The Designation of Concepts in Studies of Multipart Music

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Abstract

The starting point of this article is Hilary Putnam's idea of getting away from the picture of the meaning of a word as something like a 'list of concepts'. That a term may have different uses rather than one absolute meaning is all too familiar in ethnomusicology. The vast diversity of the musical practices focused on, the local terminologies, the manifold worldviews of the individuals involved in them, and the significant impact the terminology of studies of "Western art music" plays are all decisive in this context.

In studies of multipart music the designation of concepts is connected both with the different understandings attributed to terms already in use, such as 'polyphony', 'multipart music' or the German term *Mehrstimmigkeit*, and with the establishment of new terms. The newly established terms focus on the one hand on the musical outcome, as in the cases of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* and 'polymusic', and on the other hand on the role of the music makers, their understandings and the complexity of their interactions during the performance and in discussions about it, as in 'singing in company'.

These different approaches are attempts to verbalize the actions of the (re)creation of acoustical forms based on the interactions of "individualists in company".

1. Introduction

"*Theoretical terms* in science have no analytic definitions […]; yet these are surely items (and not atypical items) in the vocabulary of natural languages." (Putnam 1975: 146; italics in original) The term 'natural language' is understood in philosophy as a "human language like English or Japanese, as opposed to a computer language, musical notation, formulas in logic, and so on" (Pinker 1994: 478). Hilary Putnam formulates the statement on *theoretical terms* in the article "Is semantics possible?" in which he suggests the need "to get away from the picture of the meaning of a word as something like a *list of concepts*" (Putnam 1975: 146; italics in original).

In metaphysics and especially ontology, a concept is a fundamental category of existence. According to Eric Margolis and Stephen Lawrence there are "two dominant frameworks in contemporary philosophy" concerning the question of what is a concept. "One proposes that concepts are mental representations, while the other proposes that they are abstract objects." (Margolis, Lawrence 2007: 561)

As far as mental representations are concerned Steven Pinker emphasises that "the theory of thinking called 'the physical symbol system hypothesis' or the 'computational' or 'representational' theory of mind […] is as fundamental to cognitive science as the cell doctrine is to biology and plate tectonics is to geology." (Pinker 1994:

77–78) Another supporter of this orientation, Jerry A. Fodor, states that if

> the computational theory of the mind is true (and if, as we may assume, content is a semantic notion par excellence) it follows that content alone cannot distinguish thoughts. More exactly, the computational theory of mind requires that two thoughts can be distinct in content only if they can be identified with relations to formally distinct representations. (Fodor 1981: 227)

This perspective is helpful to comprehend the importance of the discussion about the designation of concepts both in a broad sense and in more specific contexts. Studies on multipart music are under-represented in this context. This is obviously one of the reasons why this subject is also being given more and more space in the discussions of the Study Group on Multipart Music of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM).

The view of concepts as "abstract objects" goes back to the German philosopher and mathematician Gottlob Frege, who introduced the terms *Sinn* (sense) and *Bedeutung* (reference) into the philosophical discourse in his article of 1892 "Über Sinn und Bedeutung" ("On sense and reference"). "The Fregean tradition maintains that the meaning of a declarative sentence is a proposition, where propositions are understood to be

abstract objects that exist independently of our minds and that are the primary bearers of truth." (Margolis, Lawrence 2007: 564)

An alternative view of the question of what is a concept is that of the so-called abilities view, according to which concepts are neither mental images nor word-like entities in a language of thought. Ludwig Wittgenstein is mentioned frequently as one of the leading representatives of this idea. He completed the first part of his *Philosophical Investigations* in 1945. Section 122 reads as follows in the English translation:

> A main source of our failure to understand is that we do not *command a clear view* of the use of our words. – Our grammar is lacking in this sort of perspicuity. A perspicuous representation produces just that understanding which consists in 'seeing connexions'. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate cases*. The concept of a perspicuous representation is of fundamental significance for us. It earmarks the form of account we give, the way we look at things. (Is this a 'Weltanschauung'?) (Wittgenstein 1986 [1958], Part I; italics in original)

The question of concept is a topic in the philosophy of language as well. Putnam asserts that "there are many usable extensions of the notion of an object […]" (Putnam 1994: 304–305) and that "in particular the notions of object and existence, have a multitude of different uses rather than one absolute 'meaning'" (Putnam 1987: 71).

In the case of ethnomusicology this is all too familiar, as researchers within the discipline focus on the most diverse musical practices. The manifold worldviews of the individuals involved in the music making processes make the matter more complex. A special issue in this context are local terminologies, which are particularly important in multipart music practices as a way of representing performing practices from inside. Studies of multipart music are, moreover, a specific example in which the terminology of studies of "Western art music" has a significant impact.

Before concentrating on concepts and terms in this context, the question of the priority of language towards the concepts or vice versa should be referred to as well. One of the perspectives in philosophy in this context is the view of concepts as prior to and independent of natural language,

which is considered in this case to be a means for transmitting thought (see Fodor 1975).

Steven Pinker formulates three main arguments for this perspective in the third chapter of his book *The Language Instinct (1994)*. This chapter is entitled "Mentalese", meaning a language of thought. The first argument is about the observation that language can be ambiguous, while thoughts are not. One of the examples taken from newspaper headlines which contain ambiguous words and are discussed in this chapter reads: "Drunk Gets Nine Months in Violin Case". Pinker explains this and other examples: "[…] surely the thought underlying the word is *not* ambiguous; the writers of the headlines surely knew which of the two senses of the words […] they themselves had in mind. And if there can be two thoughts corresponding to one word, thoughts can't be words." (Pinker 1994: 79; italics in original)

The second argument is the reflection that language has to be learned, therefore thought is prior to language.

