

Musical life in Bilbao from 1790 to 1880 and the problem of local music history

Willem de Waal

Musicólogo e investigador

Después de un análisis de la literatura existente sobre el tema, se discute el problema básico de la historia local de la música: El predicamento estético que encuentra la disciplina musicológica y la prevención de la misma sobre el contacto con la historia convencionalmente académica. Se analizan dos vías para detectar el significado social de la música, el segundo concretamente fundado en el modelo desarrollado por Pierre Bourdieu.

Bilboko musikagintzaz gogoetak egin ondoren arazo teoriko eta metodologikoaz aritu da: Musika, historia eta estetika ikuspegiak tradizio akademikoan. Bi bide aztertzen dira, musikagintzaren esangura soziala eta P. Bourdieuren ereduaren bilakaera.

After a short discussion of the existing literature on the chosen period, a basic problem in writing a local music history is discussed: the “aesthetic predicament” in which the musicological discipline finds itself and which prevents it from taking contact with history as an academic discipline. Two ways of detecting social meaning *in* music are sketched, the second based on the model of society developed by the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu.

During the third symposium “Bilbo: 700 urteren bidean = Bilbao: 700 años de memoria”, entitled “Bilbo, musika-hiria = Bilbao, una ciudad musical” I offered four theses that contain the main directions of my talk “La vida musical en Bilbao (1790-1880)”. They will be retained in the present paper, which is the result of substantial changes of the text I read in January. In order to maintain a connection between the two presentations, the theses will be repeated in the introduction, together with some observations and comments. In the first section I will then review the existing literature and propose subjects and methods for projects which could be realised in the near future. In section II to V I will discuss a basic problem that arises in writing any local music history, various questions of method that surge along with it, and a proposal for solving it. Of course, the basic problem reflects immediately on the special case of Bilbao. The four theses were:

Firstly, the ongoing activities of the musical institutions that have vertebrated musical life in Bilbao during roughly the past century obscure the musical activities during earlier periods, in the current view of aficionados as well as professionals. The vigour of the present institutions does not seem to foster historical investigation, and this was confirmed in recent years. To celebrate their seventy-five years of existence, the Conservatorio de Bilbao has organized a series of concerts, and to commemorate their centenary, the Banda de Música issued a compact disc; both were hardly looking back at all. The memorial volumes edited by the Sociedad Coral, the Sociedad Filarmónica and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Bilbao for their commemorations mention little of musical life before the beginnings of the respective institutions. Only in the volume issued on occasion of the centenary of the Teatro Arriaga the history of theatrical — and by implication musical — activities in town prior to its inauguration receive some attention: three pages on the period up to the construction, during the thirties of the 19th century, of the anterior theatre and some twenty-five pages on the activities this Viejo Teatro housed. Another reason for the relative neglect of the period before the 1880s might be that the creation of the oldest of the institutions mentioned coincides with the spectacular growth of Bilbao after the end of the last Carlist War, and with the change from activities centred mainly in commerce to those in heavy industry, which brought about a profound transformation of most aspects of social life in the Villa, including the musical. It may be assumed that the memories of earlier times changed in the process, and the literature commonly called “costumbrista” confirms this assumption. It could also be noted that the so called “resurgimiento” of Arriaga’s works since the 1880s coincides with these profound changes in society; in fact, they could be interpreted as a way of preserving or restoring the ties with the past and thereby constructing a new image of it.

Secondly, the existing literature on one of Bilbao’s emblematic figures, the composer Juan Crisóstomo de Arriaga,¹ nicely shows the effects of certain aest-

hetic presuppositions which guide the authors and lead them to concentrate on “the unexplainable genius of the composer” and “the music of his works in themselves”, to the detriment of “the composer and his music in context”, be it musical or social. The present paper discusses this problem — the genesis and the effects of these presuppositions and the difficulties they cause in the writing of a local music history — at length and will propose another way of dealing with music and social context.

Thirdly, because musicology has been introduced only recently as an academic discipline in Spain² — it exists for approximately twenty-five years as a specialisation, and only since three years as an independent academic training in university — and because of its even more recent, rather oblique, presence in the University of the Basque Country,³ it is relatively little known to scholars, let alone to the general public. The discipline is important enough to merit a presentation of an impression of the state of the art and the latest tendencies and methodological innovations in the field; for when starting up the project of writing a local history of music of Bilbao, it might be wise to orientate it on the most recent developments within the discipline.

And lastly, the historiography of music is not only a question of gathering “content” — facts, events, data, information, or however it may be defined —; serious reflection on its goals, perspectives and methods is necessary to avoid a mere recompilation which then remains without any explicit interpretation, and depends completely on the implicit tenets of its *mise-en-forme*. In this article one model will be proposed as a way of interpreting music and its history within society.

¹ An extensive bibliography will be provided in a forthcoming monography on the composer entitled *De Bilbao a París, la trayectoria del compositor Juan Crisóstomo de Arriaga*, Barcelona: Tritó, [c. 2000].

² On musicology and its introduction as an academic discipline within Spain, both in conservatories and universities, consult Carmen Rodríguez, “Musicología en la enseñanza superior en el País Vasco: una laguna en humanidades y ciencias sociales”, *XII Congreso de Estudios Vascos: “Estudios Vascos en el Sistema Educativo = Eusko Hezkuntza Sarean”*, Vitoria-Gasteiz 1993, Donostia: Eusko Ikaskuntza, 1995, 595-602, esp. 598-599, and Juan José Carreras, “Musicology in Spain (1980-1989)”, *Acta Musicologica* 62/2-3 (1990) 260-288, esp. 261-263. - Of special interest are Xoán Manuel Carreira, “La musicología spagnola: un’illusione autarchica?”, *Il Saggiatore Musicale* 2/1 (1995) 105-142, and the two rejoinders by José V. González-Valle and María Encina Cortizo y Ramón Sobrino in *Il Saggiatore Musicale* 3 (1996) 223-227. - The present state of the discipline as exercised in Spain is reflected in *Revista de Musicología* 20/1-2 (1997) = *Actas del IV Congreso de la Sociedad Española de Musicología: “La investigación musical en España: Estado de la cuestión y aportaciones”*, Madrid, 8-10 de mayo de 1997, passim. - To gain an idea how this compares to the discipline at large, one may confront the organisation and position papers of this congress with those of the 16th Congress of the International Musicological Society, celebrated in London, November 1997; position papers of round tables published in *Acta Musicologica* (69/1) (1997) 3-52.

³ Since February 1998 - the course “Historia de la música” is obligatory for all students of Art History at the University of the Basque Country.

I

The literature on musical life in Bilbao over the period from 1790 to 1880 is slight:⁴ many particulars have been gathered patiently by José Antonio Arana Martija;⁵ María Nagore Ferrer has commented on the origins of the choral movement, on philharmonic societies and on the staging and production of zarzuelas;⁶ Jon Bagüés Erriondo has given attention to opera in Bilbao;⁷ Carmen Rodríguez Suso has collected many data and set valiant steps towards their interpretation.⁸ Of course, the recompilation of data, the attention paid to individual institutions and organisations, the care put into the interpretation of anecdotal situations and individual cases does not satisfy the need for a global picture of musical life in Bilbao between roughly 1790 and 1880, but, apart from their intrinsic interest, they constitute valuable preparatory work for such an overview. It should be noted that other towns in the Basque Country and Navarra, like Vitoria-Gasteiz and Iruña-Pamplona, have received a more generous treatment of their local music history of late; studies on Donostia-San Sebastián seem to be in the same desolate state as those on Bilbao. But the indicated need remains even in these favoured cases.

