

# Music theory in/as musicology in Norway

## Historical reflections

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### Introduction

The interest in Scandinavian histories of music theory has grown in recent years.<sup>1</sup> The literature on music theory in Scandinavia as a whole, along with that on music theory in Norway in particular, has generally focused on the field of tonal harmony, the central discipline of music-theoretical pedagogy. This article aims to broaden the scope of the existing research by discussing relations between this more specialised field of music theory and the broader academic field of musicology in Norway, an academic field which in Norway gradually emerged during the first half of the twentieth century and was properly institutionalised at the middle of said century. This is a complex subject matter. The distinctions between what is regarded as ‘music theory’ and what is regarded as ‘musicology’ are not obvious, and prevalent conceptions of where to draw the borderline have varied, both between historical and national contexts and within them.

Nonetheless, I will in the following attempt to map the roles music theory has played in/as Norwegian musicology by discussing the following two (overlapping) questions:

- What roles has music theory played *in* musicology in Norway (i.e. as part of musicology education and research)?
- To what extent has music theory been considered *as* musicology in Norway (i.e. existing as a distinct subdiscipline of research)?

This discussion takes investigations of relevant literature published in Norway - musicology journals, musicological monographs (books and doctoral theses) and theory

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<sup>1</sup> See, in particular, Hvidtfelt Nielsen, 2019, 2022, 2024; Kirkegaard, 2022, 2024; Kirkegaard-Larsen, 2018, 2019, 2020; Lundberg, 2019; Utne-Reitan, 2022a, 2022c, 2023.

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textbooks – as its point of departure.<sup>2</sup> This approach has certain limitations. For example, this material does not reveal (at least not directly) what takes place within musicology classrooms and lecture halls, including the use of foreign-language and unpublished texts, nor does it include Norwegian musicologists' publications outside Norway. Regardless, this approach was chosen in order to limit the material to a manageable amount while maintaining breadth and diversity. Although such an approach cannot give the complete picture, it is probable that what has been published in Norway reflects the most central topics for this national context, thus providing a good foundation for the discussion of the above-presented questions. As a way of glimpsing beyond the country's borders, I have also searched through major international music theory journals for contributions from scholars affiliated with Norwegian institutions. These have given me an indication of the extent to which musicologists in Norway have chosen to take part in international music theory research.

My aim is to reflect on the major themes in the intertwined histories of music theory and musicology in Norway. Although my reflections will be relevant at the national level, the situation in Oslo will be the fulcrum of my discussion. This focus is warranted by the fact that the oldest and largest Norwegian institutions, both within the conservatoire and the musicology contexts, are located in Oslo. It is beyond the scope of the present article to provide comprehensive histories of music theory and musicology in Norway; this is a task for future research, with the history of musicology in Norway having received particularly little attention from scholars. The present more general investigation is important both as a contribution to further research into the histories of music theory and musicology in Norway and for enabling future comparative studies of the histories of the discipline(s) in different parts of the world. Before moving on, I will provide provisional definitions of the key terms of this article: 'music theory' and 'musicology'.

*Music theory* is a term that means and has meant different things in different contexts. It has long been common to distinguish between 'speculative' and 'regulative' (also called 'practical') music theory. Speculative music theory focuses on understanding the ontologies of tone systems, while regulative theory is concerned with the mastery of the compositional principles of specific musical styles. Carl Dahlhaus introduced a third category (or 'paradigm'), that of 'analytic theory', which aims at uncovering the specific features of individual works of art (Dahlhaus, 1984; cf. Christensen, 2002). It is debatable whether the latter should include actual work analyses or only theory developed with analysis as its primary aim, given that it is common to distinguish between theory and analysis (however much they often imply each other).<sup>3</sup> In the

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<sup>2</sup> To search for and in relevant material, I used the National Library of Norway's digital collection (*Nettbiblioteket*), the joint digital catalogue for Norwegian academic libraries (*Oria*), the physical collection of the Norwegian Academy of Music's library and the survey of Norwegian theory textbooks in Appendix A of Utne-Reitan, 2022a. The searches were conducted in November 2022.

<sup>3</sup> In Julian Horton's words, analysis can 'be understood as a musicological praxis, which enables discourse about technical autonomy and its sociopolitical import. Discourse about its abstract properties is the domain of theory; discourse about its manifestation in pieces of music is the domain of analysis;

present article, I retain the distinction between music theory and actual analyses. My focus is on the former – specifically, it is on discussions and developments of different types of theory – while the latter (i.e. the use of different theories in analyses) is only of secondary interest here. Music theorising may take many forms, focusing on different musical parameters and using different methods and tools. Traditionally, music theory (be it speculative, regulative, analytic or a mixture) has focused on pitch structure in notated music. Indeed, the term ‘music theory’ is still often understood in this rather narrow sense. The position of such traditional Western (classical) music theory will be at the centre of the historical reflections presented in this article. I will, however, also comment on the presence of other types of music theory in this history.

*Musicology*, too, means different things in different contexts. In Norwegian, the field is called *musikkvitenskap* (cf. *Musikwissenschaft* in German), a term which usually refers to the academic study of music broadly conceived. It is traditionally situated within university musicology departments as part of the wider field of the humanities. One could argue that this has changed since the late 1990s, as primarily vocational educational institutions – such as conservatoires and teacher training colleges – have become more academicised and research-oriented in conjunction with the Bologna process.<sup>4</sup> The definitions of what does or does not count as ‘musicology’ are blurry. For instance, not all Norwegian researchers in music education or music therapy would identify themselves as ‘musicologists’. In this article, I will focus on research and education explicitly framed as ‘musicology’.

In my dissertation, which generally focuses on music theory’s role in conservatoire education, I claim that the music theory discourse in Norway has historically been predominantly focused on regulative theory, and that ‘music theory has primarily been a pedagogical field in Norway’ (Utne-Reitan, 2022a, p. 3). I will use this article to nuance the picture by considering historical relations between music theory and musicology in Norway. Before discussing the two above-presented questions, and as a background for discussing them, I will give brief introductions to the fields of (conservatoire) music theory and (university) musicology in Norway. Since, to my knowledge, there exists no comprehensive account of the history of musicology in Norway,<sup>5</sup> the latter introduction will be more detailed than the former.

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and both are examples of communicative rationality, which seek intersubjective consensus about technical autonomy’s critical meaning’ (Horton, 2020, p. 82).

<sup>4</sup> For instance, the Norwegian Academy of Music received the right to award PhD degrees in 1998, but within music education, music therapy and performance practice (as opposed to the degrees in ‘musicology’ awarded at some universities). In 2018, an additional PhD programme was established at the Academy, this time in artistic research. For a historical overview, see Christensen, Jørgensen and Varkøy, 2023.

<sup>5</sup> In the current Norwegian textbook introduction to the field of musicology (Ruud, 2016), there is no survey of the field’s history in Norway, only a general survey of the field’s international history (from Guido Adler to the present). Rather surprisingly, key early Norwegian musicologists – such as Ole Mørk Sandvik and Olav Gurvin – are not mentioned at all in the book. The same is the case in an earlier and shorter introduction to the field (Klempe, 1991).

