

The Question of “Harmony” in a Local Multipart Music Practice: Eastern Latvia as a Field for Terminological Experimentation

Anda Beitāne

Abstract

There are many examples of multipart singing practices in Latvia (as well as in Lithuania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and elsewhere) that can be examined as being more or less connected with functional harmony. This kind of multipart singing is usually called ‘harmonic polyphony / multipart singing’ or ‘homophonic polyphony / multipart singing’ in the local academic literature. In these cases it means the researchers have considered that the multipart singing concerned is based on the logic of functional harmony or that functional harmony has influenced its creation.

It does not help very much to choose one of these terms as the right one or the better one. In either case doing so is no more than an attempt to put together two different things: the Western term, which comes from so-called “Art music” theory, and musical structures that follow other “mechanisms” and rules.

Does the music designated by the terms ‘harmonic’ or ‘homophonic’ include functional harmony? Does the term designate what the music makers mean? How can the analysis of the chords help to find solutions concerning the terminology? What does ‘part’ mean? How can the local folk terminology help us to make terminological experimentation? From which viewpoint can we analyse the instrumentation of sound in multipart singing practices? What is the role of music theory and anthropology in this context? These are the questions I would like to discuss, using examples of multipart singing from eastern Latvia.

Introduction

Upon joining the Study Group on Multipart Music of the International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) some years ago, I was very happy to use the term ‘multipart singing’, which I found to be much more precise and corresponding better to the music that was the subject of my studies. But I have to admit that at that time I used this term rather as an alternative to the English term ‘polyphony’, equivalent to the Latvian *daudz balsība* (*daudz* – multi, *balsis* – voice, part), which is a direct translation of German *Mehrstimmigkeit* and Russian *многоголосие*. So, at first it was merely a question of translation. It was only later, while preparing my paper for the symposium European Voices III (23–26 April 2013, Vienna) and thinking of the instrumentation and instrumentalisation of sound in local multipart music practices in eastern Latvia, that I began to realise the conceptual aspects of the term. One of the conclusions I drew was that the terms we often use to describe and analyse these practices do not always designate

exactly what the singers mean when actually making multipart music. Accordingly, this might be a good reason to review some of these terms used in discussing multipart music in the light of the concept of the ICTM Study Group on Multipart Music, whose current definition of multipart music 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”.¹

As Ignazio Macchiarella writes in the introduction of the book *Multipart Music: A Specific Mode of Musical Thinking, Expressive Behaviour and Sound*,

Often, multipart music is considered mainly (or totally) as ‘musical outcomes’ or mere ‘musical textures’, i.e. as a compilation of ‘musical objects’ [...] or as overlapping between depersonalized melodic lines or musical materials. Based on a largely reductionist approach to music, many analyses try to explain multipart music in terms of structural elements alone:

¹ www.multipartmusic.eu (6 July 2015).

intervals, melodic behaviours, interlocks among sounds, harmonies, and so forth.

Since we are ethnomusicologists, we believe that music has to be personalized; in fact to humanize music makings is the main feature of our approach to music study. In such a direction, I would concisely propose some general items for our Study Group's discussions, pivoted on a basic point: *to study multipart music means to focus on what individuals do when they sing/play together in organized ways* (Macchiarella 2012: 9).

This statement not only helps us to think about the different emphases that we make in our research work but can also be a good starting point in trying to find answers to the question of how to deal with these 'musical outcomes' that are a part of the result of this singing and playing together, which is also the subject we have to analyse. This question has been very relevant for me since I have been working with multipart music. Therefore, in this article I would like to take the opportunity to discuss the terminology connected with the term 'multipart music' or, more precisely, the terms used in the analysis of this kind of music also (but not exclusively) when talking about musical textures within the concept of multipart music.

There are several cases in different research practices in which we can see quite strong systems of (local) terminology (more or less connected with an international terminology) that are already part of the educational system with their own history, and which have sometimes been used automatically, without any explanation of what these terms actually mean and why they have been used. The problem arises when it is necessary to translate these terms, and the researcher suddenly realises there are no equivalents in the other language. Some of my colleagues would be very happy if someone could give them the "right" terms they need in English, but it is not always so easy. Since we are using different languages the question will always be about translation, but we can work with this on two levels: we can try to translate the terms, and we can try also to "translate" the concepts, which include the terms as well. And the most important thing is to find how and why to use these terms in analysis.

Homophonic vocal polyphony, harmonic or homophonic multipart singing or something else?

The question of "harmony" in multipart music practices originally arose in my case for two reasons: first, because of local research traditions and problems of terminology, and secondly because of the particular multipart music practices I am working with and the fact that for a long time it was self-evident to consider this material from the viewpoint of functional harmony. The third and most important reason comes now, reflecting on all this in the light of the concept of multipart music.