For the present the most important source material for an acceptable history of Bilbao's musical life is accessible only with difficulty or not at all. Added to the scarcity of explicit discussion of methodological questions, this might lead to a problematical situation in the very near future, for to shed light on Bilbao's musical life of the past on occasion of the commemorations of the town's seven

⁴ For a declaration in this sense of a far more competent observer consult José Antonio Arana Martija, "La Música del Barroco al Romanticismo", Teresa Casanovas, coord., *Bizkaia 1789-1814*, [Bilbao]: Bizkaiko Foru Aldundia, Kultura Saila = Diputación Foral de Bizkaia, Departamento de Cultura, [1990?] 215-241: "Para escribir la historia de nuestra música, sea cual sea el período que se quiera tratar, carecemos de estudios monográficos que permitan ensamblar sus diversos aspectos con el fin de obtener unos resultados serios".

⁵ Gathered in José Antonio Arana Martija, *Música vasca: Segunda edición*, Bilbao: Caja de Ahorros Vizcaína, 1987, (Biblioteca Musical del País Vasco 1), an augmented version of the first edition of 1976, and in the many publications by the same author.

⁶ María Nagore Ferrer, "Orígenes del movimiento coral en Bilbao en el siglo XIX", *Revista de Musicología* 14/1-2 (1991) = *III Congreso Nacional de Musicología (Granada, 1990)* "La música en la España del siglo XIX", 125-134; "Sociedades filarmónicas y de conciertos en el Bilbao del siglo XIX", *Cuadernos de Arte Granada* 26 (1995) 195-206; "La vida zarzuelística en Bilbao (1850-1936)", *Cuadernos de Música Iberoamericana* 2-3 (1996-1997) = *Actas del Congreso Internacional "La Zarzuela en España e Hispanoamérica. Centro y periferia, 1800-1950"*, Madrid, 20-24 de noviembre de 1995, 399-408.

⁷ Jon Bagüés, "La ópera en Euskal Herria", *La ópera en España*, [Oviedo]: Excmo. Ayuntamiento de Oviedo; Universidad de Oviedo, Vicerrectorado de Extensión Universitaria, 1984, 115-123.

⁸ Carmen Rodríguez Suso, "Viejas voces de Bilbao: La música en la Villa durante los siglos XVIII y XIX", J. M. González Cembellín, A. R. Ortega Berruguete, eds., *Bilbo, arte eta historia = Bilbao, arte e historia*, [Bilbao]: Bizkaiko Foru Aldundia, Kultura Saila = Diputación Foral de Bizkaia, Departamento de Cultura, regd. 1990, vol. 1, p. 225-251; "La ópera de J. C. Arriaga: Bases para un replanteamiento de su período bilbaino (I)-(III)", *Mínima* 1/1-3 (1992).

hundredth anniversary in the year 2000, both of these elements — a thorough review of the all the pertinent sources and a discussion of method — are indispensable.

Bilbao certainly does not lack in interesting and significant persons, events and institutions during the period under scrutiny. I shall mention just some of these in chronological order: During the 1790s a project for an opera house was in discussion, and it was realised with considerable difficulty. This case would show nicely how private initiative and governmental control contradicted each other and what steps had to be taken by the entrepreneurs to win through in this confrontation, which took place up to the highest levels of State. It is also a good example of how a primarily musical interest was able to create its own relatively independent social context, a world of its own, so to speak. Many music teachers exercised in Bilbao, but little is known in detail of their activities. During the early 19th century some of them might have used Mateo Albéniz's new treatise of 1802, for even though it was published in Donostia-San Sebastián, the ties of its author with Bilbao were strong. A study of this treatise and its users would also contribute to the general history of music pedagogy, generally a sadly neglected subject in music history. The life and works of the composer Juan Crisóstomo de Arriaga have attracted much attention for over a century, but even so many obvious questions remain without an answer or were never even asked. To mention just one example: one of his compositions has been dedicated to a "filarmónica sociedad", which has been interpreted to mean that a philharmonic society existed in Bilbao around 1815 to 1820, although so far no contrasting documentation has been brought forward. Did this society actually exist as an institution with formal statutes, a board of directors and official membership, or was it rather a "salón", like the one that can be documented, for instance, for A Coruña during roughly the same years?⁹ Or was the expression used in the much vaguer sense of "all the aficionados of music in town"? The visits of the Señor de Vizcaya — a title then held by the King of Spain — to his lands are documented for 1820 and 1828 for instance, but the musical activities related with these visits have not received much comment. They are of interest however, because all groups of society were obliged to present themselves, and in the course of the presentations and festivities all kinds of musical activities were deployed, including music of social agents that can only with difficulty be documented otherwise. These visits are perfect cases for a study of the self-representation of the social agents and thus of all of society, even of its inner divisions and its equilibrium of power. In October 1851 Louis Moreau Gottschalk, a young but

⁹ Margarita Soto Viso, "La biblioteca Adalid hasta 1827. Recepción de la música instrumental en A Coruña en el primer cuarto del siglo XIX", *XV Congreso de la Sociedad Internacional de Musicología*, (Madrid, 3-10/04/1992), "Culturas musicales del Mediterráneo y sus ramificaciones" = *Revista de Musicología* 16/6, 3488-3509.

already well-known American piano virtuoso, visited Bilbao on his way from Paris to Madrid and gave three concerts in the theatre.¹⁰ Who formed the audience of these concerts which interrupted the normal course of musical life? A surprisingly large number of aficionados of music in Bilbao can be identified through subscription lists to musical periodicals, so they were well informed about what went on in the international music world, also with regard to Gottschalk of course. Did they attend the concerts, or even invite the pianist to stop by on his way down south? The virtuoso's last concert was in benefit of the Casa de Misericordia; a copy of the letter of gratitude for the contribution received written by the Mayor of the moment, Eugenio de Larrinaga, still exists. The anecdotes around Gottschalk lead immediately to more general questions such as: What is known of the taxes that had to be paid on the tickets for public concerts, which were commonly used to finance the aid to the poor? and: Which other temporary activities supplemented the regular musical life of the town? Was the visit of Gottschalk an incentive for organising a Sociedad Filarmónica during the next year, 1852? Why did it have to disband in 1856? Its president, Nicolás de Ledesma, is a figure that looms large over musical life in the Villa from 1830, when he became maestro de capilla, to 1883, the year of his death. But next to no investigation has been done on him, even though he is one of the key figures in Bilbao's musical life for over fifty years. As can be noted, even a cursory and rather haphazard review of subject matter yields many possibilities for study and investigation, interesting not only in themselves as individual cases but also for the larger themes they evoke.

The theories and methods musicology developed in the course of its existence as an academic discipline over more than a century are manifold — but at the same time restricted, as will become clear in the rest of this text — and all of them could be brought to bear on the material gathered or could even serve as eye-openers for subject matter that would be “invisible” without them. For an up-to-date review of the actual state of the art Jann Pasler's position paper for the London congress of musicologists¹¹ in November 1997 can be consulted. She reports that in search for the meaning of music, and indeed how music might be said to mean something in a meaningful way, the discipline has on the one hand stepped up the search for a stronger factual basis and on the other has opened up to new methods and theories such as *histoire des mentalités*, structural anthropology, semiotics, sociology, deconstructionism and postmodernism (and the various brands of cultural studies, gender studies, etc. could be added). Apart from the focus on composers, their works and intentions, now the performer and the listener come into view, both as individuals and as social groups. Musicologists also reflect more and more on their personal perspective on and interest in their studies. They may

¹⁰ Clyde W. Brockett, “Gottschalk in Biscay, Castile, and Andalusia: A Man for All Classes”, *Revista de Musicología* 15/2-3 (1992) 815-849.