## Music theory in Norway

Music theory, as a pedagogical discipline, was properly institutionalised in Norway in the late nineteenth century. Several Norwegian textbooks in elementary music theory (*musikk lære*) were published around 1880 (Kobberstad, 1879, 1881; Winter-Hjelm, 1888), and the country's oldest conservatoire, the Oslo Conservatoire (*Musikkonservatoriet i Oslo*), opened in 1883.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the first Norwegian harmony textbook was published in 1897 (Lange, 1897). In this brief introduction, I shall focus on this early history and the institutionalisation of the field.

Music theory was, of course, practised and taught earlier in the nineteenth century, but it had not yet been institutionalised. For instance, early in the nineteenth century, Ole Andreas Lindeman, the father and grandfather of the two founders of the above-mentioned Oslo Conservatoire, copied and translated a number of important theory treatises for use in private teaching (Karevold, 1996). There had also been several earlier attempts at establishing a conservatoire in Norway. In the 1860s, for example, Edvard Grieg co-founded a music academy in Oslo (then named Christiania) together with Otto Winter-Hjelm, but activity at the institution only lasted for a couple of years. When founding their academy, the two composers underlined the importance of studying harmony in addition to a main instrument (Winter-Hjelm and Grieg, 1957, p. 226).

In 1883, Ludvig Mathias Lindeman and Peter Lindeman opened an organist school that soon would expand to become the Oslo Conservatoire. In the very first advertisement for the school, harmony was presented as one of two 'teaching subjects' (*undervisningsfag*) - the other being organ performance - while other subjects (piano performance and elementary singing) were classed as 'voluntary subjects' (*frivillige fag*) (Lindeman and Solbu, 1976, p. 8). Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, harmony (and occasionally also counterpoint), together with instrumental lessons, were normally considered 'main subjects' (*hovedfag*), while other music-theoretical disciplines were 'secondary subjects' (*bifag*). This distinction was also held at conservatoires established in other Norwegian cities in the early twentieth century, for instance in Stavanger (Utne-Reitan, 2022a, p. 138). Harmony was thus at the heart of the education provided.

The dominant style of music theory education in Norway from the late nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth was heavily inspired by the Leipzig Conservatoire. As Yvonne Wasserloos has demonstrated, the 'Leipzig model' spread widely in the second half of the nineteenth century (Wasserloos, 2004). In the case of music theory pedagogy, this development was especially tied to the influence of Ernst Friedrich Richter's 1853 harmony textbook (Richter, 1853). Among other things, Richter's hugely influential work popularised the use of Weberian Roman numerals in conservatoire harmony teaching and propagated a very practical pedagogy (see Utne-Reitan, 2022b). As Richter states in his preface: 'Here the question to be asked is not *Why?* The inquiry of immediate application is *How?*' (Richter, 1867, p. vi). The first

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<sup>6</sup> In 1973, the private Oslo Conservatoire became the public Norwegian Academy of Music. The institution remains the largest provider of higher music education in the country.

Norwegian harmony textbook, authored by Gustav Lange and published in 1897, explicitly cites Richter as its main source (Lange, 1897). Lange's book remained the only Norwegian harmony textbook available until the middle of the twentieth century.

As I argue in my dissertation (Utne-Reitan, 2022a), the music theory discourse in the Norwegian conservatoire context changed in several respects in the period of ca. 1945–1975: Gradually, post-Riemannian function symbols replaced the time-worn Roman numerals in the harmony textbooks (which I will return to below), a new name for music theory training was introduced (*satslære*) and the curricula started emphasising that the aim of the theory training was 'understanding music'. Despite these discursive changes, theory training's 'regulative' focus on teaching compositional craft remained very strong. In other words, conservatoire music theory in Norway has focused on regulative theory, with less attention paid to analytic theory and (especially) speculative theory.

## Musicology in Norway

Norwegian musicology was properly institutionalised in 1958, when the first musicology department in the country was founded at the University of Oslo. Hence, musicology is a rather young discipline in Norway, having come into play much later than the (pedagogical) field of music theory. The field of musicology did not, however, appear out of nowhere. Rather, it was a result of a gradual process spanning decades. As Thomas Holme has shown, Norwegian music scholars contributed to a broader process of musicological institutionalisation in the Nordic region during the first half of the twentieth century (Holme, 2019). That said, Holme's portrayal also indicates that Norway 'lagged behind' Denmark, Sweden and Finland in several respects, such as participation at international musicological conferences and – most importantly – in instituting a university professorship. The following chronological overview first focuses on the gradual institutionalisation of the discipline, leading up to the first musicology departments being established in 1958 (Oslo) and 1962 (Trondheim), before turning to some broad lines in musicological research from the 1960s until today.

In 1913, the first doctoral degree (*dr.philos.*) in musicology was awarded at the University of Oslo, which was then called the Royal Frederick University (*Det Kongelige Frederiks Universitet*), Norway's only university at the time. The degree, awarded to Georg Reiss, was based on a study of medieval music in the Nordic region. Then, in 1922 and 1925, the University awarded doctoral degrees to Ole Mørk Sandvik and Erik Eggen based on their respective studies of Norwegian folk music (see Benestad, 1968).

Sandvik's work was particularly important in laying the foundation for musicology as a university discipline in Norway. In 1911, he received a scholarship from the University to collect Norwegian folk music (Klungsoyr, 2021). Together with Gerhard Schjelderup, he edited the first history of Norwegian music, published in two volumes in 1921 (Sandvik and Schjelderup, 1921). In 1927, he founded the National Music Collection (*Norsk musikkksamling*), which was housed at the University Library (Gaukstad, 1976, p. 8).<sup>7</sup> In 1926–1927 and 1937–1940, Sandvik gave lectures at the University on the topics

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<sup>7</sup> The first manager of the collection was the Norwegian composer Fartein Valen (Gurvin, 1962, p. 78).

of Norwegian church music; Gregorian chant; Norwegian, Danish, Swedish and Irish folk music; relations between medieval church music and Norwegian folk music; and the reading of old musical notation (Amundsen, 1961, p. 375). Sandvik also founded the yearbook *Norsk musikkgranskning* [Norwegian musical research] in 1937, which became the primary arena for musicological publications in Norway for more than thirty years.<sup>8</sup> The yearbook published both research articles and longer works (often published versions of theses). Sandvik remained the yearbook's editor-in-chief until it was discontinued in 1972. Internationally, Sandvik served on the editorial boards of the *Bulletin de la Société 'Union musicologique'* 1921–1925 and *Acta Musicologica* 1931–1945 (Holme, 2019, p. 58).

While Sandvik was the main facilitator of the establishment of musicology as a university discipline in Norway, Olav Gurvin was the one to realise it. Gurvin was awarded the first *magister* degree (*mag.art.*) in musicology from the University in 1928 for a thesis on Norwegian programme music. His degree also included studies in the history of music theory as a supporting subject (Benestad, 1968, p. 27). Ten years later, in 1938, Gurvin became the fourth recipient of a doctoral degree in musicology from the University. The year before, composer Geirr Tveitt had attempted to gain a doctoral degree based on a piece of (ideologically highly problematic) speculative music theory, but it was never accepted (see Utne-Reitan, 2022c).

