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# Functions of Music: A Survey of Research Vocabularies

## *Muzikos funkcijos: tyrimų terminologijos apžvalga*

### Abstract

The issues concerning functions of music, frequently raised throughout the history and especially within the last approximately three decades by different profiles of music scholars, have stimulated valuable musicological insights into the nature of music's function. This essay discusses the research into musical functions, susceptible to heterogeneous and heteronomous epistemological approaches. The text is centred in the question regarding the epistemological range in the research into music's functions. They are discussed through the context of studies on music's functions (such as in Merriam's *Anthropology of Music* from 1964 and nine scholars thereafter) and music preferences (Rentfrow-Gosling's study *The Do Re Mi's of Everyday Life: The Structure and Personality Correlates of Music Preferences* from 2003). As the research into functions of music unfolds through different approaches forming a trajectory between natural sciences and social studies, the main focus of the text is directed toward a plea for considering a mutually "compatible" vocabulary of music research. My aim is to offer a sketch of musicological research on *functions* of music. Although seemingly futile endeavour for an art with a myriad of overtly loaded or tacitly attached tasks, wavering between a plethora of intentions and its immanent disfunctionability, current music research practices allow one to claim that issues on music's different functions have gained in importance with intensified culturological, anthropological, but also other approaches to music from the behavioral sciences especially during about the last two decades. The notion of functions regarding music is accordingly dispersed among different disciplines, branches, or epistemologies, each of them offering different vocabularies. Thus this text attempts to unfold the range of research into music's *functions*.

**Keywords:** social psychology of music, musical effect, epistemology of music research, functions of music.

### Anotacija

Su muzikos funkcijomis susijusius klausimus įvairių profilių muzikos specialistai dažnai nagrinėjo praecityje, o ypač daug dėmesio jiems skyrė tris paskutiniuosius dešimtmečius. Šiame straipsnyje aptariami muzikos funkcionalumo tyrimai heterogeniniais ir heteronominiais epistemoliniais pūviais. Daugiausia dėmesio skiriama epistemoliniam muzikos funkcijų tyrimo diapazonui. Muzikos funkcionalumas nagrinėjamas muzikos funkcijų tyrimų (pavyzdžiui, Merriamio „*Anthropology of Music*“, 1964, ir devynių vėlesnių muzikologijos tyrimų) bei muzikos prioritetų (Rentfrow-Goslingas „*The Do Re Mi's of Everyday Life: The Structure and Personality Correlates of Music Preferences* from 2003“) kontekste. Kadangi muzikos funkcijų tyrimai atsiskleidžia įvairiais požiūriais ir sudaro trajektoriją tarp gamtos mokslų ir socialinių studijų, šiame straipsnyje svarstomos muzikos tyrimų sąvokos. Mano tikslas buvo pasiūlyti muzikologinių muzikos funkcijų tyrimų eskizą. Nors pastangos kalbėti apie meną su nesuskaičiuojama daugybe jam atvirai keliamų ar tyliai priskiriamų užduočių, varijuojančių tarp intencijų gausos ir būdingo jų nefunkcionalumo, iš pirmo žvilgsnio atrodo beviltiškos, vis dėlto dabartinė muzikos tyrimų praktika duoda pagrindą teigti, kad klausimų, susijusių su skirtingomis muzikos funkcijomis, svarba, ypač per paskutiniuosius du dešimtmečius, gerokai išaugo – tai lėmė suintensyvėję kultūrologiniai, antropologiniai ir iš biheivoristinių mokslų perimti požiūriai. Taigi muzikos funkcijų samprata plinta kitose disciplinose, mokslo šakose ar pažinimo teorijose, ir kiekvienoje iš jų siūloma skirtinga terminologija. Šiame darbe mėginama atskleisti muzikos funkcijų tyrimų diapazoną.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** socialinė muzikos psichologija, muzikos efektas, muzikos tyrimų epistemologija, muzikos funkcijos.

### Calibrating functions in music

It is a relatively easy task to survey the main phenomena of functions of musical genres and forms in music throughout history – even the most modest historical surveys mention them while describing institutional, economical, biographical, or social and intellectual histories as parts of specific “musical practices” (K. Blaukopf), “sound groups”, “musical communities” or “musical scenes” (W. Straw, T. Magrini). In the long run, each historical period and culture can reveal some kind of music functioning “well” or “poorly”. But talking about incommensurable differences in functions of music confining them temporally, geographically, or socially, opposes the equally rooted persuasion that “function of music presents itself precisely as a break with any

conventional notion of the ‘function’, the notion that is tacitly based on utility and the economics of survival” (Dolar 2006: 11). Not only the *differences* should be considered when discussing functions of music, but also the common background that enables music to function should be taken into consideration.