> Knowing a language, […], is knowing how to translate mentalese into strings of words and vice versa. People without a language would still have mentalese, and babies and many nonhuman animals presumably have simpler dialects. Indeed, if babies did not have a mentalese to translate to and from English, it is not clear how learning English could take place, or even what learning English would mean. (Pinker 1994: 82)

The third argument is connected with the establishment of new concepts which are named later on. Referring to the science-fiction novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell, published in 1949, and the government's language in it, called Newspeak, Pinker writes his "predictions for the year 2050". The second of these, which is the most relevant for the subject of this paper, reads: "since there are far more concepts than there are words, and listeners must always charitably fill in what the speaker leaves unsaid, existing words will quickly gain new senses, perhaps even regain their original senses." (Pinker 1994: 82)

On the other hand there are philosophers who claim that at least in some cases concepts are established in the internal system of representation, constituting natural language competence. Peter Carruthers, for example, writes: "If […] natural lan-

guage is constitutively involved in our conscious thinkings […], then language is itself the primary medium of such thought, and much such thinking is essentially linguistic." He refers to it as "*the cognitive conception* of language, since it accords a central place to natural language within our cognition". Furthermore he emphasizes that from this viewpoint "we often think *in* language, and the trains of reasoning which lead up to many of our decisions and actions will consist in sequences of natural language sentences." (Carruthers 1996: 2; italics in original)

Considering language to have "an intra-personal cognitive function" as well as "its obvious interpersonal uses" creates a different picture of communication through language.

> When a speaker utters a sentence, on this view, their utterance expresses a thought by *constituting* it, not by encoding or signalling it. A hearer who is a competent user of the same language will then understand that utterance in virtue of it constitutively expressing, for them, the very same (or a sufficiently similar) thought. (Carruthers 1996: 2; italics in original)

A further argument here is connected with spatial reorientation, which is selectively impaired when the linguistic system is engaged but not when comparable attention is given to non-linguistic distractors (see Carruthers 1996: 48).

In studies on multipart music, the issue of concepts and their coming into being is connected to different understandings attributed to terms already in use as well as to the establishment of new terms as a result of new research perspectives. The different understandings are striking, particularly in the case of umbrella terms. The most-commonly used ones in English ethnomusicological literature are 'polyphony' and 'multipart music'. The establishment of new terms shows two main tendencies: many studies are concentrated primarily on the musical outcome, while in others the focus is on the role of the music makers, their understandings and the complexity of the interactions between them.

In this paper ways of designating the most utilized terms in studies of multipart music are discussed as one of the approaches towards the designation of concepts in this research area. As far as the umbrella terms are concerned, in addition to 'polyphony' (section 2) and 'multipart mu-

sic' (section 4) the German term *Mehrstimmigkeit* (section 3) is also examined, to give an example from a musical literature other than that in English. German seems appropriate in this case, as the language in which comparative musicology, the antecedent of ethnomusicology, was first presented. When it comes to the newly established terms, among those connected primarily with the musical outcome *Schwebungsdiaphonie* (section 5.1.1) and 'polymusic' (section 5.1.2) are focused on, while among those connected with the kinds of music making and with social and behavioural questions the term 'singing in company' (section 5.2) is introduced.

2. Polyphony

The term 'polyphony' along with its connotations in various references is the most-frequently used one in scholarly literature. It is significant that in Greek antiquity, *polyphonia* appeared first as a parallel term to *diaphonia* in its technical sense and also as a neologism. The noun 'polyphony' was used apparently almost exclusively as a musical term only in post-Hellenic times in ancient Greek literature, while the adjective and its derivatives had other meanings too, including the classical ones: *polyphonia* – that which has many sounds, *polyphonos* – "of many sounds, many voices" and "abundant in linguistic expression" (Frobenius 1995 [1980]: 70).

The term has a long history of use in the literature on "Western art music", mostly meaning a compositional technique. The contents associated with it have constantly changed, also because of the different views composers of different times and places have imparted to it (see Frobenius 1995 [1980]). Different contents have been given to this term in ethnomusicological literature as well. Characteristic is that since Guido Adler and Erich Hornbostel 'polyphony' is often considered an umbrella term (see section 3). In the 1995 edition of New Grove, the definition of 'polyphony' reads:

> A term used in connection with the technique of composition to designate various important categories in music: namely, music in more than one part, music in many parts, and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently. (Frobenius 1995 [1980]: 70)

Simha Arom makes another differentiation, according to which "all multi-part music is not necessarily polyphonic" (Arom 1991: 34) stating that "a true polyphonic procedure must be 'multi-part, simultaneous, hetero-rhythmic and non-parallel'" (Arom 1991: 38). Later a group of researchers led by Arom carried out a classification of polyphonic techniques, published first in Italian (Arom et al. 2005) and then in French (Arom et al. 2007). The classification begins with the phrase: "A general agreement has been reached to consider as polyphony all music that does not come under monody – music in unison or in octaves – i.e. every plurilinear manifestation, independent of the modalities in which it appears."[1] (Arom et al. 2007: 1088) Rudolf Brandl, on the other hand, formulated a definition in 2008 (see section 3) which takes into account the modalities of appearance and cognition.

The broad range of perspectives revealed by these and other interpretations of the term 'polyphony' (see for example contributions in Aubert 1993 and Meyer 1993) has been enriched in the last few decades by views gained from acoustic and psychoacoustic approaches. These have led in turn to the establishment of new terms (see section 5.1).

3. *Mehrstimmigkeit*

In the musical literature of languages other than English, other terms are also used in parallel to the term 'polyphony' to connote similar contents. In German the term *Mehrstimmigkeit* was already used by Guido Adler in his article of 1885 "Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft" (The Scope, Method, and Aim of Musicology) in this context.

In the core of this term is the noun *Stimme*, which in everyday life is used in several meanings. Important for the term under discussion are the meanings 'voice' and '(musical) part'. This noun makes together with the pronoun or quantifier

mehr – 'more, some, multi- (as prefix)' – the adjective *mehrstimmig* in the meaning of 'several voices and/or parts'. This adjective with the suffix *-keit* build the noun *Mehrstimmigkeit* which might be translated literally into English as 'multipartite (music)', 'multi-part/multi-voiced music'. Moreover, the adjective *stimmig* (coherent, consistent) and the suffix *-keit* build together the noun *Stimmigkeit*, which means 'coherence, consistency', adding another connotation to the term *Mehrstimmigkeit*.