Gurvin wrote his doctoral thesis on the transition from tonality to atonality (Gurvin, 1938) and started giving lectures at the University in 1937.<sup>9</sup> In 1947, he was given a full position as reader (*dosent*) and started preparing a musicology programme.<sup>10</sup> The following year, he hosted the first Nordic Musicological Conference (see Holme, 2019), and in 1951 he established the Norwegian Folk Music Institute (*Norsk Folkemusikk-institutt*, then not directly affiliated with the University). Gurvin was especially interested in traditional music and collected a substantial number of traditional instruments from different parts of the world for use in his teaching at the University (see Kjeldsberg, 2023). A decade after obtaining the position as reader, he became Norway's first professor of music.<sup>11</sup> In 1958, the Department of Musicology was opened at the University of Oslo, with Gurvin as the first department head. He also founded the journal *Studia Musicologica Norvegica* [Norwegian journal of musicology] and edited its first volume, which was published in 1968.<sup>12</sup> The journal is published by the Norwegian Musicological Society (*Norsk musikkforskerlag*, established 1964), in cooperation with Scandinavian University Press (*Universitetsforlaget*), and remains the primary platform

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<sup>8</sup> Due to economic difficulties and lack of content, the 'yearbook' was not published every year (Gaukstad, 1976, p. 9).

<sup>9</sup> In the period 1937–1940, the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) funded a temporary university position in musicology which was shared between Sandvik and Gurvin.

<sup>10</sup> The University created the position 1 June 1946, and Gurvin – the only applicant – was appointed 1 April 1947 (Amundsen, 1961, p. 375).

<sup>11</sup> The University created the professorship 1 July 1956, and Gurvin was appointed 1 July 1957 (Amundsen, 1961, pp. 375–376).

<sup>12</sup> Eight years would pass, however, before the second volume of the journal appeared.

for musicological research published in Norway to this day. Additionally, Gurvin was central in the establishment of a musicology department at the Norwegian College of Teaching (*Norges lærerhøgskole*) in Trondheim in 1962 (Grinde, 2022).<sup>13</sup>

Finn Benestad - who had been awarded the University of Oslo's fifth doctoral degree in musicology in 1961 - became the first professor at the new department in Trondheim, and thus Norway's second professor of music. In 1964, he was appointed Gurvin's successor in Oslo.<sup>14</sup> Benestad remained a towering figure in Norwegian musicology for the remainder of the century. Other central musicologists of the same generation include Nils Grinde and Dag Schjelderup-Ebbe. In 1968, Benestad stressed that the exploration of Norwegian music history was the main task at hand for musicology in Norway (Benestad, 1968, p. 22). Indeed, Norwegian musicologists had focused on this from the beginning. Until the 1960s, all Norwegian musicological theses - except Gurvin's doctoral thesis<sup>15</sup> - treated Norwegian music history, Norwegian composers, Norwegian works of music or Norwegian folk music (Paulsen, 1987, p. 79).

Musicology in Norway was for a long time a nation-building project focusing on Norwegian music history, both classical and folk music. Many musicological monographs - often theses published as books - were of the 'life-and-works' genre, treating Norwegian composers' biographies and analysing their works; early examples include Liv Greni's work on Rikard Nordraak (Greni, 1942), Finn Benestad's on Johannes Haarklou (Benestad, 1961a) and Waldemar Thrane (Benestad, 1961b), Olav Gurvin's on Fartein Valen (Gurvin, 1962) and Gunnar Rugstad's on Christian Sinding (Rugstad, 1979).<sup>16</sup> The standard textbook on Norwegian music history, authored by Nils Grinde, was published in 1971 (Grinde, 1971). It remained the main reference work on the subject for the remainder of the century; a fourth edition appeared in 1993 (Grinde, 1993). Meanwhile, Benestad and Schjelderup-Ebbe co-authored the standard biographies of Edvard Grieg and Johan Svendsen, which were published in 1980 and 1990, respectively (Benestad and Schjelderup-Ebbe, 1980, 1990). These remain standard biographies to this day. Indeed, for a long time, Grieg research was a key theme of musicological research in Norway, and a large number of musicologists in the country were involved in creating the critical edition of Edvard Grieg's complete works (the *Grieg Gesamtausgabe*) published by Peters Verlag in 20 volumes from 1977 to 1995. The extensive work on Norwegian music history by numerous musicologists in Norway during the second half of the twentieth century culminated in the five-volume *Norges musikkhistorie* [Norwegian history of music] published from 1999 to 2001. This

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<sup>13</sup> The college got university status in 1968, as part of the new University of Trondheim. It has since 1996 been part of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

<sup>14</sup> Hampus Huldt-Nystrøm became a professor in Trondheim in 1966. This department would strengthen ethnomusicology in Norway, particularly under Ola Kai Ledang's leadership in the 1970s (cf. Benestad, 1987, p. 16; Paulsen, 1987, pp. 80–81).

<sup>15</sup> In this thesis, on the transition from tonality to atonality in Western music, he nonetheless dedicates a whole chapter to Fartein Valen's music (Gurvin, 1938, pp. 61–83).

<sup>16</sup> Of these, Greni's was a *mag.art.* thesis and Benestad's (on Haarklou) and Rugstad's were *dr.philos.* theses.

reference work on Norwegian music history was edited by Arvid O. Vollsnes, with contributions from many musicologists of different generations and affiliated with different institutions (Vollsnes, 1999–2001).

Although Western classical music history in general, and Norway's part in this history in particular, arguably was Norwegian musicology's 'core' throughout the twentieth century, the field gradually expanded from the middle of the 1970s. In 1974, the first master's thesis on jazz music was accepted at the musicology department in Oslo and the range of genres within both jazz and popular music included in the University's research has since been steadily increasing (see Dyndahl et al., 2017). That the field was expanding, not only in terms of the music studied but also in terms of the understanding of what musicological research could be, is reflected in the doctoral theses accepted at the University of Oslo (Paus, 2013). In 1980, Jon-Roar Bjørkvold was, for example, awarded a doctoral degree based on a study of kindergarten children's singing, and in 1987, Even Ruud became the first doctoral candidate to defend a thesis with a music therapy orientation. More generally, there was a gradual turn towards what in the US was dubbed 'new musicology', where traditional positivistic source studies were downplayed in favour of more critical perspectives and music understood as a broader cultural phenomenon inseparable from cultural and ideological contexts.

While Western classical music history has remained part of the musicological field, it is safe to say that it has lost its central position.<sup>17</sup> The field of musicology is now more decentred. Popular music and culture – with leading scholars such as Stan Hawkins and Anne Danielsen, among others – is an example of a sub-field that has grown particularly strong in Norway over the last couple of decades. The same goes for music cognition – particularly music and movement, but also other aspects of how humans perceive and experience music – which has been explored by figures such as Rolf Inge Godøy and Alexander Refsum Jensenius. The success of these fields is reflected in the fact that the musicology department at the University of Oslo currently houses a 'Centre of Excellence' funded by the Research Council of Norway. At this research centre – RITMO Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Rhythm, Time and Motion – researchers from musicology, informatics and psychology work together to, as it says on their homepage, 'expand our understanding of rhythm as a fundamental property of human life' (RITMO, n.d.).