In other words, although there are many different *uses* of music, placing on the music researcher's agenda a hardly surveyable list of music's formal appearances – music is “irrefutably grounded in human behaviors” (Cross 2003: 5) – humans nevertheless share similar listening capacities. For instance, Caroline Drake and Daisy Bertrand proposed a list of five potential cognitive universals: segmentation and grouping (“We tend to group into perceptual units events that have similar physical characteristic or that occur close in time”);

predisposition towards regularity (“Processing is better for regular than irregular sequences. We tend to hear as regular sequences that are not regular”); active search for regularity (“We spontaneously search for temporal regularities and organize events around this perceived regularity”); temporal zone of optimal processing (“We process information best if it arrives at an intermediate rate”); and predisposition towards simple duration ratios (“We tend to hear a time interval as twice as long as previous intervals”) (Drake & Bertrand 2005: 24–29). If the differences among listeners’ expectations of music, according to David Huron, “may be attributable to four possible sources” only – to different 1. “underlying representational codes”, 2. degree of acquired schemas of music developed with individual exposure to music, 3. level of distinguishing “expectational sets that may be appropriate for different genres of music” and 4. “accuracy of predictive heuristics” (Huron 2006: 364) – then the universals regarding functions of music seem to be of equal importance for music research as are the individual cases. (Although some culturologically oriented scholars advocate a stance that current foci in ethno/musicology are “contrary to the essentialist definitions and questions for musical ‘universals’ of 1960s [...] or text-oriented techniques of musicological analysis,” as, for instance, Stokes 1994: 5, the recent endeavours in the field of ethno/musicology research does not seem to corroborate any claims regarding “surpassing” any of the “old” research topoi.) However, there seems to be no widely acceptable view on functions research, although the interest in defining functions of music is not only of historical relevance, but has also a well-focused recent history, as indicated in the chapter below.

### **Epistemologies of functions in music**

Even the most musically disinterested person shares an important common stance with the music professional: if the quantitative cultural goods “have increased five-fold over the last two decades”, when compared to the two decades earlier on, “music goods continue to dominate the market (a quarter of all cultural imports and exports)” (Ramsdale 2000: Preface, ix). Yet, if compared to other cultural goods, among which UNESCO statisticians reckon music, paintings, film as well as video cameras, games and sporting goods, music seems to be a quite evasive one for institutional managing in spite of its omnipresence. Thus there seems to be little more than provisional conformity between different formulations of music’s many functions through which any of the mentioned qualities are usually addressed. Functions of music, or values attached to it from vantage points of different disciplines, could be surveyed sche-

matically, similarly as Radocy and Boyle have done (2003: 10–19, 32–3), in a chart such is the following one (see next page).

The variety of categories with which music’s functions have been studied could, clearly, be enriched even further according to specific genres of music (as, for instance, film music), to certain habitual variables (as in North, Hargreaves, Hargreaves 2004), to some conceptual issues (for instance, DeNora 2000), to geographical or societal contexts (as it is usually the case in ethno/musicology) etc. Nevertheless, further differentiation would not change the strategies of generating a rather basic set of concepts that point to further domains of contextual variables (as indicated, for instance, in Bersch-Burauel 2004: 36 ff, esp. 197–221, or Behne 1986). However, a short comparison of Merriam’s and Hargreaves & North’s functions could serve as an illustration of these strategies. Merriam’s functions of music indicate a holistic view lacking epistemological unity: functions number 1, 2 and 6 are psycho- and physiological in nature, pertaining to different personal human faculties; functions 4, 5 and 7–10 address societal issues, whereas function 3, as Merriam also notes, can be understood either as “pure” entertainment or as entertainment “combined with other functions” (Merriam 1980: 223). Functions indicated by Hargreaves & North offer a much subtler view if compared to Merriam’s: they indicate quite clearly a division of music’s effect as “either psychological, physiological, or behavioral” arousal (McMullen 1996, quoted from Radocy and Boyle 2003: 41). They offer a frame for numerous intra- as well as interpersonal (communicative, social, cultural) functions emerging out of the two most commonly accepted psychological effects music can achieve: it can have either “stimulating, invigorating” *or* “soothing, sedating” effect (Radocy and Boyle 2003: 41). And considering Merriam’s division of functions through Hargreaves & North’s psychosociological eyes, the universalistic slant of his set of functions become the more pale the harder one tries to exemplify them: are Merriam’s functions 7–10 (enforcing, validating, stabilizing, integrating) not simply different points of view of elementary social relations emerging from “interpersonal relations” (Hargreaves & North’s function No. 2)? If so, then all functions of music, as indicated by Merriam in his last itemized function (“the function of the contribution to the continuity and stability of culture”), are anchored in a rather basic process of *forming, creating, establishing*, etc., *hierarchies of socialisation through music*. And they do include personal (psychological, biological, physiological) as well as interpersonal (social, political, but also economical as well as a plethora of pragmatical) determinants. However, if one tries to find cohesive