There are many examples of multipart singing practices in Latvia (as well as in Lithuania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and elsewhere) that can be examined as being more or less connected with functional harmony. This kind of multipart singing is usually called 'harmonic' polyphony / multipart singing (sometimes 'homophonic' polyphony / multipart singing) in the local academic literature. In these cases it means the researchers have considered that the multipart singing concerned is based on the logic of functional harmony or that functional harmony has influenced its creation.

We can find three descriptions of Latvian polyphony or multipart singing in the music dictionaries. The first, published in 1996 in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart. Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik* and written by Martin Boiko, states that "[d]ie jüngere Schicht der Volksmusik umfaßt auf funktioneller Harmonik basierende Lieder und Tanzmusik" (Boiko 1996b: 1103) and uses the terms *homophone, auf Funktionsharmonik basierende, vokale Mehrstimmigkeit* (Boiko 1996b: 1103).

Four years later, the article "Latvia" by Valdis Muktupāvels was published in *The Garland Encyclopaedia of World Music*, where we see the terms 'two- or three-part singing' and 'western Lithuanian homophony':

These songs are performed mostly solo. Two- or three-part singing, resembling that of western Lithuanian homophony, is characteristic for south-western Kurzeme. Singing in thirds with the melody in the upper voice can be heard all over Latgale, and this style is certainly influenced by liturgical singing (Muktupāvels 2000: 500).

The third description, also written by Boiko, was published in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* in 2001:

More recent homophonic polyphony based on functional harmony is found chiefly and in great variety in the Catholic south-east, with a small 'island' of this phenomenon in the south-west. [...] Besides a type of polyphony with strict functional differentiation of the parts, there is another more reminiscent of heterophony influenced by functional harmony. Some examples display evidence of interaction between the ostinato-like syllabic drone and the harmonic parallel 3rds. [...] Two-part or three-part polyphony predominates, although the number of parts is not strictly regulated, and depends on the specific experience and skills of the singers. Even in what is basically a two-part polyphonic song, divergences in the supporting part can lead to sporadic occurrences of three-part polyphony (Boiko 2001: 361).

The terms used in this article concerning this topic are: 'homophonic polyphony based on functional harmony', 'heterophony influenced by functional harmony', 'interaction between the ostinato-like syllabic drone and the harmonic parallel thirds', 'two-part or three-part polyphony'.

Conversely, in the article "On the Interaction of Styles in Baltic Traditional Music: Baltic Polyphony and East Baltic Refrain Songs" (2000) Boiko uses the terms 'vocal multi-part music' and 'homophonic multi-part singing' as well, although in the title of the article and also of the sub-chapter ("East Baltic refrain songs and later forms of Latvian and Lithuanian vocal polyphony") we still find 'polyphony' / 'vocal polyphony':

Throughout Lithuania and in southeastern Latvia (in the areas called Latgale and Augszeme) diverse types of homophonic multi-part singing are widespread. These kinds of vocal multi-part music are based on the principles of functional harmony and are supposed to be of later origin. Both in eastern Latvia and eastern Lithuania there is no lack of southeastern Baltic refrain songs, their melodies being used in homophonic multi-part constructions as principal parts. The East Baltic refrain songs are mainly modal melodies. The process of

their being 'taken up' into homophonic constructions has as its consequence their 'majorization'. (The term 'majorization' – that is, the process of transforming melodies into major keys – is an equivalent of German term *Verdahrung* and the Russian *omazorivanie*.) When comprising a modal melodic structure, the accompanying parts ignore the modal quality of it. The tones making up a melody become re-interpreted as degrees of a major key (Boiko 2000: 6).

Thus, we can see the terms 'polyphony' and 'multipart music/singing' are used here as synonyms. In addition, the article also mentions such terms as 'homophonic multi-part constructions' and 'majorization', obviously in an attempt to illustrate the process of transforming the musical thinking in the direction of functional harmony. The term 'folk arrangement', used at the end of the article, can be understood as an assumption that there has been a large process of interaction between old modal melodies and their "taking up" into "homophonic constructions":

More often than in Lithuania, the East Baltic refrain songs (mostly the summer and winter solstice songs) have been used in homophonic constructions in south-east Latvia. Besides simple arrangements with uninterrupted or predominating consecutive thirds, there are also more complex cases, such as in some southeast Latvian districts where a specific form of multi-part singing with a high solo accompanying part is widespread. Songs of this category are in three or four parts. The solo accompanying part is taken by a single woman with a particularly high, penetrating voice. Other parts are performed by several singers. The high accompanying part sometimes comes in after the semi-cadence, sometimes just before the cadence but never at the very beginning of the melodic strophe. The high accompanying part may take various forms: for instance, it can be introduced in consecutive thirds to the principal part or an octave above the lower accompanying part, etc. In three-part constructions the principal part is the middle or the lower part. In four-part songs it is one of the middle parts. The songs of this category are performed powerfully, at a slow tempo and often in the open air.