In short, musicology in Norway has become more and more diverse since the 1970s. Today, musicology education is offered at the universities of Oslo, Trondheim and Bergen.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> In December 2023, the diminished focus on Western classical music at the Department of Musicology, University of Oslo, was the subject of a heated debate in the online magazine *Scenekunst* (Edwards and Nielsen, 2023; Guldbrandsen, 2023a, 2023b; Halvorsrød, 2023; Özgen, 2023).

<sup>18</sup> The latest addition – at the Grieg Academy, University of Bergen – was first established in the late 1990s and initially had a strong focus on ethnomusicology (Holter, 2005). Additionally, in 2011, the Centre for Grieg Research was opened in Bergen.



## Music theory *in* musicology

Music theory has been important in musicology: both as a practical training part of musicology education and as a provider of tools and concepts for musicological research of different kinds. In the currently most widely used Norwegian encyclopaedia, the brief entry on *musikkteori* defines the term as follows:

Music theory, a general term for musical teaching disciplines such as elementary music theory, harmony, counterpoint, form, instrumentation and so on. In addition to this typical pedagogical and craft-oriented use of the term, which, moreover, is well established, music theory is also used in a more distinct ‘theory’ sense, more similar to literary theory, art theory and the like.<sup>19</sup> (Ledang, 2021)

This reflects the widespread notion that the term *musikkteori* is first and foremost associated with practical-pedagogical disciplines and that *musikkteori* thus largely overlaps with *satslære*.<sup>20</sup> Music theory as a pedagogical field – with disciplines such as harmony, counterpoint and form at its core – has been central to the Norwegian musicology context ever since music courses began to be provided at Norwegian universities. It was, and still is, customary that music theory training forming part of musicological education is conducted by active music practitioners, primarily composers and/or organists. When Gurvin started the first courses in musicology as a secondary subject (*bifag*) at the University of Oslo in 1949, organist Arild Sandvold was appointed teacher in harmony and counterpoint. Organist Anfinn Øien, who had previously taught at the Oslo Conservatoire, taught at the University from 1966 to 1969 before returning to the Conservatoire to become its new principal. Composer Sigvald Tveit was particularly influential as head of theory training at the musicology department in Oslo, where he worked from 1972 to 2010. Notably, in newspaper interviews, he was careful to present himself as a craftsman (see Engebråten, 1983; Hammersmark, 1998; Iglund, 1984). Moreover, in a 1987 essay, Bjørn Alterhaug – affiliated with the musicology department in Trondheim – argued strongly in favour of a theory training focused on craft and creativity (Alterhaug, 1987).

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<sup>19</sup> ‘Musikkteori, sammenfattende betegnelse på musikalske undervisningsdisipliner som allmenn musikkteori, harmonilære, kontrapunkt, formteori, instrumentasjonslære og så videre. I tillegg til denne pedagogisk og håndverksmessig pregede bruk av termen, som for øvrig er vel innarbeidet, anvendes musikkteori også i mer utpreget “teori”-betydning, på linje med litteraturteori, kunstteori og lignende’. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>20</sup> While the encyclopaedia definition highlights that music theory was primarily considered a pedagogical field, it also states that the term is sometimes used more broadly. Concrete examples of such use are found in the institutional documents of the Norwegian Academy of Music, particularly from the 1980s, where *musikkteori* is broadly defined as any discipline working with music in a theoretical sense of any kind, including – in addition to the traditional music-theoretical disciplines – music history, sociology, physiology, communication studies and psychology (Norges musikkhøgskole, 1982). This very broad understanding of music theory has, however, had limited influence; all the mentioned examples are usually regarded as something different from music theory. Still, this definition highlights that the limits of the term are blurry.

I will argue that there is a shared (regulative) music theory discourse between conservatoires and university musicology departments, at least concerning undergraduate theory training. Indeed, several of the theory textbooks have been influential (just as some of their authors have worked) across such institutional boundaries. Examples of such boundary-crossing works include the harmony textbooks by Anfinn Øien and Sigvald Tveit (Tveit, 1984; Øien, 1971, 1975) as well as the counterpoint textbooks by Nils Grinde, Ludvig Nielsen and Per Hjort Albertsen (Albertsen, 1990; Grinde, 1989, 1990; Grinde and Nielsen, 1966). An example of a theory textbook explicitly intended for use across institutional domains is Finn Benestad's 1963 *Musikklære* [Elementary music theory] (Benestad, 1963). Since its publication, Benestad's book has served as the standard work on elementary music theory in Norway and is still used both at and in preparation for conservatoires, universities and teacher-training colleges. Its fourth edition appeared in 2009 (Benestad, 2009). To further investigate this shared regulative theory discourse, I will consider the case of function theory in Norway.

The introduction of post-Riemannian function symbols to harmonic analysis is a significant historical development in Norwegian music theory, both in musicology and conservatoire education. Function analysis had first been introduced in German music theory in the late nineteenth century by Hugo Riemann (Riemann, 1893). It would, however, undergo a long process of transfer and transformation – including an earlier reception in Sweden and (particularly) Denmark – before it was gradually introduced in Norway from around 1950 and finally replaced the older Roman numerals as the dominant system in the 1970s (see Utne-Reitan, 2022a, 2023). Various developments in musicology contributed to this transition. First, it is important to note that function theory was known in Norway before 1950, though its influence was very limited. In a 1949 music encyclopaedia which Olav Gurvin co-edited with Øivind Anker, function theory is described as ‘very complicated, which makes its practical use somewhat difficult’ (Gurvin and Anker, 1949, s.v. ‘Funksjonsteorien’).<sup>21</sup> It comes as no surprise, therefore, that in 1953, Gurvin chose to translate Paul Hindemith's concise 1943 textbook in traditional harmony – which uses figured bass and Roman numerals – for use in the university's harmony training. In the translator's preface, he mentions that function symbols have grown in popularity in Germany, Sweden and Denmark but claims that good teachers can make students aware of functional relationships without using function symbols (Gurvin in Hindemith, 1953, p. vi). Not until 1975, with Anfinn Øien, did Norway get a full-fledged harmony textbook using function symbols (Øien, 1975). That said, a draft of the book had circulated for several years prior to publication, much of it having been written while Øien was teaching theory at the University of Oslo's musicology department in the late 1960s (Øien, 1971).

If we consider the history of harmonic analysis in Norwegian musicology research, it becomes clear that function theory was gaining ground in this domain as early as the 1950s. From the middle of the decade, the use of post-Riemannian function symbols

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<sup>21</sup> ‘meget komplisert, noe som gjør dens praktiske anvendelse litt vanskelig’.

gradually became more common. This is, for example, reflected in several theses published in *Norsk musikkgranskning* (cf. Benestad, 1959; Grinde, 1961; Huldt-Nystrøm, 1959; Rugstad, 1959). Function theory had also been presented in a music history textbook published in 1950, which was authored by Jon Medbøe, a music history teacher at the Oslo Conservatoire (Medbøe, 1950).<sup>22</sup> These early instances of function analysis in Norway employ what Thomas Husted Kirkegaard has called ‘key-relational’ function theory, using the *parallel* relation (called the ‘relative relation’ in English) to label secondary chords (Kirkegaard, 2024; Kirkegaard-Larsen, 2018, 2020). The type of function theory that would soon become dominant in Norway, primarily due to the influence of Anfinn Øien (building on the Danish work of Povl Hamburger), would replace the *parallel* relation for designating secondary chords with the mediant relation, in what Kirkegaard calls ‘interval-relational’ function theory.