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Nettl 2001: 468	use in rituals and addressing supernatural	"transforming experience" (David McAllester): changes "individuals consciousness" or "ambience of a gathering"	marking importance of events	association with dance						
Hargreaves & North 1999	management of self-identity	interpersonal relations	mood							
Lehman 1996	ease / relax	associate / dream	escapist stimulus	identity determining stimulus	sentimentality arousing stimulus	emotional / mood stimulation	arousing senses	background stimulus	consoling / compensating stimulus	
Middleton 1990: 253	communicative values	ritual values	technical values	erotic values	political values					
Kaplan 1990: 18 ff	a form of knowledge	collective possession	personal experience	therapy	moral and symbolic force	incidental commodity	symbolic indicator of change	link among past, present, and scenarios of the future		
Frith 1987: 140-44	helps to create a type of self-definition, a particular place in society	provides a way of managing the relationships between one's private and public emotional lives	helps to shape memory, organize one's sense of time, and intensify experiences	provides a sense of musical ownership						
Karbusicky 1986 (borrowing from Paul F. Lazarsfeld's and Robert K. Merton's <i>Mass Communication, Popular Taste, and Organized Social Action</i> [1948/60]* Alfons Auer's <i>Ethos der Freizeit</i> [1972])	regenerate	emancipate	compensate	4* status conferral function	5* narcotizing dysfunction	6* reinforcement function				
Behne 1986	motorical listening	compensational listening	vegetative listening	diffusive listening	emotional listening	sentimental listening	associative listening	distanced listening		
Gaston 1968: 21 ff	a need for aesthetic expression and experience	determinants of the cultural matrix on the mode of expression	integrational relationship between music and religion	music as communication	music as structured reality	music's relationship to the tender emotions	a source of gratification	potency of music (in a group)		
Merriam 1964: 222-7	emotional expression	aesthetic enjoyment	entertainment	communication	symbolic representation	physical response	enforcement of conformity to social norms	validation of social institutions and religious rituals	contributes to the continuity and stability of culture	contributes to the integration of society

bonds between them and the other more explicitly personal functions of music (as Merriam's functions 1 and 2, or 1, 5 and 6 in Gaston's set, the first three functions of Karbusicky, etc.), the process of forming hierarchies of socialisation through music becomes a primarily epistemological issue, not so much a phenomenological one as the piled up sets of functions above might suggest.

In other words, functions of music are pertaining to "the body" and/or "the voice". Evidence for either addressee should be searched for (as the whole field of music therapy testifies perhaps most clearly) at different bio-physiological levels and specific (and specifying) contexts (social structures, political agendas, cultural environments, economic hierarchies, etc.). And as a concept of knowledge, not only as a field of scientification of one's own personal set of preferences for – and biases towards – certain musical styles and genres (or any other forms of musical activity), functions of music are a trajectory, or a cross-section, of phenomena consisting of two mutually connected *sets of complexities*: of "musical complexity" (Parry 2004) as a bio-physiological stimulus and hermeneutically understood "complexity in music" (R. Toop) that stimulates different epistemological framings. Both views can be traced not only in the current debates involving postmodernity or popular culture, they also have a respectful history of epistemological oppositions, mediating between facts of *nature* and variables of *nurture* that have been granting musicology a rather complex tradition of connections, leveling different functions of music with regard to a series of basic oppositions, such as "outer" and "inner" levels of the musical structure (18<sup>th</sup> century treatises, as summed up in H. Ch. Koch *Anleitung zur Komposition*, 1787–1793); *form* and *expression* (as in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century aesthetics); *absolutist's* (*formalist's*) and *referentialist's* (*expressionist's*) approach to explaining music (Meyer 1956); *aesthetical* and epistemological understanding of music [*ästhetisches / erkennendes Verstehen*] (Eggebrecht 1995); musical and musicological listening (Cook 1992: 152ff); *musical* and *everyday listening* (Gaver 1993); cognitive and connotative understanding (Hübner 1994: 26–38); listening as a fantasy thing and listening as fantasy space (Schwarz 1997: 3 ff); *body-mind* opposition (as, for instance, in Lidov 2005: 145–164); even between *ethic* and *emic* issues, where "the ethic point of view is that of the researcher who is outside of the culture; [while] the emic point of view corresponds to the cognitive categories [...] of the local inhabitants" (Nattiez 2004: 13 [after Kenneth Pike]). All the mentioned oppositions, however, are but the opposite poles of "our continuing wavering between two modes of listening" (Bujic 1997: 22) to music – to "two levels of musical understanding": of

listening to music as to a physical structure on the one hand and, on the other, of listening to "telling details" and "assigning value" to them (Bujic 1997: 19).

The research into music's functions, as may be seen from the above list indicating the single disciplinary perspectives, seems to be a kind of a "march of the names" – a process of transgressing cognitive, social and axiological levels through different identification categories. They seem to indicate relations between "negotiation of meaning" about music and the "levels of signification", between "primary" and "secondary signification" (Shepherd and Wicke 1997: 14, 203, 103 ff), between *syntactic* and *semantic* pregnancy of the musical flow (Middleton 1990: 176 ff), stirring up different *functions* that music may have as a stimulus for either "visceral responses" (Cook 2000: 79) or/and "cultural deeds". Namely, fine questions regarding music's functions, such as, for instance, posed by Simon Frith – "how folk [music] 'consolation differs from pop 'escapism'" (Frith 2006: 161) – are interesting at the same time as issues that provoke reflections about "a more mutable, pliable construction of [music's] autonomy, adapted to our relativized, post-modern frame, oblivious neither to other determinants of musical experience [...] nor to the social medium in which it operates" (Clarke 2003: 170) as well as for neuroscience and psychology (not only) of music (cf., for instance, Levitin 2006 and Huron 2006). On the face of it, the question of music's function seems to address a set of empirical particularities as a counterpart of certain universals impinged on music by the human faculties – contingencies of "flesh" attached to a much more evasive, yet crucial "skeleton" within which the very notion of music's myriad functions makes certain sense as "cultural material" (DeNora 2000: 151) as well as an issue regarding its biological function that unfolds beneath the rituals of life (Levitin 2006: 241–61). In short: musical practices have more pragmatic cultural as well as elemental biological relevancy for human beings as a "tool for arousing feelings and emotions" (Levitin 2006: 261).