¹¹ Jann Pasler, “Round Table III: Directions in Musicology”, *Acta Musicologica*; see note xxx.

now call themselves humanists and modernists, structuralists, poststructuralists or postmodernists. Pasler begins her paper with the statement: “The discipline is in a state of flux”. It seems that this methodological upheaval is perceived quite generally and it allows for new formulations, a situation on which the ethnomusicologist Josep Martí remarked last year, 1997: “sería conveniente hablar de rearticulación de los diferentes ámbitos musicológicos”.¹² Therefore it might be a convenient moment for the presentation of a proposal for a methodology for writing local music history. Not all of the current musicological activities mentioned by Pasler have to be brought into play, of course; this paper proposes a method that refocuses existing methodological approaches to the problem, rather than create a completely novelty.

For a project of a local music history not only the methods of music history and social history, but also those of sociology of music, and especially ethnomusicology should be used, it would seem to me. The discipline mentioned last is of interest for its outlook on the material to be studied that is quite different from that defined by the mostly unreflected presuppositions current in historical musicology. Ethnomusicology tends to take a global, inclusive view of music within a defined context, it asks for relationships between musical and other activities within that context, and it exercises no preliminary selection on aesthetic grounds of the material for study. Because of the recent inclusion in its concerns of questions of transformation of musical cultures over time and acculturation after migration, it has become easier in this discipline to think flexibly on historical and geographical changes in musical cultures. On these developments Barbara Krader observed in the late 70s: “part of this trend represents a return to music history, with an expanded sociological dimension”. And she notes a trend that seems to continue at present: “a number of Western ethnomusicologists are in fact studying their own cultures: ... there is interest in investigating the ethnic group to which one belongs, or a local rural or urban community”.¹³ Ethnomusicology is also of interest because of the ongoing debate on methodological matters. On the other hand, in the measure that it tends to think of societies as homogeneous groups — especially as the influence of cultural anthropology¹⁴ can be very strong — it will welcome the shifted perspectives from a sociological point of view.

¹² Josep Martí, “¿Necesitamos aún el término “Etnomusicología”?”, *Revista de Musicología* 20/2 (1997) 887-894.

¹³ Barbara Krader, “Ethnomusicology”, Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London: Macmillan, 1980 [etc.], vol. 6, p.275-282, esp. 280.

¹⁴ For the multiple meanings of the term see Gustavo Bueno, *El mito de la cultura: Ensayo de una filosofía materialista de la cultura*, Barcelona: Editorial Prensa Ibérica, [1996] 1997; Antonio Ariño, *Sociología de la cultura: La constitución simbólica de la sociedad*, Barcelona: Ariel, 1997, (Ariel Sociología). - For the methodological difficulties the concept of “music and culture” poses, see a problematical monograph by an admirable scholar: Mark Slobin, *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West*, Hanover; London: University Press of New England [for the Wesleyan University Press], cop. 1993.

In this first section I have kept to the format required of all participants in the symposium: an overview of the existing literature on the subject and some indications on projects of investigation that could be realised in the near future. In the remainder of the article I would like to lay the base for a general proposition for the study of local music history, that should be taken into account in the special case of Bilbao. I do not pretend to give a full theoretical model with an accompanying theory and methodology; I must save a more formal presentation of such a proposition for a later time. This presentation will therefore be essayistic rather than academic, and mention various points of interest.¹⁵ But the basic thrust of a future formal proposition will be the same as in the essay offered here.

A basic problem in the writing of a local history of music can be stated in just a few words: it will tend to concentrate on local musical activities, but generally will not select its material on the criterion of absolute aesthetic quality of musical products. But just this kind of selection is usually made before beginning a general music history. A profound contradiction between the presuppositions of the academic disciplines of musicology and history can be detected here, a strong tension between aesthetics and historiography. The historiography of music has not orientated itself on debates between historians on historiographical methodology, to the detriment of finding a solution for the basic problem. It is even aggravated by this neglect. The recent surge of various musicological transgressions sometimes known under the name “new musicology” may have helped to break down orthodoxy and deconstruct it, but it has not constructed a way of going about solving the problem either.

Musicology finds itself in what has been called an “aesthetic predicament”, because it makes a priori judgments on the aesthetics differences between various kinds of musical activities and artefacts, and these judgments influence music historiography from the very first moment. This problem has to be solved if the project is to prosper. A drastic way out of the predicament was proposed in the beginning years of the discipline by Philipp Spitta, a famous Bach scholar, who distinguished between the work of art as a historical document and as an aesthetic object.¹⁶ This line of thought has not been followed out by the discipline. On the one hand for internal reasons that will become clear below. On the other hand it cannot be denied that societies value art works as aesthetic objects, not as documents. This kind of social use should be included in any history of music, whether local or general, although not as an a priori. Konrad

¹⁵ This must be also because I cannot dispose of all the literature needed to formulate such a proposal.

¹⁶ Philipp Spitta, “Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst”, *Grenzbote* (1893), cited by Carl Dahlhaus, *Musikästhetik*, Köln: Musikverlag Hans Gerig, [cop. 1967; cited after 3rd edition] 1976, (Musik-Taschen-Bücher Theoretica 8), 105. - Dahlhaus' chapter “Ästhetik und Historie” discusses the basic problem but does not touch on local music history.

Boehmer has proposed from a Marxist perspective to substitute one a priori for another.¹⁷ But this does not change the basic problem; it just shifts it. The basic problem seems to reside in the acceptance of whatever a priori. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu proposes a model of society which gets behind the aesthetic criterion and shows its social use without destroying it. An approach of this kind might bring the basic problem nearer to a solution.

If musical activities are to be the centre of attention of a music history, they would turn out to be most informative if brought into a relationship with social activities in general. But despite various attempts to connect music and society which will be mentioned below, no successful model which puts music into a reasoned relationship with its social context has been brought forward. Musicologists who look for these connections are usually weak in the study of social structures. Their attempts have not been convincing because they tend to juxtapose information, and lack ways to integrate it. Theories of society of Marxist inspiration may have come closer, for they are based at least on a general theory of society and its workings — which may include music. What seems to be needed is a model of society that allows to make sense of music as a social activity and which respects the exigencies of serious studies on the structure of society and the acquisitions of the musicological discipline as a whole.

If music can be seen as one of the social activities, it might be interesting to see how society leaves its traces in musical activities and artefacts. This approach might even be another way out of the predicament. As to detecting society *in* music two questions may be raised. Firstly: Can social meaning be found in *individual* musical artefacts? Some ethnomusicologists, sociologists and musicologists think that this is possible and their positive responses will be mentioned in section III. Secondly: Can social meaning be found in *all* musical activities and artefacts? The answer is positive within the model proposed by Pierre Bourdieu who exemplified this for literature and photography, and gave indications for the other arts. His model will be discussed in section IV.