By contrast, Schjelderup-Ebbe’s ground-breaking studies of Grieg’s harmonic style use Roman numerals; his master’s thesis was published in 1953 – both as a book and as an appendix to *Norsk musikkgranskning* – and his doctoral thesis in 1964 (Schjelderup-Ebbe, 1953a, 1953b, 1964). Schjelderup-Ebbe conducted some of his studies in the US and published them in English, so his use of Roman numerals is not surprising. His works are among the most detailed analytical studies of harmony in the history of Norwegian musicology.

Function theory would become the most dominant system in Western classical music-theoretical discourse in Norway from the 1970s onwards, but here too the regulative focus prevailed. The interval-relational function theory preferred by Norwegian theory teachers strips away as much speculative Riemannian theory as possible, becoming much closer to the primarily descriptive Roman numeral system.<sup>23</sup> Nowhere is this demonstrated more extremely than in the work of Sigvald Tveit, who attempted to make function symbols analogous to Roman numerals (Tveit, 1984, 1996). His 1984 harmony textbook, which appeared in a revised edition in 2008, remains widely used. Tveit, as mentioned, worked within a university musicology department. In short, the regulative focus of Norwegian harmony pedagogy has been shared across the institutional boundaries of conservatoire and musicology education.

One need only flick through the indices of the 48 volumes (as of November 2022) of *Studia Musicologica Norvegica*, the premier Norwegian musicology journal since 1968,<sup>24</sup> to affirm that music history has traditionally held a strong position in Norwegian musicology. As mentioned, analyses of works have been an important part of this project. Thus, different forms of music theory have clearly been important providers of frameworks and concepts for music-analytical research – at least implicitly. But to what

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<sup>22</sup> Medbøe also draws on other strands of Germanophone music theory, particularly Ernst Kurth’s and Rudolf von Tobel’s conceptions of musical form. However, his book is in many respects an exception in Norwegian conservatoire theory discourse and had restricted influence (Utne-Reitan, 2022a, p. 88).

<sup>23</sup> I will not go into the technical details here, as this is well covered in the existing research literature on post-Riemannian function theories in Scandinavia (see Hvidtfelt Nielsen, 2019, 2024; Kirkegaard, 2024; Kirkegaard-Larsen, 2018, 2020; Utne-Reitan 2022a, 2023).

<sup>24</sup> No volumes were published in the period 1969–1975.

extent has research on theory as such (i.e. discussions and development of theory) been a part of musicological research in Norway?

Assessing this question is a difficult task, as it will necessarily rely on a definition of what one regards to be music theory and what one regards to be something else (aesthetics, philosophy, technology, psychology, cognition, etc.). The borders between the fields are blurry in many cases, and research is often interdisciplinary, making categorisation difficult. I went through the issues of *Studia* multiple times, looking specifically for articles primarily framed as discussions and/or development of music theory as such. I did not count biographical or work-analytical articles using a certain theory, of which there were many but often lacking any critical-theoretical discussion. I underline that I have not performed comprehensive systematic analyses, only a basic review of the journal's contents specifically aimed at shedding light on the amount and types of music theory research previously conducted. A broader quantitative and qualitative study of Norwegian musicology publications would be an interesting task for future research and could uncover many more details about the discipline's history.

Among the 398 total articles published (not counting editorials, book reviews, bibliographies, etc.), I identified 18 specifically and primarily addressing theory (see Table 1).<sup>25</sup> They are distributed over the entire period – the first two published in 1968 and the latest in 2018 – and treat very different theory topics (theory education, phenomenological approaches, musical humour, etc.) related to different types of music (folk music, contemporary classical music, popular music, etc.). The articles do not indicate any unified 'tradition' of theory research in Norway – rather the opposite – but show that discussions of music theory have never been completely neglected. However, several of the articles are negatively framed, arguing for the need to go beyond music theory (at least as it has traditionally been conceived) in this or that direction.

**Table 1.** Chronological overview of music theory articles in *Studia Musicologica Norvegica* (as of November 2022). See the reference list for full citations.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Article title</b>
Kåre Kolberg	1968	New terms in the theory of music
Kjell Skjellstad	1968	Theories of musical form as taught at the Leipzig Conservatory, in relation to the musical training of Edvard Grieg
Jacqueline Pattison Ekgren	1981	The Norwegian 'nystev' and the 'thump-theory': three methods of nystev classification
Lasse Thoresen	1981	En fenomenologisk tilnærming til musikkteorien [A phenomenological approach to music theory]
Ståle Wikshåland	1983	Musikkvitenskap i krise? [Musicology in crisis?]
Rolf Inge Godøy	1984	'Tonalitet' og 'intensjonalitet' i Pierre Schaeffers musikkteori [Tonality and intentionality in the music theory of Pierre Schaeffer]
Ståle Kleiberg	1985	Impresjonismens formtenkning – et forsøk på en tolkning [Impressionist ideas of form – an attempt at an interpretation]

<sup>25</sup> Additionally, the corpus revealed an early interest in methods for performing music analysis with computers (see Lande, 1978; Sørensen, 1978).

## *Music theory in/as musicology in Norway*

Nikolai Birger Paulsen	1990	Skalaer og intervaller i samiske joiker [Scales and intervals in Sámi joiks]
Rolf Inge Godøy	1991	'Hors-temps': tid og objekter i Iannis Xenakis' musikkteori ['Hors-temps': time and objects in the music theory of Iannis Xenakis]
Sigvald Tveit	1994	Funksjonsharmoniske trekk i det 20. århundrets musikk [Function-harmonical features in twentieth-century music]
Asbjørn Ø. Eriksen	1995	Humor i instrumentalmusikk – et forsøk på systematisering [Humour in instrumental music – an attempt at a systematisation]
Sigvald Tveit	1996	Den tradisjonelle funksjonsteoriens tilsløring av harmonilæras simplisitet: om grunnutdanninga i satslære [The traditional function theory's disguise of the simplicity of harmony: on the fundamental training in music theory]
Sigvald Tveit	2000	Mellom tonalitet og atonalitet: begrepet 'klangomgivelse' (harmonic environment) hos den amerikanske komponisten David Angel [Between tonality and atonality: the American composer David Angel's concept of 'harmonic environment']
Stan Hawkins	2001	Joy in repetition! Structures, idiolects, and concepts of repetition in club music
Tellef Kvifte	2004	Description of grooves and syntax/process dialectics
Håvard Enge	2008	Systemet og musikken: om den analytiske resepsjonen av 1950-tallets nye verktyper [The system and the music: on the analytical reception of the new work types of the 1950s]
Thomas Solomon	2012	Theory and method in popular music analysis: text and meaning
Bjørnar Utne-Reitan	2018	Edvard Griegs øvelser i harmonilære og kontrapunkt [Edvard Grieg's exercises in harmony and counterpoint]

Ståle Wikshåland's 1983 article is a telling example of attitudes towards music theory in Norwegian musicology.<sup>26</sup> Wikshåland criticises the lack of discussion of the theories used in traditional work analyses, particularly their limits, claiming their hegemony to be part of the Kuhnian 'normal science' of musicology (Wikshåland, 1983). The notion that structure-oriented analyses of scores alone were insufficient for doing musicological research and needed to be complemented by, or discarded in favour of, other approaches, would become widespread. Moreover, the growing scepticism towards traditional work analysis was further intensified by the international turn towards 'new musicology'.

