



**First Seminar
of the ICTM Study Group on Multipart Music**
19-20 September 2014
Tallinn, Estonia

Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre
Eesti Muusika- ja Teatriakadeemia

PROGRAM & ABSTRACTS

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The INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR TRADITIONAL MUSIC (ICTM)

Short introduction

The ICTM was founded on 22 September, 1947, in London, England, by scholars and musicians as The International Folk Music Council. Ralph Vaughan Williams became its first president, followed by Jaap Kunst, Zoltan Kodaly, Willard Rhodes, Klaus P. Wachsmann, Poul Rovsing Olsen, Erich Stockmann, Anthony Seeger, Krister Malm, and currently, Adrienne L. Kaeppler. In 1949, the Council was one of the Founding Members of the International Music Council - UNESCO, and is currently an NGO in formal consultative relations with UNESCO. Through its wide international representation the Council acts as a bond among peoples of different cultures and thus serves the peace of humankind.

The AIMS of the ICTM are to further the study, practice, documentation, preservation and dissemination of traditional music, including folk, popular, classical and urban music, and dance, of all countries. To these ends, the Council organizes meetings, world conferences, study groups and colloquia. In addition the Council maintains a membership directory and supervises the preparation and publication of journals and bulletins.

ICTM STUDY GROUP ON MULTIPART MUSIC

Short introduction

Multipart music represents one of the most fascinating phenomena in numerous local musical practices. It has therefore been a favoured object of research for a long time, particularly in the national framework. Regional studies extending beyond political boundaries are, however, rare.

A network of researchers, many of them ICTM members, was working since 2003, focusing first on multipart music traditions in Europe within the framework of the “*Research Centre of European Multipart Music*” established at the Institute for Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology of the Vienna University of Music. Results of the research are presented in the books “*European Voices I. Multipart Singing in the Balkans and the Mediterranean*” (Vienna: Böhlau. 2008) and “*European Voices II. Cultural Listening and Local Discourse in Multipart Singing in Europe*” (2011).

Fragments of the work had also been presented in panels at ICTM World Conferences (Sheffield 2005 and Vienna 2007).

All of this work served as the basis of the negotiations with the ICTM Board for the establishing of a Study Group on Multipart Music. The board reached a positive decision on the formation of the group in July 2009 after the ICTM World Conference in Durban, South Africa.

The three first symposia are organised in Italy (2010), Albania (2012) and Hungary (2013).

Mission statement

The name of the organization is ICTM Study Group on Multipart Music. The Study Group is an appointed committee of the Executive Board of the International Council for Traditional Music [ICTM Rules 1984: paragraph 8, article i]. The ICTM is a non-profit non-governmental international organization in formal consultative relations with UNESCO.

The Study Group shall promotes multipart music through research, documentation, interdisciplinary and cross-cultural study and shall provide a forum for cooperation among scholars and students of multipart music by means of international meetings, publications and correspondence, intending a tight collaboration with local singers and musicians also in the discussion processes. The Study Group may undertake such projects as are in support of its stated objectives, including, but not limited to, organization of Study Group symposia, and formation of sub-study groups.

Seminar's theme:
Multipart Music: theoretical approaches on the terminology
Tallinn, Estonia, 19 – 20 September 2014

The current definition of the multipart music used by the ICTM Study Group on Multipart Music reads: *Multipart music is a specific mode of music making and expressive behavior based on the intentionally distinct and coordinated participation in the performing act by sharing knowledge and shaping values.* The term “multipart music” and others connected with it are applied in different meanings in the scholarly literature and the symposia of the Study Group. Therefore an in-depth discussion on theoretical approaches of this particular terminology has become more than necessary. This seminar will be dedicated entirely to this subject.