Even among them one finds arrangements of the East Baltic refrain songs. [...] Such folk arrangements of summer solstice melodies are widespread in Eastern Latvia in the parishes near the Russian border (Boiko 2000: 6–7).

Coming back to the question of "harmony", we can conclude that the terms used by Boiko concerning multipart music based on the principles of functional harmony are 'homophonic (vocal) polyphony and/or multipart singing (music)'. The first work in which this term was mentioned was his dissertation, *Die Litauischen Sutartinės. Eine Studie zur baltischen Volksmusik* (Hamburg, 1996): "Der späte mehrstimmige Gesang ist in Lettland, und zwar durch homophone Mehrstimmigkeit, vertreten" (Boiko 1996a: 158). In the Latvian version, which was published only in 2008, we can find also a short remark that "it is also called harmonic polyphony [*to mēdz saukt arī par harmonisko daudzbalsību*]" (Boiko 2008: 186). This means he considers these two terms 'harmonic polyphony' and 'homophonic polyphony' as synonyms.

There are many cases in the literature when ethnomusicologists, writing about different regions of the world, have used both of the above-mentioned terms. Actually, it does not help very much to choose one of them as the right one or the better one. In either case doing so is no more than an attempt to put together two different things: the Western term, which comes from so-called "Art music" theory, and musical structures that follow other "mechanisms" and rules. Even if the sound of multipart music practice seems more or less close to Western functional harmony, it is good to look deeper and try to understand whether the music is actually based on functional harmony. And, if this seems to be the case, maybe it is possible to find other more precise terms that correspond better to the rules of the music.

Here I would like to mention the suggestion by Gerlinde Haid, who writes in the second volume of *European Voices* and speaks about two different types of multipart singing, which are identical with regard to the technique of harmony:

But one speaks of 'two-part turnover singing' in relation to triad melodies, in which due to the greater range there is a change of register, whereas 'two-part singing adding thirds' has linking melodies and small ranges and contains no change of register. The expression

'turnover' ('Überschlag') has therefore been taken up as a scientific term because of its particular clarity (Haid 2011: 156).

This might be a way to personalise specific types of multipart music in different local practices as opposed to designating all of them as only depersonalised harmonic or homophonic music. It also does not tell us very much about the music from the textural point of view if we say, for example, 'Western Lithuanian homophony' or 'Eastern Latvian homophony' etc. In fact, such descriptions actually raise more questions than they answer.

Terminological experimentations

The questions I would like to discuss, using examples of multipart singing from eastern Latvia include: does the music designated by the terms 'harmonic' or 'homophonic' include functional harmony?; does the term designate what the music makers mean?; how can the analysis of the chords help to find solutions concerning the terminology?; what does 'part' mean? – for example, is it still singing in two parts if several singers are singing the same melodic line, making only a few sporadic three- or four-part episodes?; how can the local folk terminology help us to make terminological experimentation?; from which viewpoint can we analyse the instrumentation of sound in multipart singing practices?; what is the role of music theory and anthropology in this context?

The following quote by Bruno Nettl, written over 50 years ago now, may also be helpful in trying to answer the above questions, although it is related to polyphony in general and to non-Western cultures:

While we can usually describe and measure the number of pitches heard at one time and thus come to a rigid definition, there is the possibility that members of cultures other than ours might not consider materials which we call polyphonic as polyphonic at all, or, perhaps more likely, consider as polyphonic a kind of music which we consider monophonic (Nettl 1963: 247).

The same can be related to the question of harmony in local multipart music practices. Clearly, the music makers themselves have no ideas about

functional harmony, and there is still the question of whether the music that researchers put on the “shelf” of ‘harmonic or homophonic polyphony’ really includes functional harmony at all. It might seem that it does when looking from the “outside”, but it is not always so from the “inside”, at least in the eastern part of Europe. If we “focus on what individuals do when they sing/play together in organized ways” (Macchiarella 2012: 9), we can see different rules and more important qualities than the logic of Western harmony. Even if we (as outsiders) can hear a chordal texture, it does not mean the singers are making the chords. Of course, it is possible to analyse almost all musical structures from the viewpoint of Western harmony, but this does not help to explain the music at all. So, the analysis of chords can help to find solutions concerning terminology only if they really are chords also from the viewpoint of the music makers.

Actually, it is quite easy (maybe indeed too easy) to use the terms ‘harmonic’ or ‘homophonic’ to designate all multipart music that in some way might be connected with functional harmony or, in other words, in which it is possible to hear at least something from the logic of this kind of musical thinking. It is also possible to assume that this music is based on the principles of functional harmony, as has been done without question by Latvian ethnomusicologists, including myself, until now. However, the questions start to arise when we analyse specific musical examples and consider them also from the viewpoint of functional harmony.

Does the music include “functional harmony”?