The overall picture presented above indicates that there has been a shared regulative theory discourse across conservatoire and university contexts. Even though it has been present in some form or another, research in, and development of, music theory seems to have had an uneasy position within musicology in Norway. I will in the following further investigate to what extent music theory has been considered a distinct subdiscipline of musicology research.

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<sup>26</sup> The article is the first part of a two-part essay. The first part discusses theoretical problems, while the second (published in the following issue) treats the breakthrough of modernism as a case study.

## Music theory as musicology?

Musicology has long been considered an umbrella for many different approaches to the academic study of music. As demonstrated, music theory has been – and still is – a key part of musicology education and has laid the foundation for music-analytical research, but to what extent has it been considered a subdiscipline of its own?

Based on the existing publications in Norwegian musicology, one can question whether music theory has managed to become a distinct subdiscipline of musicology rather than just a pedagogical field providing the necessary foundation for certain kinds of musicological research. It is safe to say that publications in Norwegian musicology up until the 1980s were primarily focused on Norwegian music history and that music-analytical inquiries were an important part of this overarching music-historical project. Indeed, traditional work analysis was a key element of the investigations into Norwegian music history that formed the core of Norwegian musicology throughout the twentieth century.<sup>27</sup>

One of the founders of Norwegian musicology, Olav Gurvin, would have claimed that music theory *is* musicology. In the previously mentioned 1949 music encyclopaedia that he co-edited with Øivind Anker, musicology is defined as a field that primarily investigates the music itself in its stylistic-formal development and comprises the main subdisciplines of music history, music theory and comparative music research (Gurvin and Anker, 1949, s.v. ‘Musikkvitenskap’). Following the mention of music theory, the terms rhythm, melody, harmony, agogics and form are listed in parentheses. When Gurvin, eight years later, held his inaugural lecture as professor of musicology at the University of Oslo, he reiterated this conception of what musicology is. As he claimed was most common in other Scandinavian universities, education in musicology should ‘place the main emphasis on a thorough theoretical education in the music-theoretical subjects, in the history of style and finally, as far as possible, provide an introduction to and practice in doing music research’ (Gurvin, 1959).<sup>28</sup> He presented musicology as a science striving for objectivity, discarding hermeneutic readings of instrumental music in favour of more positivistic structuralist readings, clearly preferring a Hanslickian view

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<sup>27</sup> Training in analysis has also been an important part of musicology education from the start, either in separate analysis courses or as part of music history courses. It has also been common to present analyses of works in musicological master’s and doctoral theses. In a 1975 compendium used to teach analysis at the University of Oslo, Øivind Eckhoff champions an approach to analysis that is primarily auditive and based on the listener’s experience; neither the word ‘theory’ (*teori*) nor any of its derivatives are used in the compendium, only ‘analysis technique’ (*analyseteknikk*) (Eckhoff, 1975). While analysis was considered important, (meta)theoretical discussion seems not to have enjoyed a similar position. In a later text used at the same institution, Rolf Inge Godøy presents a systematic approach to instrumentation analysis which is also auditive founded but much more explicitly theoretically grounded (Godøy, 1993). I thank Asbjørn Ø. Eriksen for bringing these unpublished manuscripts to my attention.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Hovedvekt skal liggja på ei grundig teoretisk utdanning i dei musikk-teoretiske faga, i stilhistorie og til slutt så langt råd er innføring og praktisering av musikkgranskning’. The lecture was given 2 October 1957 and published in 1959.

according to which musical content could not be anything other than musical in nature. When, in the lecture's conclusion, Gurvin describes the tasks at hand for Norwegian musicology, it becomes clear that investigating and elevating Norwegian music history were at their core. Among other things, he mentions that great composers such as Johan Svendsen and Christian Sinding still lacked proper biographies and that Grieg was still considered no more than a salon composer in many countries. Nonetheless, we can say that in Gurvin's early conception of musicology in Norway, music theory was considered as musicology.

To understand the predominant conception of music theory at this time, we can turn to the 1949 encyclopaedia, in which music theory is defined as 'an umbrella for the various branches of knowledge that treat the technical structure of music: elementary music theory, harmony, counterpoint, composition, form, instrumentation, etc.' (Gurvin and Anker, 1949, s.v. 'Musikkteori').<sup>29</sup> This definition is rather open, but it still indicates how the term mainly referred to the practical-pedagogical disciplines. As mentioned, Gurvin also chose Hindemith's purely practical textbook for the University's harmony training, a book 'with emphasis on exercises and a minimum of rules' as stated in its subtitle (Hindemith, 1953). It was nonetheless his ambition that theory should be a central part of musicology. This ambition is reflected in his work, such as his doctoral thesis on atonality from 1938 and a couple of later articles published in *Norsk musikkgranskning* (Gurvin, 1938, 1941, 1956). The early studies of Norwegian folk music which appeared in the 1920s, including the theses of Sandvik and Eggen and the work of composer Eivind Groven (Eggen, 1923; Groven, 1927; Sandvik, 1921), are also clearly music-theoretical (and speculative) in their explorations of folk tune scales (see Dalaker, 2011, pp. 59–72). The question is if Gurvin's ambition, primarily reflected in publications from the field's nascent stage, was realised when the field came of age. As noted above, for the most part, the publications in *Studia Musicologica Norvegica* do not indicate this.

In 2016, Even Ruud published the first Norwegian textbook presenting the field of musicology in its full breadth – or so the book's blurb claims (Ruud, 2016). In the opening of the book, he defines musicology in the following way:

Musicology can simply be defined as 'the scientific study of music'. Music research involves the systematic study of scores, manuscripts, recordings or instruments. Equally important for musicology today are studies of musical experiences, performance, use and consumption, production and dissemination of music.<sup>30</sup> (Ruud, 2016, p. 15)

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<sup>29</sup> 'et sammenfattende navn for de forskjellige kunnskapsgrener som har å gjøre med musikkens tekniske oppbygging: (almen, elementær) musikkteori, harmonilære, kontrapunkt, komposisjonslære, formilære, instrumentasjon osv.'

<sup>30</sup> 'Musikkvitenskap kan enkelt betegnes som "den vitenskapelige utforskningen av musikk". Musikkforskning handler om systematiske undersøkelser av partiturer, manuskripter, innspillinger eller instrumenter. Like viktig for musikkvitenskapen i dag er studier av musikkopplevelser, framføring, bruk og forbruk, produksjon og formidling av musikk.'