¹⁷ Konrad Boehmer, "Sociology of music", Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London: Macmillan, 1980 [etc.], vol. 17 p. 432-439. - Boehmer suggests a way out of the aesthetic predicament by stating: "Unlike traditional musicology the sociology of music does not recognize 'aesthetic' differences between art music, folk music and the more recent phenomenon of light or popular music; it sees these categories from the viewpoint of social history". But then, as a good Marxist, he imposes another a priori: "social relevance" in the choice of subject matter for study. Flatly denying the possibility of aesthetic differences will not do; nor substituting one a priori for another. Boehmer does not see a possibility for an universally applicable model: "In its analysis of relationships between music and society the sociology of music must be regarded as a historical discipline that cannot devise a general conceptual framework valid for all countries and social circumstances". Bourdieu's proposal of a sociological theory preserves this possibility, as will become clear.

Musicology as a discipline seems hardly prepared to solve the problems generated by the aesthetic predicament. If this situation needs to be changed, it would be indispensable to know why the discipline has not solved or even faced these problems. Some reasons can be given: musicology does not define itself as a purely historical discipline; there is a strong undercurrent that considers musical style as the proper object of investigation, and not musical activities. Musicology finds that it is hard to escape from the aesthetic predicament. Consequently, musicology has not orientated itself on the discussion about historiographical methodology that takes place in the historical discipline. Social history has not been successfully integrated in musical historiography, let alone sociology; the undercurrent keeps the ship of musicology in the bay of aesthetics and prevents it from sailing out for open water. Some of the coastline has been sighted and charted to some extent since the 50s, through the forays of the smaller boats of ethnomusicology. But some of them stranded on the reefs of culture; others never dared go too far off shore and sailed by the beacons of aesthetics. Those that sailed by the lights of Marxism were often considered foreigners. The result is that much is left to be explored, musicology as a discipline has developed few thoughts on the social aspects of music.

II

Three areas within the musicological discipline would seem to be of primary importance to the project of writing *a music history which seeks to establish a significant connection between musical activity and social action in general*: music history, ethnomusicology and sociology of music. And if social meaning can be found in the texture of musical activities and artefacts, analysis of music would come into play as well. In the first discipline mentioned, “historical musicology”, which still makes for the mayor part of the activities within the musicological field, the question of music in relation to society has received relatively little attention. One can still detect strong resistances to the consideration of music in its social context among its practitioners. But music might be thought the most social of the arts: musical activities are to a large extent group actions and interactions; a large part of musical repertoires is ensemble music — it has to be produced or reproduced at every presentation, by specialists in music, often in groups as well — which is presented in its corresponding settings to listeners.¹⁸ To look for social meaning in music thus seems wholly appropriate, but curiously — and, as will become clear over the course of this article, at the same time understandably — enough the question has been shunned for a long time, by scholars as well as by musicians and aficionados.

¹⁸ The introduction and general availability of radio and disc have changed and complicated this interaction, but not the fundamental importance of group action in musical activities.

I think that it is important to look for a *significant* connection between music and society; music should be viewed *in* society. It is not sufficient to simply juxtapose miscellaneous information obtained from various sources and interpreted through the methods of various academic disciplines; this information should be brought into a reasoned relationship, which in its simplest form would come down to giving a justification for the juxtaposition and in its most extensive form to devising a model for “music in society”. I adhere to the idea that it is feasible to develop a perspective which shows “society *in* music”, that individual musical structures contain social meaning. But it might even be possible, as is suggested by Bourdieu, to go one step further and maintain that social meaning can indeed be found in all of musically organised sound.

Much of musical practice is heavily predetermined by, not to say prejudiced through, a number of aesthetic concepts springing mainly from certain currents in early 19th-century German Romanticism, especially those of “absolute music”, which put the “work” at the centre of attention. The situation has been described as an “aesthetic predicament”, because it is indeed difficult at times to look at music in a different way, especially if one has been professionally trained. This aesthetic conception is alive among aficionados of music, among performers and among scholars; it guides practices in the musical and in the academic world are in close contact with the basic tenets of the discipline.

In the person of Eduard Hanslick these worlds came together in a highly significant way: his publications as a music critic were widely read by the interested public (thus involving society at large); he took part in one of the mayor musical polemics of the 19th century, in the course of which he wrote his famous pamphlet *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen* (and thus deeply engaging the world of professional musicians); and he was the very first to obtain a full professorship of Music History and Aesthetics (thus obtaining interests in the academic world). He was in a position to introduce the idea of “absolute music” and the aesthetics its represents into many quarters of the German speaking world, and if through polemics.

The twofold circumscription — history and aesthetics — of Hanslick’s chair, and by implication of the science of music, soon known as Musikwissenschaft or musicology, lies at the base of the first programmatic formulation of this academic discipline by Guido Adler. During the next fifty years this programme was implemented by the first generation of musicologists. Musicology had gained sufficient momentum to carry on as academic practice; alternative programmes were still formulated, but they cannot be said to have changed the course of musicological practice in any profound way. Only recently “undisciplined” ideas have been formulated seriously and systematically to undo what Adler had done a century earlier to define the discipline. At this point questions can be answered such as: why has historical musicology never paid much attention to problems of music and, or in, society; and: why has it never developed a view on music as socially important?

The interest in music outside the sphere of Western art music crystallised into academic activities — at first indicated by the name comparative musicology, then ethnomusicology — at the same time as the discipline as a whole was programmatically defined by Adler, including this field of study. But soon the practices of the first scholars with these interests redefined the discipline of “comparative musicology”. The experiences from the field of musical folklore were taken into account in the process to some extent. The methodological landslide within this discipline, reflected by the change in name to “ethnomusicology” during the 50s of the present century reorientated its activities once more. Strong tensions developed — especially in the United States — between scholars with an anthropological and those with a musicological outlook. But on the whole, ethnomusicology has had but little influence on historical musicology. Rather, the aesthetic predicament can easily be reconstructed in the study of many repertoires from outside Western art music. Some quite simple reasons for the segregation of historical musicology from ethnomusicology can be given.

Although musicologists, especially those interested in music outside of their own society and those of a Marxist conviction, had never had a blind eye to the social aspect of musical activities, the sociology of music as an academic discipline is of a rather recent date. It is also true that sociologists have occupied themselves with questions related to musical life, but their influence among both historical musicologists and ethnomusicologists has remained almost nil. The resistance to sociological investigation of musical practices are highly indicative of the basic assumptions about music, both of aficionados and professionals, be they musicians or scholars. Changes in this respect in academe are facilitated by recent developments both within the musicology and sociology, and the actual situation sheds light on the question of their former misalliance.

A history of music, that is of musical activities, in one locale, which aspires not only to record these activities, but interpret them as well, that is, to make sense of them, to give meaning to them, will need a carefully planned preparation. Apart from prospecting the source material, it will need to devise a methodology that should be inspired by the ongoing debates in musical historiography, ethnomusicology and sociology of music. The source material — of whatever kind it may be — that will be necessary for the investigation is to a certain extent even defined by the methodological orientation. Thus a reciprocity between sources and method is established, a process which usually comes to a halt soon because of the absence of any explicit discussion of methodology. Work then continues on the basis of the unreflected academic habits which constitute professional orthodoxy.

Various scholars consider that social meaning lies hidden *in* musical activities and *in* the artefacts it generates, even in the “masterworks”. Analysing this nexus would constitute the limit of a music history, which takes the social aspect seriously. The possibilities of this kind of analysis can at least be sketched, even if they have been little explored until now. It is possible that the

question is posed too crudely if put this way. Even if some works show direct traces of society, this may not be true for all of them. This possibility will therefore never be a real escape from the aesthetic predicament.