Guido Adler uses the term *Mehrstimmigkeit* for example in the study *Die Wiederholung und Nachahmung in der Mehrstimmigkeit. Studie zur Geschichte der Harmonie* (Repetition and Imitation in Multipartite Music. A Study About the History of Harmony) published in 1886. In the same article he also uses the term *Polyphonie*, characterising 'imitation' as a "factor of the highest importance in the history of polyphony"[2] (Adler 1886: 3).

Furthermore, according to Adler the difference between the terms 'repetition' (*Wiederholung*) and 'imitation' (*Nachahmung*) creates a difference in the understanding of

> […] mono- or multipartite (music). If a motive is repeated from one and the same part, regardless of whether it is done in the same or only in a similar way, it is a 'repetition'; but if the theme is taken from a second part or several parts, this is an 'imitation', because the following parts imitate the leading part.[3] (Adler 1886: 4)

Hornbostel explained the term *Mehrstimmigkeit* in 1909 in the essay "Über Mehrstimmigkeit in der außereuropäischen Musik" (About Multipart Music in the Non-European Music) as an umbrella term for the terms 'harmony' (*Harmonie*) and 'polyphony' (*Polyphonie*):

> From pure monopartite [music] (homophony), which is still today practiced by a large part of mankind, multipartite forms are being devel-

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[1] "On s'accorde généralement pour considérer comme polyphonie tout ce qui ne relève pas de la monodie – musique exécutée à l'unisson au à l'octave –, c'est-à-dire toute manifestation plurilinéaire, indépendamment des modalités selon lesquelles elle se manifeste."

[2] "Faktor, von höchster Bedeutung in der Geschichte der Polyphonie."

[3] "[…] Ein- oder Mehrstimmigkeit. Wird ein Motiv von einer und derselben Stimme, einerlei ob in gleicher oder nur ähnlicher Fassung wiederholt, dann ist dies eine 'Wiederholung'; wird aber das Thema von einer zweiten Stimme oder von mehreren Stimmen aufgenommen, dann ist dies eine 'Nachahmung', den die nachfolgenden Stimmen ahmen die führende Stimme nach."

oped because of two totally different mental attitudes or dispositions which must be differentiated sharply from each other. One can pay attention to the common sounds [*Zusammenklänge*] as such, so that the form of the melody appears unchanged even in all its details, only doing so in a fuller setting. This kind of multipart music, which we would like to name harmony, behaves towards homophony in exactly the same manner as a melody performed on an instrument with a timbre which is full and rich in overtones to the same melody when it is formed of simple tones without overtones. Or one can spread the attention to several simultaneously-performed melodic entities which are more or less different to each other. We would like to confine the name polyphony to the multipart music defined in this manner.[4] (Hornbostel 1909: 299)

Several studies of the first half of the 20th century, including *Geschichte der Mehrstimmigkeit* (History of Multipartite Music) by Marius Schneider (1934, 1935, 1969), were carried out from a "eurocentric aspect to discover the early forms of multipart music of the 'high mountains of the modern European art of sound' (C. Sachs 1959, p. 5) or the origin of (European) multipart music (C. Stumpf 1911, pp. 42 ff)."[5] (Simon 1996: 1767) This attitude changed through the growing knowledge about local practices in different parts of the world, combined with acoustic and psychoacoustic approaches and studies of concepts and perceptions of music. These changes were also

helpful with regard to research into understanding the mechanisms which determine the making of this kind of music. They have led to the establishment of new terms (see section 5).

Other differentiations than those mentioned until now concern ways in which the umbrella terms, which also form part of the scholarly discourse, can be understood. Examples concerning the terms *Mehrstimmigkeit* and *Polyphonie* can be found, for example, in the chapter "Universal Basic Definitions of Multiple Sequences" in Rudolf Brandl's essay "New Considerations of Diaphony in Southeast Europe" (2008).

> *Mehrstimmigkeit* [...] is a two-dimensional virtual-cognitive structuring of the musical experience in which, by means of rules beyond the partial notes of the melody's fundamental tones, the *exclusively vertical-synchronous allocation of sounds and noises* of other parts to a horizontal-temporal axis takes place.[6] (Brandl 2008: 287)

> *Polyphony* is the virtual-cognitive *three-dimensional* structuring of the musical experience, in which at least two independent *horizontal-linear* regulated sound and/or noise-sequences (parts) are *guided by means of a meta-rule in their vertical connection (= synchronicity)*, and the meta-rule overrides the linear rules, i.e. the latter adapt to the meta-rule.[7] (Brandl 2008: 288)

This essay has been printed in the original German and in English translation, taking into ac-

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[4] "Aus der reinen Einstimmigkeit (Homophonie), die von einem großen Teil der Menschheit noch heute praktiziert wird, entwickeln sich mehrstimmige Formen auf Grund zweier ganz verschiedener psychischer Einstellungen, die begrifflich scharf auseinander gehalten werden müssen. Man kann entweder auf die Zusammenklänge als solche achten, so, daß die Form der Melodie auch in allen Einzelheiten ungeändert, nur in vollerer Besetzung erscheint. Diese Art der Mehrstimmigkeit, die wir Harmonie nennen wollen, verhält sich zur Homophonie genau so, wie sich eine auf einem Instrument mit satter obertonreicher Klangfarbe vorgetragene Melodie zu derselben Melodie verhält, wenn sie aus einfachen obertonlosen Tönen gebildet ist. Oder man kann die Aufmerksamkeit auf mehrere zugleich ablaufende, untereinander aber mehr oder weniger verschiedene melodische Gebilde verteilen. Auf die so definierte Art der Mehrstimmigkeit wollen wir den Namen Polyphonie beschränken."