### **Music's particularities and universals**

The nature/nurture distinction regarding music's functions, as indicated above, should be appropriately formulated as a surmise: the myriad functions of music – as well as its autonomy – are emerging out of music's disposition to relate with the cultural variables through the listener's cognitive faculties, capacities, and needs. The functions of music are thus seen as contingencies, concatenate phenomena, emergent variables, giving a picture of an unsurveyable array of *qualia* that – nevertheless – involve certain universals.

There is a well developed, and developing, field of research on music preference, involving issues on functions regarding music. Though the majority is, more or less, confined to specific particularities (such as age, social determinants, geographic borders etc.). In spite of worthy holistic scientific ideals, mediating between the particularities and addressing music's functions as "hard" as well as "soft" science phenomena seems to be too extensive a task for the time being. Although there is a large amount of evidence for certain aspects of music's function, only several outlines of *integrative thinking* (Engel 2006: 226) in music research have been winning wider acknowledgement in claiming consistency for connecting the nature/nurture opposition: David Huron's The 1999 Ernest Bloch Lectures *Music and Mind: Foundations of Cognitive Musicology*, Daniel J. Levitin's *This is your brain in music* (2006), or Ian Cross' views (Cross 1998 et passim) should be set among them in first place.

If empirically gathered data, *particularities*, pointing to differences in music's functions, are to be integrated into inclusive theory, one should consider *universals* to be the one of the key categories that need be defined (the authors in Marieanu 1999 offered a valuable footing for this). Although music universals have long since belonged to musicological topoi centred in the common saying that "music is universal language" (Brandl and Rösing 2002: 58) and have been repeatedly attracting scholarly interest (Bruhn 2002: 447–8), the debate over music universals seems to be "abgelöst durch Erforschung von kulturspezifischen autonomen Musikgeschichten" (Brandl and Rösing 2002: 58). Nevertheless, interest in music as universal human competence (Cross 2001) seems to be, again, a rather alluring issue in current music research, offering itself not only as a counterpart to studying music's cultural and phenomenal diversities, but as inevitable scholarly positions that in the first place enable comparative views of the fragmented, particularized, specialized views to be compared at all.

To address the thorny question of universals, the following, deliberately hasty claim could be offered: to define the scope of the topic theory, one should define the points of traversing – the common features as well as differences – between the formalistic and hermeneutic categories – between the concepts, for instance, of "auditory stream" (Albert Bregman) or "auditory object" (James Wright), "segment" (mainly in set theory analysis), "formal" or "structural" unit (classical theory of musical forms), "topic", "gesture", "salient", or "marked structure/entity/feature", "trope" (semiotics of music), "term" (D. Cook), "figure" (universal notion used in different contexts from baroque theory of affection onward) etc.

The wonderful work done by semioticians (as Robert S. Hatten, Raymond Monelle, Eero Tarasti, among others), psychologists (such as by David Huron, Klaus-Ernst Behne, Daniel Levitin), and other scholars of wide perspective (as, for instance, Christian Kaden or Bruno Nettle) have brought about epistemological alertness to similar claims. One need only think of Tarasti's idea of two epistemic groups of semiotic interpretations to find various semantic levels – he distinguishes between a "philosophical 'style' rather than a systematic classification" and a systematic classification founded on the belief "that all signs exist only on the basis of an order which is there before the scholar starts his/her work"<sup>1</sup>.

It is this distinction between epistemologically systematic versus more contingent description – thin vs. thick description, to use Clifford Geertz's terms – that alerts one to compare different categorical theories. For instance, it seem that not only musicology, but also interdisciplinary music research would benefit from a comparison between the concept of *gesture*, as it has been discussed by different semioticians of music (cf., for instance, Hatten 2004, Hatten 2005 and Middleton 1993 or 2003), with the theoretical notion of *Formgehalt* ("formal content") proposed by Albrecht von Massow (Massow 1998) and, further on with the concept of *universals* in music, as it has been (apart from the ethnomusicological and sociological field) recently nourished primarily by cognitive psychology and, to some extent, also in music theory. To offer briefly a rationale of this suggestion, one might recall that the responses to Massow's Greimasian neologism, *Formgehalt* (Floros 1999, Jiranek 1999, H. de la Motte 1999, Schwab-Felisch 1999) give an idea of how difficult it is to resolve the age-old antinomy between form (structure) and content (expression, "meaning") in music by equalizing the two whilst being unable to accept the dichotomy without a bundle of scruples, whereas the concept of universals reveals a similarly telling controversial status among scholars. To indicate this, I shall mention only the work done by four scholars (although numerous other valuable studies referring to universals are at hand<sup>2</sup>). If Bruno Nettle cautiously proposes a concentric view of universals centred in the musical structures and extending over to the cultural issues (Nettle 1977 and 2001), Vladimir Karbusicky finds persuasive arguments to demonstrate the universal principles of musical form along with their correlating anthropological foundations (Karbusicky 1990, 1991, 1999). Further, Leonard B. Meyer – clearly defining "syntactic" ("perceptually discrete") and "statistical" ("relational") "cognitive universals" of the musical flow – has offered persuasive arguments to think about the concept of universals as of valuable theory in one of the most insightful essays on

universals and music where, at the same time, he asserts: “*There are none*. There are only the acoustical universals of the physical world and the bio-psychological universals of the human world.” (Meyer 1998: 6) The fourth scholar I would like to mention is Jean-Jacques Nattiez (Nattiez 2004). He has inspiringly illustrated the importance of Jean Molino’s “universals of strategy” and “universals of substance” – as complementary categories to those of Meyer.

