversees all programming, including performances of newly discovered, edited and commissioned material, as well as singing, directing performances, approving final edits for recordings, and engaging in widespread media activity as the recognised public face of the ensemble. Three research strands have been emphasized during the current cycle:</p> <p>1. The varieties and interpretation of sonic experience in Byzantine worship.</p> <p>Sung worship in modern Eastern Orthodox churches represents a synthesis between what were once distinct regional traditions of cathedral and monastic worship, the most influential being those of Jerusalem and Constantinople (modern Istanbul). Having previously charted the development and confluence of their medieval soundscapes [3.1], Lingas illustrated their musical particularities in two recorded programmes with CR. <i>Good Friday in Jerusalem, Medieval Byzantine Chant from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre</i> (CR413-CD, 2015) brought to life the processional Passion services of Good Friday in pre-Crusader Jerusalem. <i>Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia</i> [3.2] features Constantinopolitan chants for the Exaltation of the Holy Cross rendered in a digital surround-sound 'auralisation' of Emperor Justinian's sixth-century basilica of Hagia Sophia. Once the imperial cathedral of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire, today it is a mosque where the singing of Christian chant is prohibited. This output is the climax of the Icons of Sound research project to recover and interpret the basilica's sumptuous Christian worship.</p> <p>From 2011 CR, using editions of Constantinopolitan chants edited from medieval manuscripts by Lingas and other researchers, began to experiment with performing in real-time auralisations. This led to extended CR residencies at Stanford University in 2013 and 2016, when [3.2] was performed and recorded. Lingas also offered complementary scholarly presentations at Stanford in 2013, 2015, and 2016. Upon its release in November 2019, [3.2] became the first vocal album recorded entirely in live virtual acoustics, bringing together art history, music history, performance, and technology.</p>		

2. Redrawing the Sonic Geography of Mediterranean Christendom

In [3.3] Lingas concluded that the liturgical singing of Byzantine (Orthodox) and Latin (Roman Catholic) Christians around the Mediterranean remained, for the most part, aurally compatible to the end of the Middle Ages. He documented and sonically illustrated this with specific examples of inter-confessional coexistence and interchange – phenomena known previously mainly from visual art and literature – on two CR recordings consisting almost entirely of music newly edited from medieval sources or performed directly from them. *Cyprus: Between Greek East and Latin West* (CR416-CD) of 2015 explores continuities and discontinuities of musical style and religious expression in the Byzantine and Latin sacred music produced in Cyprus under French rule during the first half of the fifteenth century. *Venice in the East* of 2019 [3.4], a programme first commissioned by the Utrecht Early Music Festival in 2016, examines musical relations between Venice and her Greek colonies during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. On both discs, Lingas and the other singers realise a common Mediterranean soundscape for Greeks and Latins characterised by shared approaches to vocal timbre, ornamentation, and the improvisation of simple polyphonic textures.

3. The Modern Reception of Orthodox Musical Traditions

Lingas's third major research strand involves a range of approaches to the modern reception of Orthodox musical traditions in both historically indigenous and contemporary diasporic settings. The music ranges from works by classically trained composers intended primarily for concerts to received traditions of Armenian, Byzantine, and Slavonic chant as practised mainly in Orthodox worship. Space permits only two indicative examples of this research. *Passion Week*, Opus 13 by Maximilian Steinberg (1883–46) was the last major choral work based on Russian chant composed between 1921 and 1923 prior to the Soviet ban on new sacred music. In 2014 Lingas researched *Passion Week's* sources in St Petersburg, contributed to a new edition of it, conducted its belated world premiere in Oregon with CR, and then recorded it for CD release in 2015 [3.5] (multicomponent output). The musical contents and essays of [3.6] have provided a methodological basis for CR's cultivation of Byzantine chant in Anglophone communities. They address such issues of musical structure and performance practice as the expression of text in canonical melodic formulas, the idiomatic realisation of Byzantine musical signs (neumatic notation) in sound, and problems of expressing the latter in staff-notation transcriptions.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- 3.1** Lingas, A. (2013) 'From Earth to Heaven: The Changing Soundscape of Byzantine Liturgy'. In Mark Jackson and Claire Nesbitt (Eds.) *Experiencing Byzantium: Papers from the 44th Spring Symposium of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies* (pp. 311–58). Aldershot: Ashgate.
- 3.2** Cappella Romana, dir. A. Lingas. (2019) *Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia: Medieval Byzantine Chant Sung in the Virtual Acoustics of Hagia Sophia. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Constantinople* (CR420-CDBR). CD, Blu-Ray with 28-minute documentary.
- 3.3** 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.
- 3.4** Cappella Romana, dir. A. Lingas. (2019). *Venice in the East: Renaissance Crete and Cyprus*. (CR419-CD).
- 3.5** Multicomponent output: Steinberg, M. (2015) *Passion Week, Opus 13, Based on Early Russian Chants*, ed. V. Morosan [and A. Lingas]. San Diego: Musica Russica. ISBN:978-0-9701767-5-2. Lingas wrote the detailed historical introduction (pp. vii–xviii) and accomplished all the critical work with the composer's manuscripts for its preparation. Recorded as: Cappella Romana, Maximilian Steinberg: *Passion Week, Opus 13 / Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov: Chants for Holy Week* (CR414-CD, 2015).
- 3.6** Cappella Romana, dir. A. Lingas. (2008). *The Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom according to the Byzantine Tradition: A New Musical Setting in English*, Cappella Romana (CR404-2CD). With essays by J.M Boyer, E. Lash, and A. Lingas with musical scores in Byzantine and western staff notations published online.