[5] "[...] eurozentristischen Aspekt, die Vorformen der mehrstimmigen Musik zum 'Hochgebirge der modernen europäischen Tonkunst' (C. Sachs 1959, S. 5) oder den Ursprung der (europäischen) Mehrstimmigkeit zu entdecken (C. Stumpf 1911, S. 42 ff)."

[6] "*Mehrstimmigkeit* ist eine zweidimensionale virtuell-kognitiv Strukturierung des musikalischen Erlebnisses, in der zu einer horizontal-temporalen Achse der Melodielinie durch Regeln über die Partialtöne der Melodiegrundtöne hinausgehend die *ausschließlich vertikal-synchrone Zuordnung von Klängen und Geräuschen* anderer Parts erfolgt." (Brandl 2008: 305)

[7] "*Polyphonie* ist die virtuell-kognitiv dreidimensionale Strukturierung des musikalischen Erlebnisses, bei der mindestens 2 autonom horizontal-linear geregelte Klang- und/oder Geräusch-Folgen (Parts) durch Meta-Regelung in ihrer vertikalen Beziehung (= Synchronizität) gesteuert werden, wobei die Meta-Regel die linearen Regeln überstimmt, d. h. diese sich an die Meta-Regel anpassen." (Brandl 2008: 306)

count firstly the issue of language informing the philosophical rationale of and the methodological approach to research. A second argument has been the question of holding an academic discourse of different cultures and practices only in one language, which is problematic in terms of reducing individual interpretations while promoting singular readings.

4. Multipart music

The term 'multi-part' or 'multipart music' is still not represented in any music dictionary[8] although it has been used for a long time in records of and writings on local musical practices. One of the first records is connected with writings about the songs of the Rarotonga, inhabitants of Rarotonga, the most populous island of the Cook Islands in the South Seas. James Cowan, a well-known writer in New Zealand of the first half of the 20th century, wrote as follows in the *Official Record of the New Zealand International Exhibition of Arts and Industries*, held in Christchurch from 1 November 1906 to 15 April 1907:

> Chanting their ear-haunting tuneful *himenes*, and clattering away with a strange barbaric rhythm on their wooden drums, the brown Islanders from the Cook Group were day after day the centre of intensely interested groups, Ahoris as well as whites. One never tired of listening to the delightful part-singing harmonies of these South Sea people, [...]. (Cowan 1910: 353)

Sound recordings of these songs were made in January 1907 in Otaki by Alfred John Knocks (Knocks 1907) born at Waikanae, New Zealand (Hutton, Akeli, Mallon 2010: 99) with a group of singers participating at the Christchurch exhibition. Percy Grainger listened to these recordings in January 1909 and wrote in a telegram to his mother Rose Grainger on 20 January 1909: "NEVER HEARD THE LIKE TREAT EQUAL TO WAGNER I AM GODLY LUCKY […]" (Dreyfus 1985: 263) and in a letter to Roger Quilter: "these Rarotongan things are the strongest impressions I've met since the Faeroe dance tunes. These are dance

music also. But *polyphonic*." (Bird 1999: 147–148; italics in original)

Grainger comments in his article "The Impress of Personality in Unwritten Music" (1915) on the music and the way the Rarotonga singers perform their "improvised part-singing" (Grainger 1915: 423).

> These choral songs, which were sung as thank-offerings by the Rarotongas in return for gifts they received from the Maoris of Otaki, are more full of the joy of life than any other music (art or native) it has yet been my good fortune to hear, though they also abound in touching and wistful elements. (Grainger 1915: 424)

Later in the same article he draws attention to the performers:

> It will be seen that a great range of personal choice was left to all the members of this Rarotongan choir, in each of whom a highly complex, delicate and critical sense for ensemble was imperative. Each of these natives had to be a kind of improvising communal composer, and to a far greater degree simultaneously creative and executive than is the case with peasant songsters in Great Britain or Scandinavia, though a somewhat similar gift for complex improvised part-singing is displayed in the wonderful Russian choral folk music so admirably collected and noted by Madame Lineff. (Grainger 1915: 425)

Percy Grainger, born in 1882 in Brighton, near Melbourne, was a pianist, composer and folk music collector. After being educated in Frankfurt (Germany) he was based in London between 1901 and 1914 and later in the USA, where he died in 1961 (see Dreyfus 1983). He is often described as a contradictory and eccentric character. It is especially striking that although he was interested in different kinds of music and in the musical traditions of different parts of the world, in letters to friends he expressed extreme anti-Semitic and racial views (see Gillies, Pear 1994: 4–6). David Pear emphasizes that: "His private writings reveal a more insidious racism than his mellowed words for public consumption." (Pear 2006: 33)

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[8] An entry is planned for the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Music and Culture*, general editor Janet Sturman, publication probably in 2017.

As far as other uses of the term 'multi-part music' in the ethnomusicological literature are concerned, a prominent case is to be found in the book *Metre, Rhythm, Multi-Part Music* by Jaap Kunst (1950). Including examples from Hornbostel's and Schneider's publications, Kunst states: "we find true two-part and multi-part music in many parts of the world, […]" (Kunst 1950: 35). At the same time he uses the division in "a. polyphony, […] b. homophony" (Kunst 1950: 37) which strongly recalls Hornbostle's understanding mentioned in section 3 of this paper. Bruno Nettl remarks hereof: "The term '*multi-part music*', as used by Kunst, comes closer to our definition of polyphony than does the term *polyphony* in its narrow sense." (Nettl 1963: 247) This view applies to many studies until today, including for example two of the latest publications by Gerhard Kubik about multipart singing practices in several regions in Africa (Kubik 2010 and 2014).