As different as these concepts of universals and music are, they all share a common epistemological stance. The notion of a musical universal – as Nattiez emphasizes in his account, to a certain degree acceptable for the notion of musical universals in general – implies a plea “in favour of a well thought-out reconciliation of the universal and the relative, of the innate and the acquired, of nature and culture” (Nattiez 2004: 19). In music theory, this shift toward integration of nature and culture entities in music research is perhaps most concisely formulated in the music topic theory as developed by Hatten. Robert Hatten elegantly encompassed the epistemological range of a musical topic, the key theory in semiotic music analysis since it appeared in Leonard Ratner’s *Classical Music. Expression, Form, and Style* (1980). Writing about four levels of interpreting musical meaning, Hatten defines the following semantic fields: 1) *markedness* as an elemental phenomenon revealing a “meaningful syntax” in music; 2) *topics* as “larger style types with stable correlations and flexible interpretative ranges”; 3) *troping* as a process of combining two (or more) topics forming a second-order topic or an “inherently musical metaphor”; 4) *musical gesture* as an interdisciplinary concept of a “comprehensive theory” that would allow one “to capture the more synthetic character of music” (Hatten 2005: 14–15). Is, then, the concept of music’s *universals* a broader parallel to the music-analytical category of *gesture*? Although either a positive or a negative answer would be problematic, it is a fact that they both have a common goal: to grasp the “self-emancipating sign” in music as well those kinds of meanings that can be derived from it due to its *pregnancy*, without which music would hardly have earned such wide popularity among people and scholars at the same time.

### **Friction between different vocabularies?**

It should be clear from the discussion so far that the notion of universals regarding music may be directed either toward the music “itself”, understood broadly as a cognitive, even “physicalistic” issue dealing with human activities of producing of, and listening to, “intentionally formed sound”, or that it might demand

reports about perception of music with certain cultural, historical and/or geographical confines. Universality in music is but a platform for identifying the plethora of different effects music has and the bulk of uses attached to it. Thus talking about *functions*, not only in music, may be seen as a relatively clearly confined field of reflection: it could either take the form of sociological (also ethnographical or anthropological) reflection founded on empirical research, or it might be discussed in terms of psycho-, bio-, or physiologically oriented reports, offering “hard” evidence for dealing with different segments involved in the processes of memorizing, perceiving, or reacting to chosen auditive stimuli.

Offering common ground for discussing music from a variety of different aspects, one might be tempted to differentiate the category of function in music according to certain “theoretical instances” of music research, such as: “tradition”, “nature”, “reason”, “classical”, “practice” and “history” (Dahlhaus 1984: 34). Although inevitability of “the fatal” scientific questions seems to be at hand here – the “Vast Intellect’s dilemma”: “If it takes one tonne of paper to write down the laws of motion for one gramme of matter, then ...” (Stewart 1990: 283) – the evasive functionality seems to be itself a generator of a search for a perfect inter/disciplinary language. Yet, could one be conceived, or should one be content with the Augustinian *Deus in minimus maximus*? Or one should simply agree, to paraphrase an age-old fact mentioned in Umberto Eco’s *The Search for the Perfect Language*: there is no perfect language, but it is nonetheless well worth pursuing?

The rather lofty set of questions above seems justified only due to individual, secluded yet persuasive scholarly appeals (following the spirit of Eco’s maxim) for studying music as: “Die Musik – gegen die Musiken” (Kaden 2004: 19). Christian Kaden, whose preferences remain with the “Konzept der Ganzheit aus Verschiedenen” acknowledging at the same time the pragmatically inevitable stance “den Plural der Musiken gegen ihre Vereinzahlung in Schutz zu nehmen” (Kaden 2004: 39), voices the concept of etiology over axiology. Of course, one can easily object to such claims by stating that each of both approaches has its individual domain of inquiry and any hierarchy between the two epistemologies is senseless. Moreover, the objection could proceed by claiming: connections between different research paradigms have “amoebic” disciplinary forms, and disciplines are expanding themselves gradually due to complementary heuristic processes, usually labelled with the prefix *inter*(disciplinarity); thus hierarchies among them are arbitrary, if not absurd. Although I agree with both objections, it seems that it is precisely a lack of hierarchies between different approaches, entailing epistemological

complexities that stimulate – in Kaden’s and similar appeals for transgressing historical (cultural, social) confines while searching for epistemological unity – the connections between the “soft” and the “hard” sciences. (To avoid misunderstanding: it is not the claim for *universal*, but *holistic* knowledge.) The result seems to be *integrative* idea(l)s of knowledge on music (comparable to the one mentioned by Kaden) – an epistemological trajectory consisting of notions, on the one hand, regarding music as a physically tangible phenomenon, conceived of as an aesthetic *thing* or bio- and physiological function, and on the other hand, of music as a social agent, as a vehicle of spiritual and ritual order on the other.