PROGRAM

Friday, 19 September 2014

9.00-10.30 *The designation of concepts in studies on multipart music*
Ardian Ahmedaja (Austria)

10.30-11.00 BREAK

11.00-12.30 *Polyphony? Multipart? Heterophony? Some considerations on the definitions proposed by scholars in the field of conscious overlapping of sounds*
Enrique Cámara de Landa (Spain)

12.30-14.00 LUNCH BREAK

14.00-15.30 *Multipart music as a conceptual tool*
Ignazio Macchiarella (Italy)

15.30-16.00 BREAK

16.00-17.30 *What is a part?*
Susanne Fürniss (France)

Saturday, 20 September 2014

9.00-10.30 *Heterophony: theoretical approaches to the musical phenomenon and terminology*
Žanna Pärtlas (Estonia)

10.30-11.00 BREAK

11.00-12.30 *Styles of soloist multipart instrumental music. Terminological problems and perspectives*
Ulrich Morgenstern (Austria)

12.30-14.00 LUNCH BREAK

14.00-15.30 *The question of "harmony" in a local multipart music practice: eastern Latvia as a field for terminological experimentation*
Anda Beitāne (Latvia)

15.30-16.00 BREAK

16.00-17.30 Final discussion

18.00 Concert: The Seto choir *Verska naase'* (Värska, South-Eastern Estonia)

19.15 Reception

ABSTRACTS

Ardian Ahmedaja (Austria), *The designation of concepts in studies on multipart music*

Terms are given specific meanings in specific contexts. These may deviate from the meaning the same terms have in other contexts. Identifying the terms assigned to the concepts means to investigate concepts, conceptual systems, and their labels. In this framework Donald Davidson's argumentation of the question of "What is?" as an issue of *usage* rather than a question about facts is of a significant importance. An example is that of a person who refers to a "cup" as a "chair", making comments pertinent to a cup using the word "chair". One might readily catch on that this person simply calls a "cup" a "chair" and the peculiarity is clear.

Furthermore the question "What is?" is not only about ontology itself. Questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences, are at least partially a topic in the philosophy of language, as well. Hilary Putman asserts that different concepts of "the existence of something" can be correct. This position does not contradict the view that some things do exist, but points out that different "languages" will have different rules about assigning this property. How to determine the "fitness" of a "language" to the world then becomes a subject for investigations.

I see the discussions we will have in Tallinn from this viewpoint. It is interesting for example that the term *polyphony* was used in adjectival form in classical Greek not necessary underlying the musical term. It first appears as a parallel term to *diaphonia* in its technical sense and also as a neologism. Only in post-Hellenic times the noun was apparently used almost exclusively as a musical term, while the adjective and its derivatives had other meanings too, including the classical ones ("of many sounds, many voices", "abundant in linguistic expression").

Debating these and later understandings, including those of European Middle Ages, from which the term was spread in several languages, of comparative musicology as well as of ethnomusicology (*multi-part music*, Kunst 1950) would help to an extended approach concerning today's views. Interesting is for example that a dichotomy between the terms *polyphony* / *multipart music* and *monophony* has hardly been commenced nowadays, since these terms designate neither jointly exhaustive nor mutual exclusive musical structures or styles. In acoustical sense,

for example, even a single tone, no matter if it is produced by one or more persons, is made of several parts.

New perspectives provide views on the process of the multipart music making as well as its makers. Bernard Lortat-Jacob has shaped in this framework for example the concept of “singing in company”. The inclusion of the music makers’ role (performers and audiences), their understandings and their mechanisms into the discussions seems to be of decisive help to become a more comprehensive view and nearer to the practice concerning the designations of concepts on multipart music.

Anda Beitāne (Latvia), The question of “harmony” in a local multipart music practice: eastern Latvia as a field for terminological experimentation

There are many examples in multipart singing practices in Latvia (as well as in Lithuania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and so on) that can be examined as more or less connected with functional harmony. This kind of multipart singing is usually called ‘harmonic polyphony’ (sometimes ‘homophonic’) in the local scientific literature. In these cases it means the researchers have considered the multipart singing is based on the logic of functional harmony or is created having been influenced by it.

Does the music designated by this term 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 three or four (five, six) parts if several singers are singing the same melodic line, making only a few sporadic variations like heterophony? 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 some of the questions I would like to discuss, using multipart singing examples from eastern Latvia.

Enrique Cámara de Landa (Spain), *Polyphony? Multipart? Heterophony? Some considerations on the definitions proposed by scholars in the field of conscious overlapping of sounds*

Texture, polyphony, heterophony, homophony and homorhythmic are some of the concepts related to multipart music whose definitions appear in the Music dictionaries (Grove, MGG VER, DEUMM, Harvard...), in some volumes on the subject (Arom 1987, Arom & Meyer 1993, Agammennone 1996...), and in many monographies dealing with different music cultures or music genres. The Tallinn Conference is an ideal opportunity to critically review some of these explicit and implicit definitions.