The different connotations given to the term 'multipart music', which comes, like the term 'ethnomusicology' itself, from a European language, reflect concepts established alongside the background of different scholarship perspectives. Connotations which are connected with the musical outcome have a longer history. Those connected with the ways in which this music comes into being as well as with the action and interaction of music makers became pivotal for research only later. As a matter of fact, observations on specific phenomena connected with the second tendency may also be found every now and then in early studies and writings, as in the above-mentioned statement by Grainger about the "great range of personal choice" and the "highly complex, delicate and critical sense for ensemble" of Rarotonga singers. Nevertheless, it was Alan Merriam's interpretation of music with three areas of equal importance – concept, behaviour, and sound – (1964) and, more especially, John Blacking's view of music-making as a special kind of intentional, meaningful human action (1979) that had a strong impact on research into the roles of protagonists in the making of multipart music.

Referring to only a few studies based on long term research into some musical practices in Europe might help to obtain an impression of the vast diversity of the issues focused on in this context. *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music* is the title of a study by Timothy Rice published in 1994. The results of the research are based on experiences and cooperation with many musicians, especially with a well-known bagpipe player and his wife, and with a well-known singer. Rice aims to provide an understanding of how music is individually created and experienced, how it is historically constructed, and how it is socially maintained (Rice 1994: 8). In Jane Sugarman's study *Engendering Song. Singing and Subjectivity at Prespa Albanian Weddings* (1997), in which multipart songs are a key element, the contexts and contents of performances as well as gender are among the most important issues. By contrast, the passion in the music and the life of a brotherhood are fundamental in the study *Chants de Passion. Au cœur d'une confrérie de Sardaigne* (Songs of Passion. At the Heart of a Brotherhood in Sardinia) (1998b) by Bernard Lortat-Jacob. The focal points of the analysis are questions of time and place, repertoire and musical techniques, faith and celebration, saying, thinking, and doing, as well as conflicts and strategies. In 2009, the book *Cantare a cuncordu. Uno studio a più voci* (Singing a cuncordu. A Study in Many Parts) was published, written by Ignazio Macchiarella and four singers from a village in Sardinia as an experiment in collective writing which lasted more than three years. The processes of the coming into being of this technically very complex singing practice are viewed in various scenarios of the contemporary life of the village. In the study *A Different Voice, A Different Song: Reclaiming Community through the Natural Voice and World Song* (2014), Caroline Bithell focuses on "the natural voice movement, associated in the United Kingdom with a thriving network of open-access community choirs, weekend singing workshops and summer camps" and "a growing transnational network of amateur singers who participate in multicultural music activity by performing songs from 'other' cultures, […]" (Bithell 2014: 1).

The definition used by the ICTM Study Group on Multipart Music, as the subject of continuous discussions, is an attempt to take into account the vast variety of understandings and viewpoints. It reads: "Multipart music is a specific mode of music making and expressive behaviour based on the intentionally distinct and coordinated participation in the performing act by sharing knowledge and shaping values." The results of the discussions held until now are incorporated into the

contributions of the proceedings of the first two symposia published so far: *Multipart music: A Specific Mode of Musical Thinking, Expressive Behaviour and Sound (*Macchiarella 2012) and *Local and Global Understandings of Creativities: Multipart Music Making and the Construction of Ideas, Contexts and Contents* (Ahmedaja 2013). Here I would like to emphasize that one part of the discussions concerning this definition is concentrated on the manifold components of which multipart music is made up and by which it comes into being. Significant in this framework are becoming issues of "who" is performing and "how" (i.e. in what way), "where", "why", "for whom" etc. In many situations such questions seem far more important than "what" is being performed (see Macchiarella in this volume). Significantly, Bernard Lortat-Jacob stated in the section "La musique et son mystère: la *quintina*" (The music and its mystery: la *quintina*) of an essay about the *Chants de Passion* in Sardinia in 1996, that: "La quintina, as a phenomenon of acoustic fusion, is derived from the social fusion which engenders it: it is, in a way, the acoustic witness of an ideal arrangement […]"[9] (Lortat-Jacob 1996: 162).

In this context the term 'part' as an element of a whole appears to a greater extent in the sense of 'taking part', 'playing a role', 'participating in the action', 'influencing interaction', 'performing behaviour' than it does in a "purely" musical context.

5. New terms

New terms are, on the one hand, the result of new perspectives in research, while on the other hand they enable new perceptions of the making and/or understanding of music. Examining the processes by which new terms are invented is therefore of particular significance, not only to know more about the ways the concepts are designated, but also about contemporary tendencies in research.

5.1. New terms based on the musical outcome

Two terms will be focused on in this section of the paper. The first one is *Schwebungsdiaphonie*. It has its roots in psychoacoustic research and stands for a phenomenon known in several musical practices in different parts of the world. The phenomenon described as *polymusic* is also widespread. This is closely connected with situations (mostly ceremonies) "in which different types of music are juxtaposed" (Rappoport 2013: 33).

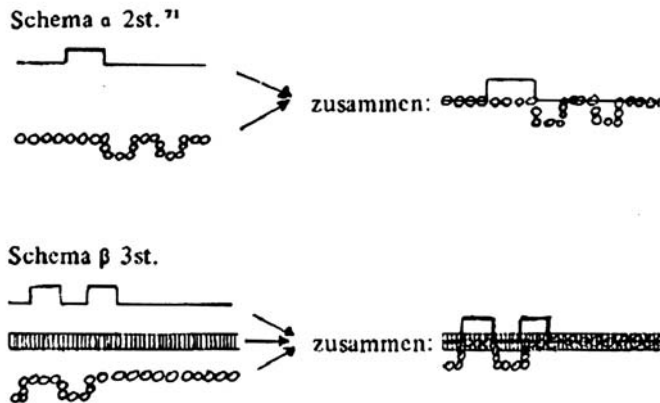### 5.1.1. *Schwebungsdiaphonie*

The German term *Schwebungsdiaphonie* is made up of the nouns *Schwebung* and *Diaphonie*. While the second noun is another use of the Greek term, the first one means 'to beat', and also contains the root of the verb *schweben* for 'floating, hanging in the balance'. The term describes a sound created through modulations of frequency and amplitude. This state is known in psychoacoustics as the 'maximal roughness' (German: *maximale Rauhigkeit*).