The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has given an important place to the arts in his model of society, and has given an important place to music in his *sociologie du goût*. He is interested in society at large, but also enquires into the inner workings of the professional worlds of music as an artistic and as an academic endeavour. Explanation and understanding are a strong drive in his work, which is by some even characterised as a sociological hermeneutic. His model helps to break down some oppositions generated by the aesthetic predicament that have caused — and still cause — many difficulties within the discipline, and it opens up a quite surprising perspective on music — surprising to the musicologist, at least. It seems sensible to take Bourdieu's model of society and its accompanying theoretical underpinning — not without problems itself — as a starting point and see where it might lead. It certainly seems useful in writing an interpretative local history of music, as will become clear in the application to some examples from Bilbao's music history.

In the next four subsections the first steps which were taken in great strides in the text above will be done again at a slower pace which allows to expose the argument in greater detail.

i

In order to get an idea of the current activities in musicology, it is quite interesting to know some of its history and its hidden presuppositions. On the whole, the discipline still finds itself in an aesthetic predicament, that is to say that its activities are heavily predetermined by a rather well-defined set of aesthetic tenets. It is useful to know how and why this situation arose, and how it hampers the study of music in society. In 1854 Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) published in Vienna his highly influential pamphlet *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, in the course of a polemical exchange of ideas. The ideas he exposed proved to be of importance: they still weigh heavily on the academic study of music, and are confirmed as a considerable part of the understanding of music of the aficionado, even if he or she is not always conscious of this. Hanslick¹⁹ maintains that “music has no model in nature and expresses no conceptual content” and thus closes the door on several tenets of other philosophical aesthetics in a single phrase. He proclaims that “music simply requires to be taken in as music, and can only be comprehended on its own terms, enjoyed in its own right”. But this does not mean that music is not intelligible, because “all musical elements share secret connections and affinities based on natural laws”, even if these “exist, not so much in the form of scientific consciousness, but rather instinctively in every cultivated ear, which through mere contemplation senses what in a tone group is organic, rational or what is nonsensical, unnatural, without a

logical concept providing thereby the yardstick or *tertium comparationis*.²⁰ A rational study of these laws is possible, although the means are limited: “a scientific examination into the effect of a theme only has at its disposal, immutably and objectively, ... *musical* factors”. And the strict definition of what these factors are, define in the same moment that everything else is extra-musical, beginning with the composer and his biography, the historical circumstances of composition and transmission, a possible narrative content, affects and emotions, texts, titles and other inscriptions, and the social context of course — even that of contemporary creation. Music was described by Hanslick as “forms set in motion by sound”, which are its sole “content and object”: “Tönend bewegte Formen sind einzig und allein Inhalt und Gegenstand der Musik”. This formulation stuck, and not only in the German speaking world. Hanslick’s concept “form” has mostly been misread,²¹ and in musical studies its definition has grown even more restricted than Hanslick meant it to be, but this fact might just show the social interest and force of the thrust of Hanslick’s idea: to constitute music as a world in itself. (The French counterpart of Hanslick’s catchword, the formula “l’art pour l’art”, had the same thrust, and its acceptance within French society shows again that the idea had social viability.) Another aspect of Hanslick’s ideas on music is of importance. He considered music to be a language, or language-like. Interestingly, this view introduces a historical aspect into the very core of his aesthetics, because language, within the Hegelian perspective at work here, implies history. Thus, philosophically Hanslick’s aesthetic principle does not guarantee its own necessity and duration.²² Although Hanslick did not draw the consequences of this aspect of his principle, or preferred to avoid them, it was relatively easy for others to do so.²³

Carl Dahlhaus²⁴ indicates the importance and influence of Hanslick’s idea of music as a world in itself and relates many details of its genesis and provenance. He puts the idea in a historical dimension — some stages of its formation will be indicated here between its inception and the moment it was included in academe — and comments that “die Idee der absoluten Musik — allmählich und gegen Widerstände — zum ästhetischen Paradigma der deutschen Musikkultur des 19. Jahrhunderts geworden [slowly and against resistance the

¹⁹ All translations from Ruth Katz, Carl Dahlhaus, eds., *Contemplating Music: Source Readings in the Aesthetics of Music, Volume I: Substance*, New York: Pendragon Press, cop. 1987, (Aesthetics in Music 5), 381-392.

²⁰ It is of interest to know that many of the first historical musicologists - Hanslick, Adler, Ambros, Schenker - had studied law, because this may have been of influence on their understanding of the word “law”, that is, legalistic rather than scientific. The first scholars interested in “vergleichende Musikwissenschaft, comparative musicology” - Stumpf, Hornbostel, et al. - had been trained in rather different branches.

²¹ One senses this behind the formulation “the value of music lies in its formal relations and not in its expressiveness” by Eric Sams, “Hanslick, Eduard”, Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London: Macmillan, 1980 [etc.], vol. 8, p. 151-153.

idea of absolute music has become the aesthetic paradigm of 19th century German musical life].” Dahlhaus reports an early and exemplary statement of the idea in Karl Philipp Moritz’ *Von der bildenden Nachahmung des Schönen* from 1788, where it is stated that a composition which aspires to be considered as a work of art does not exist for the effects it exercises on the listener, but for its perfection in itself. It is an independent entity, and the only way to approach it is through “selbst- und weltvergessene ästhetische Kontemplation [aesthetic contemplation forgetting all about oneself and the world]”. A strong escapist urge may be detected in Moritz’ stance,²⁵ which may have made it attractive to the romantic movement at large. At the same time it has a polemical side to it, as it revolts against both the aesthetics of sentiment and of utility. Moritz’ view on music is found in Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder about a decade later, but now expressly worded as an “abgesonderte Welt für sich selbst [a separate world in its own]” — the object of description is an orchestral symphony. Thus individual musical compositions, “works”, are able to constitute these separate worlds; symphonies became the exemplary embodiments of the aesthetic idea. Then, around 1810, E. T. A. Hoffmann related for the first time the symphony — and thus the “works” — to the concept of structure; this view permitted to study and analyse compositions as referring only to themselves. Hoffmann also proclaimed instrumental music as the “eigentliche Musik [music come to its own]”. This conviction fostered a new, strong idea of musical compositions as “works of art”, in which the “poetical”, the common substance of every kind of artwork, can appear. In the symphony, later in the string quartet, an “Ahnung des Absoluten [premonition of the absolute]” can be had. From here it was but a little step to the coinage “absolute music” by Richard Wagner, who used it in a pejorative sense in his characteristically confused musico-philosophical ramblings, and its reclamation by Hanslick as a basic element of his “Ästhetik des spezifisch Musikalischen [aesthetics of the specifically musical]”. Although Hanslick toned down the metaphysical ring of the expression, it is clear that he stands in the line of thought starting with Moritz. He had to set off his romantic aesthetics of the “poetical” against Adolf Bernhard Marx and Franz Brendel, who defended the categories of the “characteristic” and the “programmatic” as of more importance to music, respectively — two ideas which also have their ancestry in the 18th century. The further history of the idea, which will not be explored here, confirms the observation by Dahlhaus that its imposition was a struggle; but also that once it was accepted it quickly sunk to the region of unre-

²² See Carl Dahlhaus, note xxx, p. 80-81.

²³ Another solution of the problem was Spitta’s strict separation between the musical composition as a work of art and as a historical document, creating a history of music without musical artworks. See Dahlhaus, previous note, p. 105 on the Bach scholar Philipp Spitta.

²⁴ Carl Dahlhaus, *Die Idee der absoluten Musik*, Kassel [etc.]; München: Bärenreiter; Deutscher Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1978; and id., note xxx.