The significant development of the field since Gurvin's time is evident. After an introductory chapter, the book presents the many subdisciplines which, according to Ruud, make up the field of musicology:

- music psychology
- music therapy
- music anthropology
- music sociology
- music aesthetics and philosophy
- music history and historiography
- music analysis
- music education

It is notable that music theory is not listed as a distinct subdiscipline in this very broad outline of the field.<sup>31</sup> The closest one is 'music analysis', raising the question of why this subdiscipline was not simply termed 'music analysis and theory', like 'music history and historiography'. While I would not wish to read too much into Ruud's choice of chapter headings, they do reflect the somewhat uneasy position of music theory within the field of musicology in Norway. The term 'music theory' (*musikkteori*) pops up in several chapters of the book – not only in the chapter on music analysis (here conceptualised broadly, beyond structuralist studies of scores) – and not always in positive terms. For instance, in the chapter on music aesthetics and philosophy, Ruud endorses the need for 'a broad interdisciplinary foundation' of musicology research, which will 'shatter the traditionally music theory-centred and positivist description of music' (Ruud, 2016, p. 202).<sup>32</sup>

In the concluding chapter, Ruud asks the question, 'Why study musicology?' and provides an answer based on five competencies borrowed from the Danish literature scholar Johan Fjord Jensen: historical competence, communicative competence, creative competence, critical competence and the 'fifth' competence. Music theory (here under the term *satslære*) is only mentioned as part of the creative competence, together with music performance, instrumentation, arranging and composition (Ruud, 2016, p. 315). It is thus confined to regulative theory. Although the creative competence is indeed an important one, one could certainly argue that music theory should also be a crucial part of developing the communicative competence (by providing concepts for discussing music). It could also – depending on how the theory is taught – be part of developing the critical competence, i.e. becoming aware of how music-theoretical concepts shape

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<sup>31</sup> It should be mentioned that not all music researchers in Norway endorse Ruud's very broad understanding of what counts as 'musicology'. For example, the fields of music therapy and music education are often viewed as research fields of their own – with learned societies and specialised publications – and not necessarily as subdisciplines of musicology. The categorisation is debatable, but it does represent the conception of the field as presented by an influential Norwegian music researcher during the last half century, and the book is today used to teach future Norwegian musicologists what musicology is.

<sup>32</sup> 'Det synes nødvendig for musikkvitenskapen å finne en bred tverrfaglig forankring, ikke minst med tanke på å sprengre den tradisjonelt musikkteoretisk sentrerte og positivistiske beskrivelsen av musikk'.



the way we understand how music ‘works’. This is not mentioned by Ruud. I read this lacuna as an indication of music theory having played a secondary (and primarily regulative) role in the field of musicology in Norway.

While music analysis has long been a central musicological subdiscipline, this is not much reflected in the Norwegian pedagogical literature. Despite the many work analyses present in Norwegian musicology research – and analysis training being part of musicology education – there existed no Norwegian textbook specifically dedicated to this topic until 2011.<sup>33</sup> That year, two Norwegian textbooks dedicated to music analysis were published. Petter Stigar’s *Musikalsk analyse: en innføring* [Musical analysis: an introduction], among other things, invokes Schenkerian notions by focusing on voice-leading reductions in addition to presenting more traditional segmentation analysis (Stigar, 2011). Stigar had previously drawn on Schenkerian practice – generally rather foreign to the context of Norwegian music theory (see Kirkegaard, 2022) – in his harmony and aural skills textbooks (Stigar, 2004, 2007). Meanwhile, Per Dahl’s textbook, *Verkanalysen som fortolkningsarena* [The analysis of musical works as arena for interpretation], attempts to construct an analytical framework that includes the perspectives of the listener and the performer (Dahl, 2011). Additionally, Lasse Thoresen has, over several decades, together with colleagues at the composition department at the Norwegian Academy of Music (particularly Olav Anton Thommessen), developed a method of auditive analysis: ‘Aural Sonology’.<sup>34</sup> These are some recent examples of theory development with clear speculative and analytical foci developed in Norway.

The interest in music theory as a field of academic research in the form it has had in, for example, the US has been limited in Norway – at least until recently. With all rules there are exceptions; here, I will mention Hroar Klempe’s 1999 introduction to Anglo-American ‘generative’ music theories (Schenker, Lerdahl and Jackendoff, Forte) and Berit Kvinge Tjøme’s 1995 doctoral thesis – partly written under Allen Forte’s supervision – which analyses Fartein Valen’s music using pitch-class set theory (Klempe, 1999; Tjøme, 2002).<sup>35</sup> Probably more representative of the attitude towards this field in Norway, however, is Rolf Inge Godøy’s 1993 doctoral thesis, which heavily criticises contemporary Anglo-American music theory for its excessive focus on (pitch) structures in notated music, noting how typical analytical reductions result in what he calls ‘spatiotemporal collapse’ and miss out on essential musical features (Godøy, 1997).<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Earlier textbooks (e.g. in harmony and form) did cover different aspects of analysis, but the 2011 books were the first dedicated to teaching different forms of analysis specifically. Prior to this, one would use unpublished compendia and foreign-language textbooks.

<sup>34</sup> This method, drawing upon phenomenology and semiotics, was only recently comprehensively outlined in a monograph (Thoresen, 2015).

<sup>35</sup> Tjøme’s thesis of 1995 was published in 2002.

<sup>36</sup> Godøy’s thesis of 1993 was published in 1997.

Godøy argues instead for a phenomenological turn, where so-called ‘musical objects’ – as we *perceive* them – become the primary research object.<sup>37</sup>

Godøy frames his work as a form of cognitive music theory – emphasising phenomenological approaches – and has, among other things, developed his work to include aspects of physical movement, gesture and embodiment (UiO, 2022). This has had considerable influence in Norwegian musicology, including on the work of RITMO. The problem of categorisation again arises: Much of this research has been conducted and published within other musicological subdisciplines, such as music psychology and cognition, even though it is also clearly music-theoretical and includes speculative components in its attempt to redefine musical ontology. Hallgerd Aksnes’ work on musical meaning – which incorporates the use of cognitive metaphor theory into music analysis – is another example of interdisciplinary music theory research (Aksnes, 2002). There has thus indeed (increasingly) been conducted research in music theory in Norway during the last three decades.<sup>38</sup> Much of it is, however, somewhat distanced from what is traditionally implied by the term ‘music theory’ and primarily situated within other musicological subdisciplines.

A look through the major international journals in the field strengthens the impression that interest in Anglo-American academic music theory in Norway has been limited. Indeed, in issues from before 2016, I found no contributions from authors affiliated with Norwegian institutions in what is generally considered the ‘flagship music theory journals’ (cf. Duinker and Gauvin, 2017): *Journal of Music Theory* (1957–), *Music Theory Spectrum* (1979–), *Music Analysis* (1982–) and *Music Theory Online* (1993–).<sup>39</sup> The reasons for this are certainly manifold, but one of them is probably the limited interest in Schenkerian theory in Scandinavia, especially in Norway. However, from 2016 onwards, one finds contributions from scholars affiliated with Norwegian institutions in *all* of the mentioned major theory journals (see Table 2). The contributions are varied, both with regard to genre (from Norwegian folk music and Western classical music to EDM) and approach (e.g. history of music theory, empirical studies and even Schenkerian analysis). Many of the articles are from researchers affiliated with RITMO and present research on different aspects of rhythm, time and

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<sup>37</sup> Although it developed in quite a different direction, the phenomenological roots of this project (particularly Pierre Schaeffer’s theoretical work) recall the mentioned Aural Sonology Project conducted within the composition department at the Norwegian Academy of Music (Thoresen, 1981, 2015).