Two closely related aspects appear in the current definition of multipart music used by the ICTM Study Group on Multipart Music: music making and expressive behaviour. The first perspective – music making – includes the emic and etic taxonomies on polyphony and multipart music, and the discussions about some specific issues, like the convenience of differentiating heterophony from polyphony. Is heterophony a phenomenon to be included in a classification of polyphonic procedures? or it is to be considered as a different kind of phenomenon?, are we going to differentiate heterophony from specific polyphony?

The second issue – expressive behaviour – relates to people making music, and the concepts people have about music and its various manifestations. As everyone knows, these concepts vary in different cultures. This second aspect awakens many other questions (e.g. Is it our challenge to find a terminological background to be applied to any musical phenomenon (new universalism)?, Could it be a kind of multi-translator tool?). These and other aspects will be discussed in relation to the possibility of studying and classifying polyphonic and multipart procedures.

Susanne Fürniss (France), *What is a part?*

I would like to discuss the gap sometimes observed between perception and conception of multipart singing as it may result from the difference of approach, either musicological, or anthropological. To which degree the (ethno)musicological definition of "multipart music" takes into account the autochthonous way of conceiving the musical construction? This question addresses the naming of parts as

well as the relationship between different parts. What is to be considered as "a part"?

I have several examples where the perceived multiplicity is considered as being simultaneous variations of one and the same part. Still, a musicologist would not define the result as heterophony, but would qualify it as multipart music or polyphony. Whose perspective is taken into account by the ethnomusicologist, and in which context?

Ignazio Macchiarella (Italy), *Multipart music as a conceptual tool*

Usually, in musicology (and in humanities in general) the definitions are ambiguous or too much generic. Multipart music does not make exception: as a matter of fact, the locution indicates nothing more than a generic co-presence of 'manifold music components', without qualifying in any way what kind of co-presence it is into play, what the term 'part' means, what the relationships among the parts are, and so forth. Therefore, the locution is simply the attestation of a 'compound music', made up by different elements – that is a sort of oxymoron since, in a sense, all music is made up by 'various elements'. Nevertheless, the locution multipart music is a locution more and more used, and very often it replaces the term polyphony – a term that is equally generic, denoting nothing more than a copresence among 'more sounds' (poli-foné – poly-sounds). This replacement is – of course – due to the strong historical connotation of polyphony which immediately refers to the domain of the so called western art music where it is often considered representative (as a synecdoche) of its formal and conceptual complexity. So, usually the term polyphony is too much oriented towards the 'sound results', that is, too much towards the way of thinking about music of western academia that focuses mainly the immateriality of sound, devoting less attention to how the sound is realized.

Devoid of any historical connotation, even though generic, multipart music is more functional to attempt to move the focus towards the analysis of the musical behaviors from which the sound intertwining springs up. All the more that, in its indefiniteness, as element of a whole, the term 'part' can be used in the largest variety of meanings, beyond our common idea of sound's sequence.

My contribution will be oriented in such a perspective, trying to reach a definition of multipart music as interaction among music behavior: a definition that – in any case – will be not a synonymous of polyphony.

Ulrich Morgenstern (Austria), *Styles of Soloist Multipart Instrumental Music. Terminological Problems and Perspectives*

While vocal multipart music (except throat singing) is always a result of social interaction, multipart music performed on musical instruments not necessarily requires cooperation in an ensemble. A considerable part of folk instrumental music is performed on instruments with a capacity for multipart texture. Multi-stringed cithers and lutes, doubled flutes and pipes are only the most wide-spread and well-known examples for soloist multipart instrumental music (SMIM). Due to the initially social nature of vocal multipart music its terminological representation is of higher significance than in instrumental music. For practical reasons alone, the function of the ensemble parts becomes an issue of verbal discourse – while in an instrumental ensemble the function one takes is marked by the instrument he holds in his hands. Soloist instrumental music is more often a result of individual creativity and therefore its style and techniques are less discussed by the performers.

In ethnomusicology terminology on SMIM is poorly developed. The reason is not only the limited folk terminology at hand, but also the lack of systematic and comparative study of the very phenomenon.