From the above descriptions of Latvian multipart singing in music dictionaries, and according to the opinion generally accepted in Latvian ethnomusicology, it would appear that all forms of later-origin multipart singing in eastern Latvia are homophonic and based on functional harmony, no matter the variety of their texture (Boiko 2008: 191). Thus, it should not be difficult to find in these forms the principles and structures of Western functional harmony. However, very often there are cases when this is more or less problematic. Thus, in the Example 1 we can find the principles of functional harmony only if we are looking su-

perficially. It is possible to speak here about two harmonies that regularly change between each other, but the question is what the harmonic functions are: is it the tonic at the beginning followed by the subdominant, or does the song begin with the dominant and then proceed to the tonic? One thing is quite clear – both functions are equal, and it does not matter how we label them.

The next question that arises concerns the leading part and its homophonic accompaniment. Unfortunately, this is a case in which we cannot ask the singers which is the leading part, because the transcription is made from a historical recording and there is no one in the local practice who can answer this question. It can, however, be assumed that the leading part might be either the middle part or the lower part. Thus, in the first case the accompaniment could be the lower and upper parts, which are sung in octaves; in the second case, it could be one of the two higher parts, the highest of which duplicates the leading part at the octave. At the same time, we cannot exclude that both the middle part and the lower part are equally important, in which case it resembles Curt Sachs’s concept of ‘horizontal polyphony’ where, as he writes, “[...] we hear a lawful coexistence of voice parts or simultaneous melodic lines” (Sachs 1962: 175) instead of “harmony or ‘vertical’ polyphony: we hear simultaneous sounds or ‘chords’ in a lawful sequence of tension (‘dissonance’) and relaxation (‘consonance’)” (Sachs 1962: 175).

Thus, the question still exists of whether we can speak here of a horizontal or vertical way of musical thinking. Most likely they are just three lines: two modal melodies performed simultaneously, of which one has been duplicated an octave higher. The analysis of the chords and their harmonic functions in this case does not make sense, nor does the usage of the term ‘harmonic multipart singing’, which in this case does not help but, on the contrary, makes it more difficult to understand the multipart structure of the example in question.

Does the term designate what the music makers mean?

The answer to this question is very simple: it does not. No-one has ever taught these singers to sing in a number of parts, let alone about such terms as ‘functional harmony’ and ‘homophonic

Example 1. Transcription of the recording (the first verse) of the singers from Salnava (Latvian Radio, 1978).

$\text{♩} = 69-76$

1. si va - ka - reņ - ci, gai - da ma - ņa pa - dzī - žū - ti,

1. At - ī - dam - si va - ka - reņ - ci, gai - da ma - ņa pa - dzī - žū - ti,

1. si va - ka - reņ - ci, gai - da ma - ņa pa - dzī - žū - ti,

Ja - tī - dam - si va - ka - reņ - ci, gai - da ma - ņa pa - dzī - žūt.

Ja - tī - dam - si va - ka - reņ - ci, gai - da ma - ņa pa - dzī - žūt.

Ja - tī - dam - si va - ka - reņ - ci, gai - da ma - ņa pa - dzī - žūt.

or harmonic multipart singing'. When they sing, they do not care about harmonic functions and the chords, which they simply do not know. They sing in the way they have been used to singing their whole lives, and it is not so easy to get answers from the singers regarding the question of how they create the accompanying parts in the framework of multipart singing, because they are not used to talking or even thinking about such things.

When in an interview with Malvīne Ločmele, one of the best second-part singers from north-eastern Latvia, I asked what she does when she sings the second part – aware that she prefers to sing the lower part rather than the melody – this is the answer I received:

It is like this. You should very much listen to the first part. You shouldn't take over. You

saw, when we were singing just now, I never oversang Natālija [the first-part singer and the leader of the group – A. B.]. In 28 years, she has never complained that I have oversung her. I'm always listening. Because my father was a musician, and he was always tuning his *kokle*, and I was listening (Ločmele 2015).

To the question of whether the second part comes naturally, as if by itself, she answered: "Yes, by itself. You can't change yourself, thinking 'I will sing the second part now' if you weren't born with it" (Ločmele 2015). Later in the interview Malvīne remembers that in her youth she learned how to create the second part from an old lady with a very strong voice. As she says, "Yes, they were teaching us, these old ones" (Ločmele 2015). However, this does not mean the older singers were teaching specific parts. According to the interview, they

were just singing together and instructing the younger singers when it did not sound right to them. In that way, the younger singers learned to be creative, singing several parts, already from the very beginning.

In answer to the question “What is it like to sing together with others?” Malvīne answers:

It’s very different. When you get into such company, they can sing any part, but the sound grates upon the ears, as it were. You can’t adapt to these parts. Then it’s better just to join the first part or to not sing at all. I like it better when we are all like one. When all the parts go like they should. It’s so good if everything is in harmony, it sounds so good that it just clicks. Everybody should listen (Ločmele 2015).