²⁵ The individual case of Moritz justifies the stance, I would say. See Karl Philipp Moritz, *Anton Reiser: Ein psychologischer Roman*, 1785-1790, 4 vols.

flected presuppositions about music, of scholars and performers as well as aficionados. The insight that the aesthetic or philosophical idea of a musical world in itself is an idea that can be dated chronologically and located both geographically and socially has of course been accepted within the discipline, but its implications have not yet been noted in all quarters. In the non-academic world of composers, musicians and listeners the idea of music as an autonomous art form firmly hold ground.

As a music critic, Hanslick had the opportunity to divulge his ideas through the press to a large public; he wrote for various newspapers for some time in 1849, and then regularly from 1852 until the end of his days. His ideas must have met with the acceptance of an important part of Viennese society, because within the second year following the publication of his treatise he obtained a honorary readership at the University of Vienna, changed into an associate professorship in 1861, and a full professorship in 1870. Thus with Hanslick music entered the academic world in yet another way;²⁶ one could even say that his basic idea intellectually justified the institution of a new and independent field of study and research. Through his teaching Hanslick exercised a strong personal influence on the first generation of musicologists.

Hanslick was succeeded at the University of Vienna in 1898 by Guido Adler (1855-1941), who founded the Musikwissenschaftliches Institut in the same year. Fourteen years earlier, at the beginning of his professorship in Prague in 1885, he had laid down the chief principles of the discipline in the programmatic article “Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft [Field, method and goal of the science of music]”²⁷ in the first issue of the musical quarterly *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft*. It would seem that the circumscription of the charge of Hanslick’s chair was Adler’s guiding principle in the subdivision of the field: “music history and aesthetics” correspond perfectly to the “historical” and “systematic” branches of the programme.

The basic interest of the discipline, according to Adler, are musical “laws”, an orientation we have seen already in Hanslick. The basic concept appears both branches of his scheme, the historical and the systematic. The history of music is studied from point of view of chronology, geography and artistic practice, the last concerning itself with schools and individual artists. Four different histories are studied: that of written transmission (taking Adler’s “musikalische Paläographie” in a generous way), that of sound production (a broad circums-

²⁶ *Musica* was one of the four quadrivial studies. The acoustical studies of the 17th and 18th century were interested in music, of course. Professorships in Music existed before at German universities, but Hanslick’s chair was in Music History and Aesthetics.

²⁷ Guido Adler, “Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft” [*Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 1/1 (1885); also printed] in Charles Seeger, *Studies in Musicology 1935-1975*, Berkeley [etc.]: University of California Press, cop. 1977, fold out between p. 114 and 115, accompanying the chapter “Toward a Unitary Field Theory”.

cription of his “Geschichte der musikalischen Instrumente”, which interestingly enough does not appear in the systematic branch), the history of musical forms and genres, and — as the key piece — the succession of musical laws as they appear in the works of art of single epochs, as they are taught by the contemporaneous theorists and as can be deduced from musical practice. In the insistence on the historical dimension of the musical laws the difference of Adler’s approach with that of an earlier age shows clearly; at the beginning of the 19th century the Bach student Johann Nikolaus Forkel, for instance, sought a single, ahistorical and “fundamental law of beauty” in order to judge all the works of music history. The history of music outlined by Adler was realised by the first generations of scholars in a series of monographic publications: Johannes Wolf wrote on notation systems; Curt Sachs on musical instruments; the series *Kleine Handbücher der Musikgeschichte nach Gattungen*, edited by Kretzschmar, concentrated on the various genres; Adler himself dealt with musical style. The periods used in musical historiography were defined by the same generations of scholars, borrowing from those of literature and art history.²⁸

The systematic branch in Adler’s scheme is the definition of the principal laws of each of the parts of the art of music. In the four sections that make up this branch, these laws are studied and demonstrated in what could be called musical analysis through harmony, rhythm and melody; in what Adler calls “Musikologie” they are studied and compared to ethnographic ends; in “pedagogics and didactics” — curiously not thought of as applied laws — they are studied as they appear in the subjects taught in conservatories, that is in the practice of professional training of musicians; in the aesthetics of music, centre piece of this branch, they are mainly formulated through comparison, evaluation, and establishing their relation to the listening subject in order to find the criteria of the musically beautiful, *das musikalisch Schöne*. This systematical part of the programme was also implemented within a generation: Riemann wrote a history of music theory; Ernst Kurth developed a musicological theory of counterpoint; Lorenz and Schenker tried their hands on a theory of “Harmonik”.

The two branches did in some ways get redefined in the course of the gno-seological discussions within German academe at the end of the 19th century:²⁹ Windelband and Rickert proposed a division into ideographic and nomothetic approaches, in which either the individual aspects or the regular, lawlike ones are stressed; Dilthey proposed to make the distinction between *Geisteswissenschaften* and *Naturwissenschaften*, distinguishing between understanding and explanation. These discussions had their effect on the way musicologists perceived their field of activities. The division into ideographic

²⁸ See Werner Braun, *Das Problem der Epochengliederung in der Musik*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1977, (Erträge der Forschung 73); and Daniel S. Milo, *Trabir le temps (Histoire)*, [Paris]: Les Belles Lettres, cop. 1991, (Collection “Pluriel”).

and nomothetic approaches separates the search for laws from the research into individual works; in musicology the ideographic approach, in accord with the “Werkbegriff” ultimately won through on the whole, although the concept of law remained of importance in musical subjects related to the natural sciences, in acoustics for instance. It was clear from the outset that musicology had to coincide with the Geisteswissenschaften, if only for the fact that Hanslick had stated: “Die Formen, welche sich aus Tönen bilden, sind ... sich von innen heraus gestaltender Geist”, coinciding in quite a precise way with Dilthey’s use of the expression. But the natural sciences never quite fell outside the musicological perspective.

During the earlier years of the discipline the most important issue was to devise ways of constituting the field of interest as an independent field, independent in relation to other academic disciplines that is. Adler stressed the importance of style in musical studies, because this was a guarantee for an independent history, and by implication discipline, of music. And Adler — in the wake of Hanslick — set the investigation into musical laws at the centre of the discipline’s attention, so that it would have to be independent from any other by definition. The discipline has not given up this insistence on style, as can be seen in the article “Musicology” in the most important music dictionary of the English speaking world.³⁰

The discipline of musicology spread within the academic world, but quite unevenly. At first it remained within the orbit of German speaking countries. Gradually other European countries followed suit. Expatriates from Germany greatly helped to build the presence of the discipline at universities in the United States. After the Second World War the discipline was rapidly accepted in most countries. Within a century the discipline was implanted all over the globe, and in general its basic tenets spread with it, mostly unreflected.

Even though other systematisations of the field than Adler’s were published, either in book format or in articles and entries in encyclopaedias, they have had little effect on academic practice in general.³¹ In the course of its century of existence musicology as an academic discipline became less and less defined by its initial programme and gradually turned into a series of academic practices, a sure sign that it had gained its place in academe. An important musicological activity was the creation of a corpus of material for study and analysis; and this

²⁹ See Rudolph Heinz, *Geschichtsbegriff und Wissenschaftscharakter der Musikwissenschaft in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Regensburg: Kitzbichler, 1968, (Studien zur Musikgeschichte im 19. Jahrhundert).