Evidence of Quality – Authoritative Reviews

In *Welcoming Finitude: Toward a Phenomenology of Orthodox Liturgy* (2019), Christina Gschwandtner (Fordham University) asserts of [3.1] that ‘Probably the most extensive work [on the sonic architecture of Byzantine liturgy] has been done by Alexander Lingas’. This paper is also a key point of reference for Prof. Bissera Pentcheva’s (Stanford) scholarship on Hagia Sophia, as well as publications arising from Soundscapes of Byzantium, a project on the Byzantine churches of Thessaloniki led by Prof. Sharon Gerstel of UCLA with a team including CR’s Antonopoulos. Similarly, In *The Medieval Review* (2007), Vasileios Marinis (now of Yale) wrote of [3.3] 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’.

Recordings and concerts have received consistently favourable reviews by authoritative scholars and/or practitioners. Musicologist Charles Brewer (Florida State University) wrote in *American Record Guide* of [3.2]: ‘As in all their previous releases...the scholarship of director, Lingas, and the musicality of the ensemble is evident’. Reviewing its 2016 live premiere in Utrecht, Paolo Scarnecchia (*Il giornale della musica*) wrote that ‘The relationship between the Republic of Venice with...the Mediterranean, was well represented by an interesting concert of the ensemble Cappella Romana’. In *Fanfare*, chant scholar J.F. Weber called *Good Friday in Jerusalem* and [3.5] ‘superb discs’. Cantor Richard Barrett praised [3.6] in *Again* (Fall 2008) as ‘a gift to the English-speaking Orthodox world which will inspire and instruct.’

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Lingas and Capella Romana have collaborated with a range of secular and ecclesiastical organisations to achieve economic, commercial, critical, and public impact to the benefit of audiences, performers, employees, business partners, and congregations. Pathways to impact include recordings, performances, social media, educational, and pastoral activities.

1. Economic impact

As an Oregon-based non-profit corporation, CR contributes to economic prosperity in the creative sector by operating with a total budget for this REF cycle of c.\$3.75 million and providing direct employment. The two most recent years’ US tax returns provide a snapshot of CR’s economic activity and demonstrate how its research-based business continues to grow and remain resilient despite the 2020 pandemic. In 2018/19 annual revenue was c.\$733k, generated from grants/gifts (\$375k) and concert and sales income (\$358k), with five people employed [5.1a]. In 2019-20, total revenue was down at c.\$656k due to Covid-related lost concert income (c.\$200k), but the chart-topping *Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia* contributed to sales income of c.\$105k. With grants/gifts steady at \$375k, the number employed increased to ten [5.1b].

2. Commercially Released Recordings

CR released seven new recordings of early and modern music, distributed since 2016 by Naxos Records, with five entering Billboard’s chart of top Traditional Classical albums. An additional 16 CDs were available for sale or streaming during the REF period. *Lost Voices of Hagia Sophia* [3.2] topped this chart at #1 (week ending 14.03.20) and remained on the Billboard chart for the rest of 2020 [5.2]. The end-of-year Billboard charts for 2020 noted the following outstanding achievements: #2 Artist of 2020 for CR in Traditional Classical (ahead of the LSO, Yo-Yo Ma and Lang Lang); #2 Traditional Classical Album of 2020 for *Lost Voices* [3.2]; #3 Traditional Classical Label of 2020 (ahead of Warner & Naxos); and #4 Traditional Classical Album Imprint for 2020 [5.3].