Wishing to go deeper in this topic, I asked her the question again, but phrased a bit differently: “What is the feeling of singing together?” The answer followed:

You see, I will tell you! When we sing those songs, if you don’t find the right part, it is difficult to join. You will sit on that side, Silvija and Natālija [the first-part singers she likes to sing with – A. B.] will sit here – this is already difficult for me. I don’t like this. The sound just doesn’t come out of me then. I need to be with Natālija and Silvija. Then it works (Ločmele 2015).

These answers can help, at least in part, to define ‘harmony’ from the viewpoint of the singers. Thus, singing in harmony means such important things as listening (according to the video recordings this is done with almost no eye contact), being close together with the “right” singers, adapting to the other parts, as well as such statements as “the parts have to go like they should” (and it is important to feel [to create] that within the framework of the singing process) and “the sound is good if it just clicks” (like the strings of an instrument when you are tuning them).

What does ‘part’ mean?

This is a question of concept. For example, the singers from eastern Latvia use the same word *bolss* (in the local dialect it means ‘voice’ and also a ‘part’) to designate both – the songs and the

parts. Before singing, they say, “Let’s sing in this *bolss*”: in this case it may be translated as “Let’s sing in this melody”. Thus the folk term *bolss* has several meanings: it can be a song including the whole multipart structure, it can be a part (the first, second, etc.), it can be a melody (the main part in the multipart structure), and finally it can be a singer’s voice, which must also have specific nuances for performing each part. These several meanings sometimes lead to misunderstandings when talking with the singers. Thus, in the interview with Malvīne, when asked how many parts one song can have, she answered, “You know, when I was a shepherd, I sang in all sorts of *bolsi*,” and began to demonstrate various melodies.

There are many cases in eastern Latvian multipart singing practices when two-part singing has been “enriched” by some singers with three- or four-part episodes. The reason for this is the wish to sing something different from what the others sing. From the viewpoint of the researcher, this can, accordingly, be assumed as three- or four-part singing, also because we know the individual lines are very important for the singers, who mostly do not count the parts and are just trying to find a way to show their individual identities. However, if we ask them how many parts they are singing in, the answer is only two, no matter the number of individual lines of the parts. Trying to understand the singers’ way of thinking, I asked Malvīne: “How do you usually divide the parts?” In answer, she named specific singers, of whom two were first-part singers and two were second-part singers. Then I continued: “So, you are two second-part singers. Do you sing the same, or does each of you sing a bit differently?” She thought for quite some time and then just said, “I think there is a difference” (Ločmele 2015). Of course, I wanted to talk more about these differences, but obviously it was so self-evident for Malvīne that she did not even know what to say:

I don’t know. When they oversang, Natālija reproved them at once. Look, Vaļa from *Aizgalīne*, she thinks, ‘Oh, I have a voice!’ She wants to out-sing, so she tried to out-sing, but Natālija said at once, ‘You shouldn’t do like this!’ And so she adapted to us. [...] A voice is a voice! You can yell alone in the forest, but a part should be adapted to the others. If the first part is strong enough, the second part can be

different. But the second part should also listen to whether it sounds good (Ločmele 2015).

Thus, from the viewpoint of the singers, a 'part' means more than only one melodic line. If there are several singers performing the same part, they make different versions simultaneously, but this does not mean they sing different parts. For them it is only two-part singing, in which the first part is the melody and the second part is the lower part, no matter the number of individual lines. The best the researcher can do is to take this into account instead of simply trying to list all the lines he or she hears, because this also shows the way in which the singers create the parts.

The following quote by Nettl, which points to the differences between Western and non-Western cultures concerning the question of "what is polyphony?" can also be helpful for answering "what is a part?":

Do other cultures, in their aesthetic classifications (which may not be verbally formulated) distinguish between songs sung by men only and songs sung in octaves by men and women as we do between monophony and polyphony? There is some evidence that they do. Take the matter of singing in octaves generally. In our culture, we take it for granted that an octave is equivalent to unison. Men and women singing together, in octaves, are not thought to sing polyphony. In some non-Western cultures, the same view exists. But some cultures not only have no polyphony, but as far we know, no singing octaves. Would the aesthetic effect of octaves on a member of a non-polyphonic culture be the same as that of polyphony on a Westerner? The consideration of octaves brings up, parenthetically, the problem of identification of intervals. According to Stumpf's theory of fusibility, many people hear octaves as unisons, some hear fifths as unisons, fewer, again, fourths, etc. There seem to be some cultures, such as the Ceylonese Vedda (though they have been only partially explored), in which singing in parallel fifths is acceptable, but singing in octaves does not seem to occur. Is it possible that the effect is similar to our preference for parallel thirds (before the 20th century) over parallel fifths? Do octaves sound too 'hollow' to the Vedda, but fifths 'rich and full'? Going now beyond

distinction in pitch as a criterion of polyphony, is it possible that some cultures might draw a line between a solo performance and two or more persons singing in real unison similar to our line between monophony and polyphony? Again, two instruments with contrasting timbre performing in unison might in some cultures be considered equivalent to polyphony. Elicitation of such information from informants is bound to be extremely difficult. But we must be aware that the Western distinction may not be the only one, and that a grasp of such distinctions in other cultures might shed important light on basic concepts of music, aesthetics and cultural values (Nettl 1963: 247–248).