³⁰ Vincent Duckles, et al., “Musicology”, in Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London: Macmillan, 1980 [etc.], vol. 12, p. 836-863, esp. 840: “Fundamental to the music historian is the concept of style, for the historical phenomena with which he is concerned are not biographical facts or events. ... his object of attention: the musical substance of works of art.”

material was to a large extent music from earlier times. But this turn to the past did not imply that musicology became a historical discipline, parallel to other branches of historical inquiry. It did not adopt the proposition of Philipp Spitta in 1893 to strictly distinguish between musical scores as historical documents and as aesthetic objects, and chose to fortify its independency as an academic discipline even at the cost of remaining in an ambiguous position. Be that as it may, to a considerable extent musicological practice turned gradually into edition and investigation of historical repertoires; on the whole, it turned away from the present. And if during the first generations of musicologists these activities could still be seen as a necessary step toward the formulation of basic musical laws, there was a tendency to turn the means into an end. Especially at American universities the newly established discipline had to produce to legitimate itself. The result was a “positivism” occupied with music of the past that has been denounced by Joseph Kerman as recently as fifteen years ago:³² “Musicologists are respected for the facts they know about music. They are not admired for their insight into music as an aesthetic experience”. This is the result “of a deliberate policy of separating off their musical insights and passions from their scholarly work”. And even taking into account that Kerman is writing about the United States and Great Britain since the Second World War only, and overtly pro domo (he exhorts musicologists to do what he reproaches them not to have done, and do as he does), it would certainly seem that the tables have turned completely on Hanslick: most musicologists are not looking for musical laws any more. The reality of the positivistic vice is confirmed by the profusion of publications on historical minutiae, but the lack of good general music histories, a fact denounced even recently by Manuel Carlos de Brito.³³

Curiously but understandably enough, in a field that gradually came to be known — especially in the United States — as “historical musicology” the discussion of historiographic methodology has received relatively little attention. The existing bibliography shows that authors at first concentrated on influential persons and their programmes. During the 30s two books on the history of historiography by Hegar³⁴ and Allen³⁵ appeared. Since the 60s various articles that tackle the problem were published, the most important being those by Leo Treitler.³⁶ But one hardly finds a study programme in musicology that includes a course in the historiography of music; asking oneself about it does not seem to be a part of general academic practice in musicology.

³¹ Louis Harap even states explicitly: “I do not believe that formal classification ... is of much importance, except as it serves some practical purpose, such as the formation of a list of courses for the musical curriculum”, Louis Harap, “On the Nature of Musicology”, *Musicological Quarterly* 23/1 (1937).

³² Joseph Kerman, *Musicology*, London: Fontana Paperbacks and William Collins, 1985, (Fontana Masterguides).

Lately the topic is getting more attention, and within its concerns social aspects of music become more and more important. In his position paper for the London congress of 1997 Brito³⁷ asks “whether a “unified” history of music is possible, one which would effectively integrate the analytical study of works and their aesthetic consideration with the description of the historical circumstances under which they were created, performed and consumed”. (I have asked above whether this connection is possible, and will indicate it as a limit of music in society.) Brito confesses to be sceptical about this possibility, but abhors the alternative: “the production of different and separate histories: of music aesthetics, of music history, of composition techniques, of styles, of individual works, all of them with vague and remote links to the history of musical “functions”, musical institutions, musical training and education, musical professions, performance, instruments, musical industries and musical markets, musical reception, all eventually linked by the thin and elusive thread of an hypothetical *Zeitgeist*”. Brito might well reflect the opinion of the discipline as a whole; fragmentation is not perceived as a viable solution. But to avoid this, a sound proposition is needed that respects the exigencies Brito indicates. Furthermore, he sees problems of delimitation in a social approach to the history of music: “the study of music in society will also lead eventually to the study of more or less complex social and historical phenomena of which music is only a part Thus a “social” history of music may quickly find its own limits, and make us ask ourselves: when is music history no longer music history? where should the music historian stop?” Not only the increased study of the relationships between the field of musical practice with other spheres in society poses a problem, even the inclusion of usually disregarded or isolated musical repertoires seems a danger to him: “the historical consideration of popular traditions, both rural and urban, of their agents and their public ..., alongside and in eventual relation with the study of the dominant written musical culture(s), seems unavoidable if we aspire to an all-encompassing reconstruction of the musical past”. But it is questionable whether the goal of “an all-encompassing reconstruction of the musical past” is viable; it seems to reflect

³³ Manuel Carlos de Brito, “Round Table IV: Historiography”, *Acta Musicologica*; note xxx; which includes the position papers of Reinhard Strohm, “Enlightenment Traditions and Post-Modern Criticism in the Historiography of Music”, and Harold Powers, “Musical Historiography from an Other Perspective”.

³⁴ Elisabeth Hegar, *Die Anfänge der neueren Musikgeschichtsschreibung um 1770 bei Gerbert, Burney und Hawkins*, Strassburg: Heitz, 1933.

³⁵ Warren Dwight Allen, *Philosophies of Music History: A Study of General Histories of Music 1600-1900*, [American Book Company, 1939; cited after] New York: Dover Publications, 1962.

³⁶ Leo Treitler, “On Historical Criticism”, *Musical Quarterly* 53 (1967); “The Present as History”, *Perspectives of New Music* 8/1 (1969) 1-69; gathered in Leo Treitler, *Music and the Historical Imagination*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1989.

³⁷ Brito; note xxx.

the positivistic bias of collecting every material trace available, instead of looking for the significant activities and events.

At this point the reader is in a position to understand why musicology as a discipline never cared much for sociological questions, even if individual scholars were at times interested. As long as the discipline was in a formative stage, it had to distinguish itself from others, and so it opted for a paradigm in which the studied material was set apart from the circumstances of its genesis and use, and accessible only with the special instruments it developed and through the new trails it blasted. Musicology created its aesthetic predicament because it coincided with urgent needs within academe. The paradigm then quickly became the usual basis of practice within the discipline; it even sank to the level of the unconscious. It serves up to the present day to maintain musicology as an independent academic discipline.

ii

Ethnomusicology as an academic interest dates from the same years as the formulation of Adler's programme for the musicological discipline. With the name "Musikologie" this approach to the study of music was included in the systematic branch as the "Untersuchung und Vergleichung zu ethnographischen Zwecken [investigation and comparison (sc. of the musical laws, ww) to ethnographic ends]". This approach did not lead to consideration of social function either, as "Musikologie ... gives itself the task of comparison of the sound products, especially the folksongs of different peoples, lands and territories for the purposes of ethnographic ends, and to group and divide them according to the difference in their nature".

Thus "the scientific study of music, with which ethnomusicology associates itself, and which was almost immediately called "comparative musicology", began in the 1880s".³⁸ The first publication of the discipline by Carl Stumpf appeared in the *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* of 1886, the same journal that had published Adler's outline of the discipline the year before. Its first practitioners were men who had coursed studies in various exact sciences. The subject of this field of interest has remained fairly constant and is mostly defined ex negativo: "Ethnomusicology is concerned primarily with living music (and musical instruments and dance) of oral tradition, outside the limits of urban European art music" and thus includes music of non-literate people, orally transmitted music of high cultures of Asia, folk music (which according to Bruno Nettl includes music in oral traditions found in those areas which are dominated by high cultures). Although in many cases it occupied itself with so-called primitive music or music from rural places, with time it also included urban societies, which drew attention to the fact that in many situations various styles, each with their own history, exist side by side. This turns out to be the case even in relatively isolated societies, if only for the process of conservation

and innovation within them. Comparative musicology distinguished itself from historical musicology not only in its object of study, but also in the treatment of this material. As much of the material is unwritten by its own practitioners, recording on various kinds of sound carriers and transcription in musical notation were activities from the very beginning. Transcription immediately raised fundamental problems, for if the method was “to notate what is essential, and omit the inessential” ways to decide this have to be devised. This kind of problem is completely foreign to historical musicology.