As early as 1953, Heinrich Husmann noted from the viewpoint of psychoacoustics that the phenomenon can occur only in the state of monaural hearing, forming one of the reasons which constrain performers to stand close together. Later on, in 1974, Ernst Terhardt wrote a well-known article entitled "On the Perception of Periodic Sound Fluctuations (Roughness)". Gerald Florian Messner examined the phenomenon in his PhD dissertation *Die Schwebungsdiaphonie in Bistrica. Untersuchungen der mehrstimmigen Liedformen eines mittelwestbulgarischen Dorfes* completed in 1976 and published in 1980. In 2013 followed the English translation, which is entitled: *Do They Sound Like Bells or Like Howling Wolves? Interferential Diaphony in Bistritsa. An Investigation Into a Multi-Part Singing Tradition in a Middle-Western Bulgarian Village* (Messner 2013).

According to Messner, the sound of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* in the multipart songs in Bistrica is "a strong interferentiated interval between 80 and 165 cents (this corresponds more or less to a difference of about 15–30 Hz)" ("ein stark interferierendes Intervall zwischen 80–165 Cent (dies entspricht etwa einem Distanzunterschied von 15–30 Hz)"; Messner 1980: 61). It is created through a "combination manoeuvre [of the vocal parts] to reach the reference tone" ("Kombinationsmanöver zur Erreichung des Bezugstones, […]";

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[9] "Phénomène de fusion acoustique, la quintina naît de la fusion social qui l'engendre: elle est en quelque sorte le témoin acoustique d'une entente idéale […]."

Figure 1. Combination maneuvers of the vocal parts to reach the reference tone in two- and three-part songs from the village Bistrica in Bulgaria (a fragment from Messner 1980: 60).

Messner 1980: 60). Messner gives the following interpretation of this phenomenon in two- and three-part songs from the Bulgarian village of Bistrica. Fig. 1 depicts schematically the long dwell tones in which the condition of *Schwebung* is reached. They "are almost always of the same duration as the moved 'melodic' section" ("fast immer ebenso lang dauern wie der bewegte 'melodische' Abschnitt"; Messner 1980: 61).

The main attention of the [female] singers is directed towards "the central tone and the common sound" ("auf den Zentralton und auf den Gesamtzusammenklang gerichtet"; Messner 1980: 61). The performers are strongly dependent "on the psychologically produced and experienced sound" ("vom psychologisch erzeugten und erlebten schwebenden Klang"; Messner 1980: 61).

From the publications of Rudolf Brandl concerning the term and the phenomenon, the following articles can be mentioned: "Die bulgarische Schwebungsdiaphonie und ihre balkanischen Parallelen im Lichte neuer psychoakustischer Erkenntnisse" (The Bulgarian Schwebungsdiaphonie and its Balkan Parallels in the Light of New Psycho-Acoustical Knowledge), (1989a) and "Die Schwebungs-Diaphonie – aus musikethnologischer und systematisch-musikwissenschaftli-

cher Sicht" (The Schwebungs-Diaphonie from the Musical-Ethnological and Systematic-Comparative Musicological Perspective) (1989b). Later on, Brandl defines the term as follows:

> […] the *Schwebungsdiaphonie (roughness-diaphony)* is a two to three-dimensional mixed form of inherent inter-weavings of patterns and heterophony. In the Balkans, the dominant meta-rule of voice-crossings of the parts causes virtual two–three parts that in some cases fuse together with the maximal-dissonant drone-*cluster* lying in a small range of tones, with the most punctual localization possible, and the separate parts remain dependent and do not make sense without each other.[10] (Brandl 2008: 289)

A similar sound has been found in the Admiralty Islands. Messner published the results of his work there in the article "The Two-Part Vocal Style on Baluan Island Manus Province, Papua New Guinea", in which he refers to parallels to the Bulgarian case and similarities to other musical practices in Europe, Asia and Africa (Messner 1981: 435). In the above-mentioned essay of 2008, Brandl also points out other examples:

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[10] "*Schwebungsdiaphonie* […] ist eine zwei- bis dreidimensionale Mischform aus inhärenter Pattern-Verflechtung und Heterophonie, wobei auf dem Balkan durch die dominante Meta-Regel aus Stimmkreuzungen der Parts virtuelle 2–3 Stimmen entstehen, die z. T. mit dem maximal-dissonanten, im engen Tonraum liegenden Bordun-Cluster bei möglichst punktueller Lokalisierung verschmelzen, wobei die Einzelparts unselbständig sind und einzeln keinen Sinn ergeben." (Brandl 2008: 307)

Schwebungsdiaphonie was and is found in Flores, Indonesia (J. Kunst); among ethnic minorities in the border area of Burma and Yünnan (China) where it seems to be linked with mouth organs made of bamboo (recordings by Brandl 1998); on the Admiralty Islands near Papua New Guinea (Messner 1981 and 1986); in a slightly different form among the Nuristani (border between Afghanistan and Pakistan); and on Taiwan among the indigenous people (a historical recording found in Berliner Phonogrammarchiv with a ritual song for the god of millet). (Brandl 2008: 283)

Rytis Ambrazevičius, who has worked on the phenomenon of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* and its peculiarities in the Lithuanian vocal and instrumental *sutartinės*, emphasized:

> […] it should be pointed out that the requirement of maximum roughness is not categorical in the Lithuanian case […] It could be stated that maximum roughness is a desirable quality, but the zone of the suitable roughness is quite wide; the factor of roughness is possibly reduced by other important factors of articulation. (Ambrazevičius 2005b: 19; see also Ambrazevičius 2005a: 253)

Concerning Baluan, Messner reports on the attention of the performers "to detailed rules concerning certain standing positions, and the particular angles formed between the two singers […] It is striking that similar rules for performance are observed by all the people who perform *Schwebungsdiaphonie* […]." (Messner 1981: 442) It is interesting that in Manus Messner played "a tape of different types of *Schwebungsdiaphonie* without telling the listeners where it was from. They recognized the music as being closely related to their own style and at first thought it came from neighboring areas of their province." (Messner 1981: 445)

Similarities among the traditions in question had already been noted by Alan Lomax in 1976: "Melanesia, Admiralties, Baluan Island. Three women performing in harmony amazingly close to Balkan examples." (Lomax 1976: 173) Hornbostel, who had heard recordings from the Admiralty Islands made by Richard Thurnwald in 1907 (Thurnwald 1910: 140–142), had hesitated to give any theoretical explanation of the peculiarities of this sound, in his article of 1909 (Hornbostel 1909: 300).