During 2020 CR also had on Spotify alone over 810,400 streams by 92,200 listeners representing 90 countries [5.4]. *Gramophone* (Dec 2015) put the Steinberg *Passion Week* disc [3.5] on its list of Best Recordings of 2015, describing it as ‘A deeply moving, serene performance of the last major sacred work composed in Soviet Russia, one which until recently languished in obscurity’. Reviewing *Good Friday in Jerusalem* for the same magazine (Aug 2015), Caroline Gill wrote ‘it is hard not to feel that the work this group is doing is not only presenting music that has a veneer of inaccessibility in a way that releases its particular beauty but also allowing it to bloom and continue to evolve’. YouTube also features live performances and interviews uploaded by the ensemble and its presenters, as well as

excerpts from published recordings posted by fans. The most popular of these is a Communion Verse from [3.1] uploaded in 2010 and now with over 1.3 million plays [5.5].

3. Other Media

Audio or video outputs of CR performances and/or interviews with CR members featured in national, regional and internet broadcast or print media in Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria (2020), France (2020), Germany (interview and two complete concerts 2016/17), Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Romania. UK appearances on BBC Radio 3 include *In Tune* (30.06.16), *Private Passions* (21.05.17) – during which Bettany Hughes remarked ‘Professor Alexander Lingas is in a way an archaeologist of sound...recreating the soundscape of the city of Constantinople’ – and *Composer of the Week* (20.12.18) [5.11]. In the USA, in addition to appearances on multiple regional radio stations, a feature on [3.6] for National Public Radio’s *Weekend Edition Saturday* was that station’s ‘most listened-to story’ of 2020 [5.6]. Celebrating CR’s 25th anniversary in *Early Music America* (12.12.16), Philippa Kiraly wrote ‘The sound created by Cappella Romana’s men singing early chant is like nothing heard elsewhere’. In the *Orthodox Arts Journal* (12.02.15) Benedict Sheehan declared ‘Cappella Romana stands alone, I think, in their approach to the knotty problem of musical tradition...What is remarkable is the way in which the group manages to convincingly establish that all these things are somehow organically connected’ [5.11].

4. Touring

Internationally, CR performed concerts in Belgium (Bouillon, Liège and Namur, where a review for Belgium’s *Crescendo Magazine* (7.7.16) said that CR ‘took us by the hand and plunged us into a universe which we would never have imagined to be so interesting’ [5.11]; Germany (Konstanz and Otterberg), where *Die Rheinpfalz* (5.10.16) praised CR for its ‘high level of specialisation’ and ‘greatest possible authenticity and attention to detail’ [5.11]; Hungary (Budapest and Debrecen); The Netherlands (2014 and 2016) at the Utrecht Early Music Festival, which commissioned two new research-based programmes for CR’s second visit); Romania (the International Festival of Byzantine Music in Iași, live-streamed to over 20,000 people); as well as Canada (Vancouver, BC), Serbia (Novi Sad), and the UK (London). CR presented additional concerts in twelve states across the USA including at such prominent venues as the National Gallery (Washington, DC, which the *Washington Post* (28.10.13) described as a ‘performance of luminous beauty, with the first half of older music especially lifting the listener beyond the ordinary world outside’ [5.11], the Getty Villa (Los Angeles), The Art Institute (Chicago), Trinity Wall Street (New York), and the University of Nebraska (for a concert honouring composer Philip Glass).

5. Subscription Concert Series on the US West Coast

CR has presented annual seasons of four or more concerts in Portland, OR and Seattle, WA, over the REF period, with nearly every concert preceded by a lecture. Grants from the US National Endowment for the Arts enabled the addition of a three-concert season in San Francisco beginning in 2018. Highlights included the world premiere of Steinberg’s *Passion Week* [3.2], featured in a laudatory *Wall Street Journal* review (14.04.15) that concluded ‘Like Steinberg’s “Passion Week” and the other neglected music it’s resurrected, Cappella Romana continues its ascent’ [5.11] and the first North American festival dedicated to the music of Arvo Pärt in February 2017, about which the *Huffington Post* wrote ‘many events sold out and every concert during the festival had capacity crowds...the audience for the concerts was diverse and included a wide span of generations, attracting the younger audience in particular’ [5.7]. A performance of Tchaikovsky’s *Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom* on 14.3.20, without a live audience due to COVID-19 restrictions, was webcasted live to c.20,000 viewers with another 40,000+ views thereafter [5.8].