Amongst other things, this quotation shows that it is important to pay attention to the distinctions of multipart music practices in different cultures also from the viewpoint of the music makers. When reading about differences in considerations concerning polyphony and intervals in different cultures, it reminds me of how it was difficult for Malvine to speak about the differences in the second part. It can also be assumed that these differences, which we as researchers can hear in this part when it is performed by several singers, are not considered differences at all by the singers themselves.

Another link that can be made between the quote by Nettl and eastern Latvian multipart singing practices concerns the singing of men and women in octaves. An example from north-eastern Latvia comes to mind in which a man singing the drone part of a female song (there were no more women to sing that part and the brother was invited to help) suddenly changed his manner of singing and began to sing an octave higher, as if in a woman's voice. The following quote from the interview with the singer Anna Kaža also illustrates that the singers in eastern Latvia do distinguish between male and female parts sung in octaves. Speaking about her voice and changes in it when she became older, she says:

You see, I don't have a soprano anymore. I had such a soprano that I sang as the nightingale! But I had a husband, a singer as well, he sang in a choir... When my soprano came down, I didn't have it anymore, but this [the lower voice – A. B.] was very good and strong at that

Example 2. Transcription of the recording (the first verse) of the singers from Rekovala (Beitāne 1994).

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is labeled 'The half part' and 'rit.'. The middle staff is labeled 'The first part' and the bottom staff is labeled 'The second part'. The lyrics are: 'Kiu-koj uo - ra za - giu - zī - te, Tu kiu - ko - vi, es rau - doj'. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 40-44. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 5/4. The score shows a change in time signature from 5/4 to 4/4 at the end of the first part.

time, and he says to me: Learn mine! You have it, so just learn it! And I learned from him. So, I sing with this now (Kaža 1987).

Both of these examples show that the singers consider the male and female parts sung in octaves as different parts, although they are able to change these roles as well. I have to add that this is a field in which Latvian ethnomusicologists have not worked very much, maybe in part because of the position that in Western cultures a man and woman singing together in octaves is equivalent to unison, as also according to Nettl. In any case, many new aspects can be found for research into the question of “part” if we turn our attention to the music makers’ way of thinking; the same is true of the repertoires, about which until now it was thought that everything was known already.

How can folk terminology help in terminological experimentation?

Local folk terminology can help very much in reviewing a terminology that corresponds to “a specific mode of music making and expressive behaviour”² in local music practices because it covers the mechanisms that form the basis of this music making. The mechanisms and strategies of the instrumentation of sound, in my opinion, are

the first and main points for the study of multipart music. The role of music theory must therefore first of all respect these mechanisms and strategies.

There is an example in north-eastern Latvia where the singers use the designation ‘singing with a half part’ (*dzīduošana ar pusbolsu*) for a specific form of multipart singing. This form has been characterised by Boiko using the designation ‘multi-part singing with a high solo accompanying part’ (Boiko 2000: 6–7, quoted above), as well as by myself, using the designation ‘multipart singing with a solo upper accompanying part’ (Beitāne 2009, 2012). As the name suggests, and as according to many interviews with singers, the most important feature in this case is the ‘half part’, which is the upper part and which is performed by the soloist. The singer Stefānija Matisāne explains the meaning of it in an interview: “Why is it a half part? Because it is only half of the melody” (Matisāne 1994). This means that the half part begins later than the other parts, usually in about the middle of the verse. Another designation used by the singers is ‘raising up’ or ‘singing with raising up’, which is even more important because it describes the mechanism of creating the half part. Actually, as we can see in the transcription (Example 2), the half part does

² www.multipartmusic.eu (6 July 2015).

not begin in the middle of the verse but has just been raised up by one singer as an almost parallel line to the melody.

The question here is which designation – ‘multipart singing with a solo upper accompanying part’, ‘singing with a half part’ or ‘raising up’ – should be used as a scientific term? The first one, which has been used in Latvian ethnomusicological literature until now, is correct enough to describe the type of multipart singing in question; however, the second one in combination with the third describes the way that the singers intend it as well. If the first designation can be related to many cases of multipart singing with upper accompanying parts, of which there are quite a variety in eastern Latvia, the term that is derived from the folk terminology concerning this specific case makes it more personalised and clear.

Conclusions

Rather than conclusions, these questions lead to further questions. To what extent can we rewrite the terminology? Is it still an open field, or is it already a closed space within which we must work? How near can we as ethnomusicologists approach the way of thinking of the music makers?