5.1.2. Polymusic

The neologism 'polymusic' was coined in 1991 at a seminar of the French Ethnomusicology Laboratory of the French National Scientific Research Centre (CNRS). Dana Rappoport notes that it was defined by the acoustician Gilles Léothaud (n.d.) as being the total result of the simultaneous, deliberate presence of several autonomous musical entities, without any coordination in time (Rappoport 2013: 10, footnote 5). This is "a special kind of musical performance, surprisingly widespread throughout the world, which involves a particular use of sound in space and time: various musical acts are performed simultaneously and deliberately in the same space." (Rappoport 2013: 9) Rituals very often offer good opportunities to perceive this phenomenon. It is therefore not a surprise that Rappoport has experienced and researched it in several kinds of ritual in Indonesia. She defines this manner of music-making as follows:

> Polymusic can be understood as a phenomenon in which two or more groups simultaneously perform different tunes (i.e. that could also be played separately), derived from the same or different genres, but without temporal/rhythmic coordination (that is, they do not entrain a shared beat, and they do not begin and end together), and without the intention of playing a single piece of music together but rather of playing separately, side by side. (Rappoport 2013: 10)

In other musical practices individuals also make music in this manner. One example is a now almost vanished lament of women in the town of Gjirokastër in the region of Labëri in southern Albania. One of its local designations is *të qarët me bot* (Shituni 1982: 140), which might literally be translated into English as 'mourning with jugs/mugs' in the sense of 'full of tears'. This used to happen (or still happens) during the rituals for a dead person as well as on memorial days in cemeteries.

5.2. 'Singing in company'

The concept of 'singing in company' was shaped by Bernard Lortat-Jacob in his keynote address for

the symposium European Voices II (Vienna 2008), contributions to which were published in 2011 (see Lortat-Jacob 2011). In several of his previous studies he had paid attention to the action and interaction of the makers of music (see for example 1990, 1993, 1998a, 1998b, 2001, 2004). In the 2011 essay his interest lay on the motivation of "company" singers, their aesthetic feelings, their styles and their performances. Important at the same time are those who watch the singers, who listen to them and who are not fundamentally different from them since, over the course of the evening, they are likely to take their place and quite often covet it (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 23).

Furthermore, each moment of musical time is also social time "offered to the senses and directed at the affects. By definition, those affects are 'embodied', but this embodiment is always both mediatised and socially qualified by the performers' personal history (or rather by what is known of it)." (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 28) The affects represent the performer and offer a unique image "which is definite in time, partially controlled and above all subject to interpretation. They feed shared experiences (just as much as they feed on them) which are not only lived through but also played through." (Ibid.)

The mutuality between the performer's personality and the performers' interaction shows how this music stems from "a body of uncertainties due to the superposition of approximate knowledge and know-how." (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 33) These prevalent features, present in all social and musical aspects of the performance, contribute significantly to making every performance "a musical adventure" (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 24) and a surprise from which the "interest for the song and its beauty proceed" (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 33).

Conclusions

The starting point of the discussion about the designation of concepts in studies of multipart music in this article was Hilary Putnam's idea of getting away from the picture of the meaning of a word as something like a *list of concepts* (Putnam 1975: 146). The current results of philosophical discus-

sion on the concept as a fundamental category of existence emphasize the importance such a discussion has also for studies of multipart music.

Moreover, ideas such as that of the notions of object and existence having a multitude of different uses rather than one absolute "meaning" are all too familiar in ethnomusicology. The vast diversity of the musical practices focused on, the local terminologies, the manifold worldviews of the individuals involved in them, and the significant impact the terminology of studies of "Western art music" plays are all decisive in this framework.

The two different perspectives in philosophy concerning the question of the priority of language over concepts or vice versa are notable as well. The view of concepts as prior to and independent of natural language, which is considered in this case to be a means for transmitting thought (see Fodor 1975) opposes that which claims that at least in some cases concepts are established in the internal system of representation, constituting natural language competence (Carruthers 1996).

In studies of multipart music the designation of concepts is connected both to the different understandings attributed to terms in use and to the establishment of new terms. The different understandings of the most-commonly used umbrella terms in English ethnomusicological literature 'polyphony' (section 2) and 'multipart music' (section 4) are remarkable. The same can be said about the German term *Mehrstimmigkeit* (section 3). The establishment of new terms shows two main tendencies. In many studies the attention is concentrated primarily on the musical outcome. In this article the terms *Schwebungsdiaphonie* (section 5.1.1) and 'polymusic' (section 5.1.2) were discussed. In other investigations the focus is on the role of music makers, their understandings and the complexity of their interactions both in the moment of the performance and outside it. In this context the term 'singing in company' (section 5.2) was presented.

In conclusion, it can be said that the different approaches presented in this paper are attempts to verbalize the actions of the (re)creation of acoustical forms based on the interactions of "individualists in company".

