

### **Choosing and Researching your Paper Topic.**

A research paper is a tool for answering your own questions, for informing yourself on a topic that intrigues you, or expanding and deepening insights on a well-known subject. A paper contributes knowledge to other conductors, as an independent work, but it can act as the critical apparatus surrounding an artistic project, such as a composition or an edition.

Select a topic from any aspect of the repertoire within the seminar's historical period (after 1900) that excites your curiosity. It may be on any composer, work, or issue in the professional culture, as long as the problem and the anticipated results concern choral literature and/or choral conducting.

Your paper must contribute an original insight.

### **Examples of topics may include:**

1. The choral and/or sacred music output of composers:
  - a. Individual works
  - b. Relationship between works
  - c. Stages in the development of styles and techniques in the oeuvre
  - d. Specific technical or stylistic traits
  - e. Issues with editions, versions, etc.
  - f. Issues with the interpretation or rhetoric of a text
2. The development of styles, techniques, forms, genres, etc. Very concrete points need to be addressed for the paper to contribute something original.
3. Issues concerning the specific choral groups, singers, relationship of performing groups to the culture, funding organizations, social developments, interactions with the church, religious movements, etc.
4. Issues of performance traditions, practices, education, etc.
5. Issues of reception; how a work is perceived, valued and appropriated by critics and audiences in its historical time and afterwards.
6. Issues of interpretation. Do you have important insights after analysis?
7. Developing a composition or a church performance practice after historical lessons by the major composers.
8. New modes of presentation, interdisciplinary and multimedia practices, and collaborations with cultural and social concerns.

### **A Note on the Presentation and Examples in your Paper:**

This is a class for choral conductors. All papers must include musical examples embedded in the argument, not as an appendix, although you certainly can add complementary examples in an appendix.

### **A Note on the Expected Conclusions:**

This is a class for aspiring sacred music directors and choral conductors. All conclusions must drive your readers to consequences for programming, interpretation, and/or performance practice of choral music.