In my presentation I am going to demonstrate sound examples and transcriptions of SMIM, typical for different European folk music traditions. They are played on the fiddle, on reed pipes, multi-chanter bagpipes and other instruments.

Analyzing the texture of these tunes we will discuss terms such as *polyphony*, *movable drone*, *Scheinpolyphonie* (apparent polyphony) and others. This way I want to encourage the participants to offer creative solutions for certain unsolved terminological questions of multipart instrumental music.

Žanna Pärtlas (Estonia), *Heterophony: theoretical approaches to the musical phenomenon and terminology*

Heterophony is one of the wide-spread forms of traditional multivoiced music and one of the basic principles of formation of the multivoiced texture. On the theoretical level, heterophony can function as an indicator that reveals how the researcher understands main concepts of the music theory and ethnomusicology related to musical texture – such concepts as ‘polyphony’, ‘monophony’, ‘multipart’ and ‘multivoiced’ music. This is the reason why discussion about heterophony could be especially relevant as a part of more general discussion about terminology concerning multipart music.

The phenomenon of heterophony is also of a special interest in the context of traditional multivoiced and multipart music, because it can be considered as the border area between monophony and polyphony. Sometimes heterophony is named the primary form of polyphony; less often it is called the primary form of monophony. Whether heterophony is interpreted as belonging to polyphony or monophony depends on how these terms are understood. Are they two kinds of musical thinking, i.e. notions belonging to the level of conceptualisation, or just two types of musical texture, i.e. notions at the level of sound? This question was widely debated in Russian-language ethnomusicology and music theory during the 1970s and 1980s (Bershanskaya 1985, Harlap 1972, Skrebkov 1973, Galitskaya 1981, Alekseyev 1986). However, in English-language literature such approach to the problem seldom appears.

While discussing the nature of heterophony, one of the specific difficulties is to make clear distinction between the levels of conception, behaviour and sound (using here the well-known triad by Merriam). In heterophony one can find (seeming) discrepancies between these three levels. For instance, the singers can assert that they all sing ‘in one voice’ (the level of concept), but actually they significantly vary the melody (the level of musical behaviour) and as result we can hear the developed multivoiced texture (the level of sound). Furthermore, the singers do not coordinate their melodic variations harmonically (the levels of concept and musical behaviour), but we can find a consistent pattern in the vertical structure of the sonorities (the level of sound). The above-described situation is characteristic of Russian vocal heterophony (Pärtlas 2012), but it is not the only possibility of how heterophony can emerge.

With regard to heterophony, we should also understand the difference between 'multipart' and 'multivoiced' music and between 'part' and 'voice', because here this difference manifests itself most clearly. It is well-known that in traditional music the number of 'voices' is often greater than the number of 'parts'. In heterophony there can be as many 'voices' as many singers participate in performance, but all the same it can be often considered as one-part music realised in a multivoiced texture. The main criteria for defining music as one-part or multipart belong to the level of traditional conceptualisation. These are the performers' comments and folk terminology, which usually reflects functional differences between the parts. The song styles characterised by the bearers of tradition as 'singing in one voice' are certainly examples of one-part music irrespective of how many heterophonic divergences occur in the musical texture.

One more noteworthy question in respect to heterophony is perception of this music by traditional listeners and performers themselves. It can be presumed that the specific sound of a multivoiced texture in every concrete musical style becomes a 'sonic ideal' for the bearers of the respective tradition and the deviations from this 'ideal' (e.g. if an unexpected unison or too dense multivoiced texture emerges) can cause dissatisfaction. However, psychologically speaking, the vertical aspect of heterophonic music is traditionally something for 'hearing' rather than for 'listening', i.e. it can be passively perceived, but it is not the object of a "concentrated, goal oriented interest in noticing what is sounding" (Günther 2007: 10).

Finally, the phenomenon of heterophony is worth of theoretical discussion, because it appears not only as a particular form of multivoiced (or sometimes multipart) music, but also as the component of more complex forms of multipart music. It occurs in many styles of traditional multipart music, where the parts are performed collectively. One of the topic for discussion could be the difference in the performers' attitude toward multivoiced texture in one-part music and multipart music, where a multivoiced texture becomes an aesthetic value for the singers and musicians.