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Mõistete määratlemine mitmehäälse muusika uuringutes

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Ardian Ahmedaja
(tõlkinud Žanna Pärtlas)

Selle artikli lähtepunktiks on Hilary Putnami idee loobuda ettekujutusest sõna tähendusest kui millestki *mõistete nimekirja* meenutavast (Putnam 1975). Kaasaegne filosoofiline diskussioon mõiste kui olemise fundamentaalse kategooria üle on jõudnud tulemusteni, mis rõhutavad sellise diskussiooni tähtsust muu hulgas ka mitmehäälse muusika uurimise jaoks.

Peale selle on seisukoht, et objekti ja olemise mõistetel on pigem palju erinevaid kasutusvõimalusi kui üks absoluutne „tähendus", vägagi tuttav ka etnomusikoloogias. Uuritavate muusikapraktikate erakordne mitmekesisus, kohalikud terminoloogiad, nendega seotud indiviidide erinevad maailmavaated ja „Lääne kunstmuusika" terminoloogia tugev mõju mängivad selles raamistikus otsustavat rolli.

Peab samuti mainima filosoofia kahte erinevat perspektiivi, mis puudutavad küsimust keele prioriteedist mõistete suhtes või vastupidi. Arusaam, et mõisted on primaarsed ja sõltumatud loomuliku keele suhtes, mida vaadeldakse sel juhul mõtte edasiandmise vahendina (Fodor 1975), vastandub arusaamale, mille järgi vähemalt mõnedel juhtudel kujunevad mõisted loomuliku keele kompetentsi moodustavas sisemises representatsioonisüsteemis (Carruthers 1996).

Mitmehäälse muusika uuringutes on mõistete määratlemine seotud erinevate arusaamadega, mida omistatakse kasutusel olevatele terminitele, ning samuti uue terminite väljatöötamisega. Erinevad arusaamad terminitest *polyphony* (artikli 2. peatükk) ja *multipart music* (4. peatükk), mis on kõige tavalisemad katusterminid ingliskeelses etnomusikoloogias, on tähelepanuväärsed. Samal ajal kui esimene nendest terminitest on kasutusel olnud väga erinevates kontekstides Kreeka antiikajast alates, ilmub teine 20. sajandi alguses peamiselt seoses kohalike muusikapraktikatega maailma eri osades. Selle kasutus suurenes pärast Jaap Kunsti raamatu „Metre, Rhythm, Multi-Part Music" publitseerimist 1950. aastal. Veel üks katustermin on saksakeelne määratlus *Mehrstimmigkeit* (3. peatükk). Seda kasutasid juba etnomusikoloogia eelkäija võrdleva muusikateaduse alusepanijad, näiteks Guido Adler (1885) ja Erich M. von Hornbostel (1909).

Uue terminite väljatöötamine näitab peamiselt kahte tendentsi. Suures osas uurimustest keskendutakse kõigepealt muusikalisele tulemusele. Teiste uuringute fookuses on muusikategijate roll, nende arusaamad ja nende interaktsiooni keerulisus esituse hetkel ja selle üle arutlemisel.

Esimene termin, mille üle arutletakse artiklis seoses muusikalise tulemusega, on *Schwebungsdiaphonie* (alapeatükk 5.1.1). Selle aluseks on psühhoakustilised uuringud nähtusest, mis esineb mitmes muusikapraktikas maailma eri paigus. See termin kirjeldab sagedus- ja amplituudmodulatsiooni abil tekitatud heli. Sellist kõlaefekti tuntakse psühhoakustikas kui „maksimaalset karedust". On tähelepanuväärne, kui tugevasti sõltuvad esitajad psühholoogiliselt tekitatud ja kogetud kõlast.

Teine muusikalisest tulemusest lähtuv uus termin, mille üle artiklis arutletakse, on *polymusic*. Selline muusikalise esituse vorm põhineb kõla erilisel kasutamisel ruumis ja ajas: erinevad muusikalised aktid on teostatud üheaegselt ja ettekavatsetult samas ruumis. See tähendab, et kaks või rohkem rühma (või indiviidi) esitavad samaaegselt erinevaid viise (s.t. selliseid, mida võib esitada ka eraldi), mis pärinevad samast või mitmest eri žanrist, kuid ilma ajalise/rütmilise koordinatsioonita (s.t. nad ei jaga ühist pulssi ning ei alga ega lõpe koos) ja ilma kavatsuseta mängida koos ühte muusikapala, vaid pigem kavatsusega mängida eraldi üksteise kõrval.

Nendest uutest terminitest, mis on põhiliselt seotud muusikategijate rollidega, esitletakse artiklis terminit *singing in company* (alapeatükk 5.2). Bernard Lortat-Jacob, kellelt pärineb see termin, keskendub kooslauljate motivatsioonile, nende esteetilistele tunnetustele, nende stiilidele ja nende esitustele. Samas on tema jaoks tähtsad ka need inimesed, kes jälgivad lauljaid, kes kuulavad neid ja kes ei ole lauljatest oluliselt erinevad, kuna õhtu jooksul nad võivad asendada lauljaid ning sageli ihkavad seda (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 23).

Veelgi enam – muusikalise aja iga hetk on samuti ka sotsiaalne aeg, mis on „avatud meeltele ja suunatud afektidele. Need afektid on vältimatult „kehastatud", kuid seda kehastamist vahendab ja määratleb sotsiaalselt alati esitajate isiklik ajalugu (või see, mis on sellest teada)." (Lortat-Jacob 2011: 28.) Afektid esindavad esitajat ja pakuvad unikaalset kujundit, „mis on ajas määratud, osaliselt kontrollitud ning on ühtlasi interpretatsiooni objektiks. Nad toidavad jagatud kogemusi (just sama palju, kui nad toituvad nendest), mida mitte ainult ei elata läbi, vaid ka mängitakse läbi." (*Ibid.*)

Lõpetuseks peab ütlema, et erinevad lähenemised, mida selles artiklis esitletakse, on kõik katsed sõnastada akustiliste vormide (taas)loomise aktsioone, mis põhinevad „seltskonnas tegutsevate individualistide" [*individualists in company*] interaktsioonidel.