<sup>38</sup> Several Norwegian work-analytic studies of the recent decades also include discussions of the music-theoretical approaches used, for example of musical semiology in Stigar, 2002, of structure, plot, and intertextuality in Eriksen, 2008, and of Sonata Theory in Utne-Reitan, 2020.

<sup>39</sup> In the 1990s, Arvid O. Vollsnes served as ‘consulting editor’ and ‘*MTO* Correspondent’ for *Music Theory Online*. The journal also published a report on a 1997 theory seminar held in Oslo. Discussing one of the seminar papers, the Swedish correspondent claims that ‘the Scandinavian definition of analysis’ (as compared to the Anglo-American one) is characterised by attempts to ‘reconstruct the compositional process: to label the rows and to gain a closer understanding of the artistic considerations. There are no analytical attempts to structure the work using pitch-class set techniques or transformational networks’ (Broman, 1998, § 17). This underlines the regulative focus, also in analytic contexts.

motion. The growth of active engagement with Anglo-American academic music theory is probably (at least partly) due to the gradual broadening of this music theory research field in terms of its theoretical and analytical perspectives, interdisciplinary approaches and the types of music studied.<sup>40</sup>

**Table 2.** Chronological overview of articles by authors affiliated with Norwegian institutions in flagship music theory journals (as of November 2022). See the reference list for full citations.

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Journal</b>	<b>Article title</b>
Peter Edwards	2016	MusA	Resisting closure: the passacaglia finale from György Ligeti's <i>Le Grand Macabre</i>
Tami Gadir	2018	MTO	Understanding agency from the decks to the dance floor
Rolf Inge Godøy	2018	MTO	Motor constraints shaping musical experience
Ragnhild Brøvig-Hanssen et al.	2020	MTO	Dynamic range processing and its influence on perceived timing in electronic dance music
Mari Romarheim Haugen	2021	JMT	Investigating music-dance relationships: a case study of Norwegian <i>telespringar</i>
Ram Reuven	2021	Spectrum	Undersurface sequences
Bjørnar Utne-Reitan	2021	MusA	Schematic deformation: systematic linearity in Grieg's 'Takk' and other lyric pieces
Ragnhild Brøvig-Hanssen et al.	2022	Spectrum	A grid in flux: sound and timing in electronic dance music
Bjørnar Utne-Reitan	2022	JMT	Music theory pedagogy in the nineteenth century: comparing traditions of three European conservatories

## Concluding remarks

It seems that musicology education in Norway, at least at the undergraduate level, has only to a limited extent gone beyond the regulative theory typical of conservatoire theory education. It has primarily been practical – as reflected in the textbooks – and in many cases taught by music practitioners, particularly organists and composers. There is and has been a shared music theory discourse between the university and conservatoire contexts, oriented towards regulative theory, which I would argue has been the dominant discourse in Norwegian music theory, defining and limiting what is usually meant by the term.

The situation becomes more complex when considering the role of music theory in/as musicological research. Work analysis has indeed historically been an important part of this research. Discussions of the theories used and original theory development have been rarer, however. Examples related to 'traditional' theory focusing on Western (classical) tonal music are surprisingly few given the strong position this music has had in

<sup>40</sup> For recent discussions of the broadening of this field, see Duinker and Gauvin, 2017; VanHandel, 2023. Although there is no doubt that Anglo-American music theory has increased its thematic scope, there are still important ongoing debates on diversity and inclusion in the field, which gained renewed relevance in the wake of Ewell, 2020. For a recent contribution, see Lett, 2023, and its responses in the colloquy section of *Music Theory Spectrum*, 45 (1).

Norwegian musicology historically. There has been done more in other areas, such as folk music and – more recently – popular music, particularly with regard to aspects of rhythm. It seems that theories of harmony and tonality to a great extent have been relegated to the pedagogical domain and have seldom been critically discussed and developed in the musicological research field. The status of music theory in Norwegian musicology thus differs for different kinds of music theory.

Music theory has not been an autonomous field of research in Norway. It has existed as a separate *pedagogical* field and – to varying extents – been part of the broader category of musicological research. It is important to note, however, that this is also the norm in Europe, where the term ‘musicology’ often refers to music research in general. Nonetheless, music theory has a clearer and stronger position as a musicological subdiscipline elsewhere in Europe than in Norway. Many European countries and regions have separate societies and journals for theory and analysis. The *European Network for Theory & Analysis of Music* lists 14 member societies, representing German-speaking countries, the UK, Russia, France, Belgium, Dutch-speaking countries, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Catalonia, Croatia, Poland, Serbia and Bulgaria, respectively (EuroT&AM, n.d.). There exists no such society in the Nordic countries as of yet. While, for instance, Norwegian music educationalists and therapists have their own specialised regional learned societies, academic journals and PhD programmes, music theorists have no comparable academic infrastructure, existing uneasily between being an established practical-pedagogical field and having an unclear position within musicological research.

With the above historical reflections, I have attempted to consider exceptions to my claim that ‘music theory has primarily been a pedagogical field in Norway’ (Utne-Reitan, 2022a, p. 3) and thereby nuance this picture considerably. Music theory, at least in the way the term is traditionally understood, has indeed *primarily* been a pedagogical field in Norway and has not been institutionalised as a separate discipline of research. However, the above reflections have shown that music theory research (broadly conceived) has never been totally neglected and that music-theoretical research of different kinds has increasingly been conducted in Norwegian musicology, including recent engagement with the Anglo-American academic music theory field. This, I believe, bodes well for the future.

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## Abstract

This article presents historical reflections on relations between music theory and musicology in Norway. More specifically, it asks two questions: What roles has music theory played *in* musicology in Norway (i.e. as part of musicology education and research)? To what extent has music theory been considered *as* musicology in Norway (i.e. existing as a distinct subdiscipline of research)? Taking these questions as its point of departure, the article presents the first discussion of the broad intertwining of the histories of music theory and musicology in Norway. It argues that there has long been a shared (regulative) music theory discourse between conservatoire education and university musicology education. The picture is more complex regarding music theory in/as musicology research. Music theory in Norway has existed uneasily between being an established practical-pedagogical field (in both conservatoire and university contexts) and having a somewhat unclear position within musicology research. There are, however, recent tendencies that indicate a stronger focus on music theory research in Norway, including closer contact with the established international (primarily Anglo-American) field of academic music theory. The article is an edited version of the author's trial lecture for the PhD degree.

**Keywords:** history of music theory, history of musicology, music theory in Norway, musicology in Norway, music research, higher music education.

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