

Thinking Historiographically in the 21st Century: The Case of Spanish Musicology, a History of Music without History

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Abstract : This text provides a reflection on the way of thinking about the study of the history of music by examining the production of historiography in Spain at the turn of the century. Based on concepts developed by the historical theorist Jörn Rüsen, the article focuses on the following aspects: the theoretical artifacts that structure the interpretation of the limits of writing the history of music, the narrative patterns used to give meaning to the discourse of history, and the orientation context that functions as a source of criteria of significance for both interpretation and representation. This analysis intends to show that historical music theory is not only a means to abstractly explore the complex questions connected to the production of historical knowledge, but also a tool for obtaining concrete images about the intellectual practice of professional musicologists. Writing about the historiography of contemporary Spanish music is a task that requires both a knowledge of the history that is being written and investigated, as well as a familiarity with current theoretical trends and methodologies that allow for the recognition and definition of the different tendencies that have arisen in recent decades. With the objective of carrying out these premises, this project takes as its point of departure the 'immediate historiography' in relation to Spanish music at the beginning of the 21st century. The hesitation that Spanish musicology has shown in opening itself to new anthropological and sociological approaches, along with its rigidity in the face of the multiple shifts in dynamic forms of thinking about history, have produced a standstill whose consequences can be seen in the delayed reception of the historiographical revolutions that have emerged in the last century. Methodologically, this essay is underpinned by Rüsen's notion of the disciplinary matrix, which is an important contribution to the understanding of historiography. Combined with his parallel conception of differing paradigms of historiography, it is useful for analyzing the present-day forms of thinking about the history of music. Following these theories, the article will in the first place address the characteristics and identification of present historiographical currents in Spanish musicology to thereby carry out an analysis based on the theories of Rüsen. Finally, it will establish some considerations for the future of musical historiography, whose atrophy has not only fostered the maintenance of an ingrained positivist tradition, but has also implied, in the case of Spain, an absence of methodological schools and an insufficient participation in international theoretical debates. An update of fundamental concepts has become necessary in order to understand that thinking historically about music demands that we remember that subjects are always linked by reciprocal interdependencies that structure and define what it is possible to create. In this sense, the fundamental aim of this research departs from the recognition that the history of music is embedded in the conditions that make it conceivable, communicable and comprehensible within a society.

Keywords : historiography, Jörn Rüsen, Spanish musicology, theory of history of music

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