This is actually not so difficult if we base our terminology not only on theories and research traditions but if we also open ourselves to focus more on the behaviour of the music makers. Then, instead of using one generalised term for all the forms of multipart music that seem to us to be more or less connected with it, and analysing the depersonalised musical objects only, we can try to understand what the music makers mean as they come to these musical results. Thus, the main viewpoint from which we have to analyse the ‘musical outcomes’ of multipart music is the intentions of the music makers themselves, who

often do not follow generalised rules but realise their individual creativity, which does not always correspond to the theories of ethnomusicologists.

As Jaap Kunst has written in a text cited by many other authors,

[...] we must bear in mind that in musical practice a number of the forms distinguished here merge into each other: who shall say, where we should still speak of a kind of organum, and where we have already passed into the domain of monody with accompaniment; who can draw the exact borderline between homophony and polyphony; who can tell with certainty at which point heterorhythm ends and polyrhythm begins; who can fix the place where heterophony turns into polyphony? The living practice is always richer and more plastic than any scheme-building theory (Kunst 1950: 47).

Thus, it is beneficial if, alongside the theories, the ethnomusicologist does not lose the connection with the living practice, which actually changes all the time. While discussing the question of harmony with my colleague, who sometimes sings with a group that attempts to reconstruct some multipart music practices, including those from eastern Latvia, I found an interesting nuance. As she tells it: “I always thought we blended too much there when singing those triads, that something kind of elusive was lost there” (Tihovska 2014). As we spoke further about whether maybe it was precisely thinking about functional harmony that prevented this “elusive” thing to be perceived and reconstructed, she answered: “Yes, but the question is how much of it [functional harmony – A. B.] is there? Actually, it’s not elusive. It can even be very perceptible, if we look at the thing from another side” (Tihovska 2014).

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„Harmonia” küsimus kohalikus mitmehäälses muusikapraktikas: Ida-Läti terminoloogiaeksperimentide väljana

Anda Beitāne

(tõlkinud Žanna Pärtlas)

Ühinedes mõned aastad tagasi ICTMi (International Council for Traditional Music) mitmehäälses muusika uurimiserühmaga (Study Group on Multipart Music), hakkasin rõõmuga kasutama terminit *multipart singing* (mitmehäälsed laulmine), pidades seda täpsemaks ja paremini vastavaks muusikale, millest ma tahaksin rääkida. Samas pean tunnistama, et tol ajal kasutasin seda terminit pigem alternatiivina ingliskeelsele terminile *polyphony* ja ekvivalendina läti terminile *daudz balsība* (*daudz* – ‘mitme-’, *balsis* – ‘hääli’, ‘partii’), mis on saksa termini *Mehrstimmigkeit* ja vene termini *многоголосие* otsetõlge. Seega oli alguses tegemist vaid tõlkeküsimusega. Selle termini kontseptuaalseid aspekte hakkasin teadvustama hiljem, kui valmistusin ettekandeks sümposionil European Voices III (23.–26. aprill 2013, Viin) ning mõtisklesin kõla instrumenteerimisest ja instrumentaliseerimisest¹ Ida-Läti kohalikes mitmehäälses muusika praktikates. Üks mu järeldusi oli, et terminid, mida me tihti kasutame nende praktikate kirjeldamiseks ja analüüsimiseks, ei tähistata täpselt seda, mida lauljad mitmehäälses muusikas esitades silmas peavad. Seega oleks see hea põhjus, et üle vaadata mõned nendest terminitest mitmehäälses muusika (*multipart music*) definitsiooni valguses, mis on antud eelmainitud uurimiserühma poolt: „Mitmehäälsed muusika [*multipart music*] on musitseerimise ja väljendusliku käitumise [*expressive behaviour*] spetsiifiline viis, mis põhineb taotluslikult eristataval ja koordineeritud osalemisel esituse aktis teadmiste jagamise ja väärtuste kujundamise kaudu.”²

Selles artiklis kasutan võimalust arutleda terminoloogia üle, mis on seotud terminiga *multipart music*, või täpsemini, terminite üle, mida kasutatakse seda laadi muusika analüüsimisel, rääkides muusikalisest faktuurist (kuigi mõistagi mitte ainult faktuurist) mitmehäälses muusika [*multipart music*] kontseptsiooni raames.

Erinevates uurimispraktikates on mitmeid juhuseid, kus me näeme küllalt tugevaid (kohalikke) terminoloogiasüsteeme (enam-vähem seotud rahvusvahelise terminoloogiaga), millest on juba saanud hariduse osa, millel on oma ajalugu ja mida mõnikord kasutatakse automaatselt ilma seletamata, mida terminid tähendavad ja miks on neid kasutatud. Probleem tekib siis, kui on vaja neid termineid tõlkida ning uurija ootamatult teadvustab, et neil ei ole teises keeles vastavusi. Niikaua kui me kasutame eri keeli, jääb tõlkeküsimus alati, kuid sellega võime töötada kahel tasandil: me võime üritada tõlkida termineid ja võime üritada „tõlkida” kontseptsioone, mis sisaldavad endas ka termineid. Ja kõige tähtsam on leida teid, kuidas kasutada neid termineid analüüsis, ja põhjendusi nende kasutamiseks.