### Between pleasure and enjoyment

In music research, the always surmised and indicated yet never thoroughly elaborated Kantian difference between evaluation of art and judgement of taste (as, for instance, the fifth essay in Dahlhaus 1967) – the first aiming at more objective, consensually elaborated, somehow “historicized” arguments from within a certain context, whereas the former gives credence to subjective truths, individual, particular stances claiming no wider validity – allows a parallel with the psycho-analytic difference between enjoyment, or better: *jouissance*, and *pleasure*. As Middleton puts it, “*Plaisir* results, then, from the operation of the structures of signification through which the subject knows himself or herself; *jouissance* fractures these structures.” (Middleton 1990: 261) What seems to be a complementary Cartesian split between mind and body fits easily into a *field of relations*, of “Bedeutungszusammenhänge zwischen Rezeptionsstrategien und soziokulturellem Kontext” (Rösing 1994: 76) and flows over a notion of *The Plural Pleasures of Music* (Huron 2005), over the functions of music as agent stimulating different processes in human body and mind.

There are several widely accepted, common sociological and anthropological premises, such as *local-global*, *low-high*, *plagiaristic-authentic*, *utilitarian-autonomous* etc. Although each of them has found its way into music research, it seems that there are only few studies regarding music’s function that may be comparable, for instance, to Hofstede’s global research (Hofstede 1980, Hofstede 2004) discussing particularities *and* universals. Hofstede’s four sociological dimensions – *power distance* (equality–inequality between people in the country’s society), *individualism* (interpersonal relations, individualism and collectivism), *masculinity* (gender roles and power), and *uncertainty avoidance* (tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity), and *long-term orientation* (longterm

devotion to social values) – have been dispersed through individual studies within the psychology, sociology, or anthropology of music. The connections between them seem only gradually to be gaining institutional respect: recently, apart from a comprehensive neuroscientific survey of auditive capacities of the human’s brain in Levitin 2006, or the thorough survey of cognizance of music in Huron 2006, the nature/nurture opposition is dealt with in some detail also in Rentfrow and Gosling. Their four factor-analytically-derived dimensions (“reflective and complex”, “intense and rebellious”, “upbeat and conventional” and “energetic and rhythmic”; Rentfrow and Gosling 2003: 1421) is a fine empirical study regarding cognitive universals and personality features indicating cultural issues, worth pursuing further along the line of Huron’s view: “Like most other music scholars, I believe that culture is the principal factor influencing music. However, our belief in the preeminence of culture does not give us license to dismiss possible biological foundations.” Since: “The point is that there is no pleasure apart from brains, and since brains are the product of natural selection, there is no pleasure outside of the mechanisms provided by natural selection” (Huron 2005: 5 and 3).

The biological, neurological, cognitive – in short: the “physicalistic” – indices of responses to music seem to offer a detailed account regarding the fact that “music’s ‘powers’ vacillate” (DeNora 2000: 151). If “[t]here is little evidence in favour of behaviourist conception of music’s powers in respect to agency” (DeNora 2000: 160), it seems actually that one should consider two questions regarding music’s function: instead of “How and to what purposes people use music?”, one should ask “What does music do to people?”. The question has been, of course, already in use in the questionnaires on music preferences, not to mention its historical omnipresence. But even the elemental browsing on empirical data retrieval from respondents (be it psychological, sociological, or ethnographical) points to a caveat of *conditioned*, in a certain way *confined validity* due to the complexity in which utterances on music’s functions are imbedded (cf., for instance, Karbusicky 1975: 77–84; North, Hargreaves & Hargreaves 2004: 43–46; Müller 1995 et passim). This is far from claiming that neuroscientific methods (as developed by David E. Levitin, Isabelle Peretz, Robert J. Zatorre, Norman M. Weinberger, among others) could be a substitute for the common ethnographic, historiographic etc. approaches specific to the humanities. However, it seems that the question of music’s functions would have to define relations between the elemental categories addressing functions of music – between, for instance: *musicality* (in the

sense of Karbusicky 1975: 154ff or Phillips 1976), *tastes* (Behne 1986, Droë 2004), *habits* (Lehmann 1993), *behavior* (Walsh, Mitchell, Frenzel and Wiedmann 2003), and *uses* of music (Behne 1996, North, Hargreaves and Hargreaves 2004) – for the prevalent notion of music as omnipresent phenomena functioning without specific, yet with myriad contingent functions to gain more accurate scientific evidence than available at the moment.

### Summary

My aim is to offer a sketch of musicological research on *functions* of music. Although a seemingly futile endeavour for an art with a myriad of overtly loaded or tacitly attached tasks, wavering between a plethora of intentions and its immanent disfunctionability, current music research practices allow one to claim that issues on music's different functions have gained in importance with intensified culturological, anthropological, but also other approaches to music from the behavioral sciences especially during about the last two decades. The notion of functions regarding music is accordingly dispersed among different disciplines, branches, or epistemologies, each of them offering different vocabularies. Thus, this text attempts to unfold the range of research into music's *functions*.