6. Educational and Pastoral Work

CR has diversified its work with partner organisations to foster the preservation and transmission of Orthodox musical traditions through workshops, lectures, publications, and singing services. USA examples include: school choral workshops in Portland, OR; elucidating the Orthodox background to Rachmaninov’s orchestral music by providing three

performances of the Seattle Symphony with both a pre-concert lecture-demonstration and choral works performed in concert ('These brief but highly atmospheric chants were an innovative and thought-provoking entry into Rachmaninov's musical world', *Seattle Times*, 31.3.17) [5.11]; and demonstrating the music and technology of the Icons of Sounds project to rapturous effect for the over 10,000 attendees of Pop-Up Magazine's 2019 Edition in Oakland, Los Angeles, New York, Portland, Seattle, and Washington, DC - 'They sing and it's 537 A.D). Writing about this now cannot capture what happened in that room—the story. The awe', *Playbill*, 13/4/19) [5.11]; 'When the choir chanted with this audio effect, my whole body shivered and the tears started up', *The Stranger* (16/5/19) [5.11].

CR and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain broadened their cooperative efforts, begun with [3.6], to disseminate the musical patrimony of Byzantium. Study days capped by performances in London were presented jointly with the Archdiocesan School of Byzantine Music in 2016 ('Teaching Byzantine Chant in Diaspora', filmed with interviews of the presenters by Hellenic TV); and 2018 ('Byzantine Chant in the Anglosphere', co-sponsored by the Hellenic Centre). US-based AGES Digital Initiatives became a partner in 2018, leading to educational podcasts, creation of new chant settings, and electronic distribution of CR scores through the Digital Chant Stand website and mobile apps. This resulted in approximately 1,400 installations of the Android app and 14,000 of the Apple app; 8,500 of the Apple installations were in the USA, 346 in the UK, 437 in Canada, c.1,400 in Australia, and c.2,000 in mainland China [5.9].

In 2018 Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople bestowed on Lingas the title of *Archon Mousikodidaskalos* ('Teacher of Music') of the Holy and Great Church of Christ [5.10a]. Reflecting on the former, the late Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain wrote: 'Accept my warm congratulations and prayers for the continuation of your successful service to the University, our Orthodox Church, Theological Science, and Christianity in general. I should stress that you serve the sensitive and multi-layered field of Byzantine Music and Hymnology in a manner that is creative, truly prophetic, spiritually human that serves people and variously inspires them to glorify 'in and out of season' the Creator and par excellence Poet (*Poietes*) of the World' [5.10b]. In 2019 Metropolitan Teofan of Moldavia and Bukovina in Romania awarded him the Moldavian Cross.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

5.1 Cappella Romana US Tax Returns. a) 2018/19 b) 2019/20.

5.2 Billboard (14 March 2020) #1 Traditional Classical Album:

<https://www.billboard.com/charts/traditional-classic-albums/2020-03-14>.

5.3 Billboard (2020) End of year charts. <https://www.billboard.com/charts/2020/year-end>.

5.4 Spotify (2020) Cappella Romana end of year statistics:

<https://twitter.com/cappellaromana/status/1344720075916533761/photo/1>

5.5 Callixtus (Uploaded 3 June 2020) Capella Romana, 'Praise the Lord from the Heavens'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feu2owd0MsY&feature=youtu.be>

5.6 Chappell, B. (21 December 2020) NPR's 40 Most Engaging And Popular Stories Of

2020. <https://www.npr.org/2020/12/21/947222441/npr-s-40-most-engaging-and-popular-stories-of-2020>

5.7 De la Torre, L. (17 February 2017) Arvo Pärt Festival in Portland exceeds expectations.

Huffington Post. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/arvo-p%C3%A4rt-festival-in-portland-oregon-exceeds-expectations_b_58a7712fe4b026a89a7a2ae2

5.8 Cappella Romana (2020) Tchaikovsky's *Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*, guest conductor Benedict Sheehan. Recorded livestream, 14 March 2020.

<https://www.facebook.com/cappellaromana/videos/1294997770699445>

5.9 Testimonial from Executive Director, AGES Digital Initiatives. 1 March 2021.

5.10 Letters to Lingas relating to the bestowal of the title *Archon Mousikodidaskalos*

a) Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople (4/10/2017)

b) Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain (26/7/2018).

5.11 Capella Romana. Selected Media Coverage, 2013-2020.