„Harmonia” küsimus mitmehäälses muusikalistes praktikates tekib minu uurimuses kahel põhjusel: (1) kohalikud uurimistraditsioonid ja problemaatiline terminoloogia, (2) mitmehäälsed muusikalised praktikad, millel on tegelen, ja tõsiasi, et kaua aega oli iseenesestmõistetav käsitleda seda materjali funktsionaalharmonia seisukohalt. (3) Kolmas ja tähtsaim põhjus on mõtiskleda sellest kõigest mitmehäälses muusika [*multipart music*] kontseptsiooni valguses.

On palju näiteid mitmehäälses laulupraktikatest Lätis (ning samuti Leedus, Venemaal, Valgevenes, Ukrainas jne.), mida saaks vaadelda vähem või rohkem seotuna funktsionaalharmoniaga. Seda mitmehäälses laulmise tüüpi nimetatakse kohalikus teaduskirjanduses tavaliselt „harmooniliseks polüfooniaks / mitmehäälsuseks” või „homofooniliseks polüfooniaks / mitmehäälsuseks”. Nendel juhtudel tähendab see, et uurijate arvates põhineb mitmehäälsed laulmine funktsionaalharmonia loogikal või et funktsionaalharmonia on mõjutanud selle loomist.

¹ Mainitud sümposiooni üheks teemaks oli „The Instrumentation and Instrumentalization of Sound” (tõlkija kommentaar).

² „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.” www.multipartmusic.eu (15.01.2016).

Tegelikult ei ole palju kasu sellest, kui valida üks nendest terminitest kui õigem või parem. Mõlemal juhul oleks see vaid katse panna kokku kahte erinevat asja: Lääne terminit, mis pärineb nn. kunstmuusika teooriast, ja muusikalisi struktuure, mille „mehhanismid“ ja reeglid on teistsugused. Isegi kui mitmehääelse muusika kõla tundub olevat enam-vähem lähedane Lääne funktsionaalharmoonia omale, tasub minna sügavamale ja üritada aru saada, kas muusika tõesti sisaldab funktsionaalharmooniat. Ja kui tundub, et see on nii, siis võib-olla oleks võimalik leida teisi, täpsemaid ja muusika reeglitele paremini vastavaid termineid.

Need on küsimused, mida tahaksin arutada, kasutades näiteid Ida-Läti mitmehäälsel laulust: kas muusika, mida määratletakse terminitega „harmooniline“ ja „homofooniline“, sisaldab funktsionaalharmooniat? Kas termin osutab sellele, mida peavad silmas muusikud? Kuidas akordide analüüs võib aidata leida lahendusi terminoloogia küsimustes? Mida tähendab „partii“ [*part*]? Näiteks, kas laulmine on ikka kahehäälnine [*two-part*], kui mitu lauljat esitavad sama meloodialiini, tekitades vaid mõningaid juhuslikke kolme- või neljahäälsed fragmente? Kuidas võib kohalik rahvapärane terminoloogia aidata meid terminoloogilises eksperimenteerimises? Millisest vaatenurgast me võime analüüsida kõla instrumenteerimist [*instrumentation of sound*] mitmehäälses laulupraktikates? Milline on muusikateooria ja antropoloogia roll selles kontekstis?

Järelduste asemel tõusevad taas esile küsimused: mil määral me võime ümber kirjutada terminoloogiat? Kas see on avatud ala või juba suletud ruum, kus me peame töötama? Millisel määral suudame etnomusikoloogidena läheneda muusikute mõtlemisviisile?

See ei ole tegelikult nii keeruline juhul, kui me ei tugine mitte ainult teooriatele ja uurimistraditsioonidele, vaid avame end, et keskenduda rohkem muusikute käitumisele. Selle asemel et kasutada üht üldistatud terminit mitmehäälsuse kõikide vormide jaoks, mis tunduvad meile sellega enam-vähem seotud, ja analüüsida üksnes impersonaalseid muusikaobjekte, võiksime pealegi üritada mõista, mida muusikud mõtlevad, kui jõuavad antud muusikaliste tulemusteni. Seega on põhiline vaatenurk, millest lähtudes tuleb analüüsida „muusikalisi tulemusi“ mitmehäälses muusikas, järgmine: mida mõtlevad muusikud, kes sageli ei järgi üldistatud reegleid, kuid teadvustavad oma individuaalset loominguolulisust, mis ei pruugi vastata teooriatele. Sellepärast oleks hea, kui lisaks teooriatele ei kaotaks etnomusikoloog sidet elava praktikaga, mis tegelikult kogu aeg muutub.