The text is shaped in a form of four main issues. After a short passage (*Calibrating functions in music*) introduces the author's persuasion that, in music research generally, not only the *differences* should be considered but also the common background that enables music to function should be taken into consideration, the following section (*Epistemologies of functions in music*) discusses the logic of conceptualizing functions of music starting with a comparison of ten scholars (Merriam 1964, Gaston 1968, Behne 1986, Karbusicky 1986, Frith 1987, Kaplan 1990, Middleton 1990, Lehman 1996, Hargreaves & North 1999, Nettle 2001). The main claim of this section reads: The research into music's functions seems to be a kind of a "march of the names" – a process of transgressing cognitive, social and axiological levels through different identification categories. They seem to indicate relations between "negotiation of meaning" about music and the "levels of signification", between "primary" and "secondary signification" (Shepherd and Wicke 1997: 14, 203, 103 ff), between *syntactic* and *semantic* pregnancy of the musical flow (Middleton 1990: 176 ff), stirring up different *functions* that music may have as a stimulus for either "visceral responses" (Cook 2000: 79) or/and "cultural deeds".

The second section of the essay (*Music's particularities and universals*) elaborates the fact that musical practices

have more pragmatic cultural as well as elemental biological relevancy for human beings as a "tool for arousing feelings and emotions" (Levitin 2006: 261). The indicated nature/nurture distinction regarding music's functions is formulated as a surmise: the myriad functions of music – as well as its autonomy – are emerging out of music's disposition to relate with the cultural variables through the listener's cognitive faculties, capacities, and needs. The functions of music are thus seen as contingencies, concatenate phenomena, emergent variables, giving a picture of an unsurveyable array of *qualia* that – nevertheless – involve certain universals. After a discussion of the notion of a *universal* pertaining to music, this section advocates Nattiez's stance: The notion of a musical universal – as Nattiez emphasizes in his account, to a certain degree acceptable for the notion of musical universals in general – implies a plea "in favour of a well thought-out reconciliation of the universal and the relative, of the innate and the acquired, of nature and culture" (Nattiez 2004: 19).

The third and the fourth sections are short comments on the epistemological difficulties arising from the both previously discussed topoi: the nature/nurture opposition of the music's function and the heuristic levers of discussing it. The third section (*Friction between different vocabularies?*) is a plea for a *integrative* knowledge on music, conceived of as an aesthetic *thing* or bio- and physiological function, and on the other hand, of music as a social agent, as a vehicle of spiritual and ritual order on the other. The fourth section (*Between pleasure and enjoyment*) only illuminates this plea in which what seems to be a complementary Cartesian split between mind and body fits easily into a *field of relations*, of "Bedeutungszusammenhänge zwischen Rezeptionsstrategien und soziokulturellem Kontext" (Rösing 1994: 76) and flows over a notion of *The Plural Pleasures of Music* (Huron 2005), over the functions of music as agent stimulating different processes in human body and mind. Pointing at the scanty research of music's functions, in which one could not deny important results offered by some scholars that have marked off systematic possibilities for further research, the essay concludes with a suggestion that the research into music's function has been rather poorly argued. Namely, it seems that the question of music's functions would have to define relations between elemental categories addressing functions of music (between, for instance: *musicality*, *tastes*, *habits*, *behavior*, *uses* of music), for the prevalent notion of music as omnipresent phenomena functioning without specific, yet with myriad contingent functions to gain more accurate scientific evidence than available at the moment.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Tarasti 1997: 188–189. “I have classified all the musical semiotic theories – in the epistemic sense – into two groups, the first of which starts with rules and grammars belonging to all music, emphasizing music’s surface, which supposes that before the rules set by a theoretician there is just nothing – and consequently when the rules stop their functioning there remains nothing. This type of semiotics, as a philosophical ‘style’ rather than a systematic classification, I would call as “classical” semiotics. [...] The other trend is to think that all signs exist only on the basis of an order which is there before the scholar starts his/her work and which remains there when he/she has finished. This semiotic philosophy approaches the meaning (1) as a process, i. e. supposing that signs cannot be defined without taking into account the time, place and subject (actor), (2) as something immanent, i. e. believing like Mead and Merleau-Ponty primarily that meaning is produced within a given system, body, organism, in the first place without any meaning coming from outside as a deus ex machina (like in the ‘redemption’ at the end of Chausson’s piece, the reconciling themes do not stem from outside but are generated from the materials within the piece); (3) by giving emphasis to the content, the signified, which however, can be something non-verbal, “ineffable”, expressible only in terms of a quasi-corporeal experience.”

<sup>2</sup> Cf., for instance: Grabócz 1999, Imberty 2001, Jiránek 1999a, Kon 1999, Mäche 2001, Nattiez 2004, Nettle 1977, Nettle 2001, Trehub 2001.

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### Santrauka

Mano tikslas – pasiūlyti muzikologinių muzikos funkcijų tyrimų eskizą. Nors pastangos kalbėti apie meną su nesuskaičiuojama daugybe jam atvirai keliamų ar tyliai priskiriamų užduočių, varijuojančių tarp intencijų gausos ir būdingo jų nefunkcionalumo, iš pirmo žvilgsnio atrodo beviltiškos, vis dėlto dabartinė muzikos tyrimų praktika duoda pagrindą teigti, kad klausimų, susijusių su skirtingomis muzikos funkcijomis, svarba, ypač per paskutiniuosius du dešimtmečius, gerokai išaugo – tai lėmė suintensyvėję kultūrologiniai, antropologiniai ir iš bihevioristinių mokslų perimti požiūriai. Taigi muzikos funkcijų samprata plinta kitose disciplinose, mokslo šakose ar pažinimo teorijose, ir kiekvienoje iš jų siūloma skirtinga terminologija. Šiame darbe mėginama atskleisti muzikos funkcijų tyrimų diapazoną.

Tekstas sutelktas į keturis pagrindinius klausimus. Po trumpo įvado („Muzikos funkcijų kalibravimas“) – jame autorius reiškia įsitikinimą, kad muzikos tyrimuose apskritai turėtų būti analizuojami ne tik *skirtumai*, bet ir bendrasis pradai, suteikiantis galimybę muzikai

funkcionuoti – pirmoje straipsnio dalyje („Muzikos funkcijų epistemologija“) aptariama muzikos funkcijų konceptualizavimo logika remiantis dešimties muzikologų palyginimu (Merriamas, 1964, Gastonas, 1968, Behne, 1986, Karbusicky's, 1986, Frithas, 1987, Kaplanas, 1990, Middletonas, 1990, Lehmanas, 1996, Hargreaves'as ir Northas, 1999, Nettlis, 2001). Pagrindinis šios dalies teiginys yra toks: „Muzikos funkcijų tyrimai – tai tarsi „pavadinimų maršas“, kognityvių, socialinių ir aksiologinių lygmenų transgresijų procesas skirtingose identifikacijų kategorijose. Šios kategorijos tarsi nurodo santykį tarp „derybų dėl muzikos reikšmės“ ir „prasmės lygių“, tarp „pirminės ir antrinės prasmės“ (Shepherdas ir Wicke, 1997: 14, 203, 103 ff), tarp sintaksinio ir semantinio muzikos lakumo (Middletonas, 1990: 176 ff), kur visos galimos muzikos *funkcijos*, kaip „intuityvių atsakymų“ (Cookas, 2000: 79) ir (arba) „kultūrinių veiksmų“ stimulus, yra susimaišiusios.“

Antroje straipsnio dalyje („Specifinės ir universaliosios muzikos savybės“) rutuliojamas teiginys, kad muzikos praktikos turi pragmatinės-kultūrinės ir gaivališkos-biologinės svarbos žmonijai kaip „priemonė jausmams ir emocijoms sukelti“ (Levitinas, 2006: 261). Nurodyta muzikos funkcijų natūralių-išvestinių aspektų distinkcija yra suformuluota kaip spėjimas: nesuskaičiuojamas muzikos funkcijas, taip pat kaip ir jų autonomiškumą lemia muzikos polinkis sietis su kultūrinėmis įvairovėmis per klausytojo kognityvius gebėjimus, galimybes ir poreikius. Taigi muzikos funkcijos pasireiškia kaip netikėtumai, jungiamieji fenomenai, susiliejančios įvairovės ir sukuria neištiriamos daugybės vadinamųjų *qualia*, kurioms vis dėlto būdingas tam tikras universalumas, paveikslą. Aptarus muzikoje glūdinčio *universalumo* sampratą, šioje dalyje taip pat propaguojama Nattiezo nuostata, kad muzikos universalio samprata, kuri, kaip pabrėžia pats Nattiezas, iš dalies atitinka universa-

lo apskritai sampratą, implikuoja „kruopščiai apgalvoto universalumo ir reliatyvumo, įgimtų ir įgytų savybių, gamtos ir kultūros suderinamumo“ idėją (Nattiezas, 2004: 19).

Trečioje ir ketvirtoje dalyse trumpai komentuojami abiejų aptartų temų epistemologiniai keblumai, kylantys iš muzikos funkcijų natūralių-išvestinių aspektų antagonizmo ir euristinių jų aptarimo svertų. Trečia dalis („Nesutarimai tarp skirtingų terminologijų“) yra kvietimas pažinti muziką *integratyviai*, suvokti ją kaip estetinę *daiktą* arba biofiziologinę funkciją, taip pat ir kaip socialinį veiksnį, kaip dvasinės ir ritualinės sandaros priemonę. Ketvirtoje dalyje („Tarp malonumo ir gėrėjimosi“) toliau propaguojamas minėtas kvietimas, kuriame tai, kas atrodo kaip papildomas sielos ir kūno dualumas pagal Descartes'ą, lengvai įtelpa į „Bedeutungszusammenhänge zwischen Rezeptionsstrategien und soziokulturellem Kontext“ (Rösingas, 1994: 76) *santykių lauką* ir „teka“ per muzikos funkcijas „Muzikos multimalonumų“ (Huronas, 2005) sampratos vaga, kaip įvairius procesus žmogaus kūne ir sieloje stimuliuojantis veiksnys.

Straipsnio pabaigoje sakoma, kad nors muzikos funkcijų tyrimams skiriama per mažai dėmesio, vis dėlto kai kurie mokslininkai pasiūlė svarbių dalykų, nubrėžusių sistemingas tolesnių tyrimų galimybes, ir daroma išvada, kad muzikos funkcijų tyrimai yra nepakankamai argumentuoti. Konkrečiai kalbant, norint gauti tikslesnių mokslinių įrodymų nei šiuo metu esantieji, muzikos funkcijų tyrimai turėtų apibrėžti santykius tarp muzikos funkcijas nagrinėjančių elementariųjų kategorijų (pavyzdžiui, tarp *muzikalumo*, muzikos *skonių*, *papročių*, *elgesio*, *naudojimo*), darant prielaidą, kad muzika, kaip visur esantis reiškinys, funkcionuoja be jokios specifikos, tačiau gali reikštis nesuskaičiuojama daugybe funkcijų.