The field of study saw a profound change of interest after the Second World War, in which even the name of it was changed. Jaap Kunst proposed the neologism ethnomusicology around 1950, and remarked on the older name comparative musicology: “our science does not “compare” any more than any other science”. The argument sounds simplistic, but it reflects how far the discipline had strayed from other comparative disciplines. The practices did not coincide with the comparative methodology any longer, and thus it was possible to do away with the name with a mere quip. The International Folk Music Council had been founded in 1947; the Society for Ethnomusicology followed in 1955. Ethnomusicology established itself as a field of practices quite distinct from historical musicology. Especially in the United States it reoriented itself on cultural anthropology; a thriving discipline at American universities, as it served to chart the knowledge of the world at large and guide novel American enterprises. Many of the scholars now stated that musical “cultures” have to be studied in themselves, not in comparison. The point is made succinctly by Alan P. Merriam³⁹ in 1964: ethnomusicology is the “study of music in culture”. This raised the problem of whose standards to use, the investigator’s or the informant’s. Mantle Hood at his Institute of Ethnomusicology at the University of California at Los Angeles proposed to solve the problem by installing a programme in which the students all learned to play extra-European instruments to help connect them to get an inside feel of the repertoires they were studying. The practitioners now became more and more divided in the battle raging within ethnomusicology⁴⁰: on the one hand the anthropologists with Merriam as an emblematic figure, on the other the “musicologists” — that is those who keep the musical product at the centre of attention with Hood as a central figure. Significantly, ethnomusicology in Hood’s variant does not necessarily offer a model that permits an escape from the aesthetic predicament. As a clear sign of this the preface of Farhat’s study on Persian music⁴¹ could be cited. His story makes clear that he reconstructed the Western aesthetic predicament for a Persian urban art music, apparently without being conscious of it. The division in two branches reflects the difficulty of finding a “reconciling” model, and the

³⁸ Krader; note xxx.

³⁹ Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, [1964; cited after the paperback edition of] 1980.

approaches have to a certain extent institutionalised themselves. María Ester Grebe, who wrote her doctoral thesis on methodology in ethnomusicology, concludes⁴²: “Esta división parece ser una consecuencia de los diferentes ambientes formativos, entrenamientos, experiencia y objetivos de investigación de los etnomusicólogos, todo lo cual brinda diferentes perspectivas cuando cada cual enfrenta el problema específico de investigación”.

John Blacking⁴³ strongly advocates the use of a single global model in ethnomusicology: one should strive for “the description of both the music and its cultural background as related parts of a total system”. In his opinion, unless they are related, ethnomusicology will remain “little more than a meeting ground for those interested in the anthropology of music and in the music of different cultures”. In recent decades many disciplines were brought in to bear on ethnomusicology — folklore studies, social and cultural anthropology, studies popular or commercial music, semiotics, structural linguistics — but this has but fragmented the discipline even more.

The separation between historical musicology and ethnomusicology originates in the first place in the choice of material; the putative research into musical laws, proposed by Adler, quickly lost the interest common to all practitioners of the discipline. The differences in the make up of the sources and in the methodologies only drove the practitioners further apart. And, to the ethnomusicologists with a Western training the musics he studies are strange, from the simplest practice to the profoundest aesthetic. They have to face these musics in a very conscious manner. The historical musicologists can always feel at home and claim they music they study as their own. But interestingly to the mind of

⁴⁰ For a short overview, Kerman; note 28. - One can also consult José Antonio Martín Herrero, *Manual de antropología de la música*, Salamanca. Amaru Ediciones, 1997, (Colección Ciencias del Hombre), 9-147, bibliography 321-342.

⁴¹ Hormoz Farhat, *The Dastgâh Concept in Persian Music*, Cambridge [etc.]: Cambridge University Press, 1990 (Cambridge Studies in Ethnomusicology), p. ix-x: He relates: “Although I am of Persian birth and have lived my childhood and teenage years in Persia, my early outlook was mainly western. ... By the time, in my late teens, that I had decided to devote my life to the study of music, I had no feelings for Persian music other than contempt. As compared with the wealth, variety and range of expression in western music, Persian music seemed limited, frail and monotonous”. Hood then convinced him to write his doctoral thesis on Persian music. Farhat then went to Persia for two years to do field work, including recording. “These recordings proved to be the most useful aspect of my research. In time, I was able to transcribe much of this recorded music into western notation for the purpose of study and analysis ...”. When presenting his thesis in 1965 “my earlier misgivings about Persian music had been replaced by a deep appreciation of its unique aesthetic qualities. I no longer compared it, consciously or unconsciously, with western art music. It is a very different musical expression. ... it is rich in modal variety, in melodic subtlety, and is highly personal and intimate”.

⁴² María Ester Grebe Vicuña, “Antropología de la música: nuevas orientaciones y aportes teóricos en la investigación musical”, *Revista Musical Chilena* 35/153-155 (1981) 52-74.

⁴³ Blacking, “Deep and Surface Structure in Venda Music”, *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council* 3 (1971) 91-.

the few scholars active both in historical musicology and in ethnomusicology these practices could perfectly coincide: Frank Harrison, for instance, proclaimed in 1963⁴⁴ that “it is the function of all musicology to be in fact ethnomusicology, that is, to take its range of research to include material that is termed ‘sociological’”, because both historical musicology and ethnomusicology should find a common ground in “the study of men in society insofar as they express themselves through the medium of music”.

iii

An interest in music from a sociological point of view has been only marginal within the discipline until quite recently; even a social history of music is hardly existent.⁴⁵ In his overview of the tentatives in these directions Konrad Boehmer⁴⁶ cites Bücher’s study of music from the point of view of political economy as one of “the countless attempts made by physicists and social scientists in the second half of the 19th century to explain the origin of music from the perspective of their own sciences”. But according to him, sociology of music entered academe in 1905 with the musicologist Hermann Abert’s *Die Musikanschauung des Mittelalters und ihre Grundlagen*, and the sociologist Max Weber’s *Die rationalen und soziologischen Grundlagen der Musik*, a torso written probably 1910-1911, and published posthumously in 1921. (In France Jules Combarieu’s *La musique, ses lois, son évolution* from 1907, and Charles Lalo’s *L’art et la vie sociale* from 1921 have been influential.) Adorno started thinking about a sociology of music during the 20s, and moved to a brand of Marxism at the very early 30s, when formally invited to work with Max Horkheimer. During the 30’s Preussner, Balet and Rebling wrote their social histories of 18th century music in Germany, working from a Marxist point of view.⁴⁷ Boehmer detects three directions in the literature since the Second World War. Studies in a positivistic vein used “methods of investigation developed by American general sociology, on the assumption that there cannot be any concrete propositions in the musical object, and that its social relevance is therefore not based on its own nature but on the tastes of the various social strata”, as

⁴⁴ Frank Llewellyn Harrison, “American Musicology and the European Tradition”, in Frank Llewellyn Harrison, Mantle Hood, Claude V. Palisca, *Musicology*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963, p. 1-85, esp. 79-80.

⁴⁵ For the problems around the editorial project “Man & Music”, and the first volume of the series see Carmen Rodríguez Suso’s critical review of James McKinnon, ed., *Antiquity and the Middle Ages: From Ancient Greece to the 15th century* in *Revista de Musicología* 18/1-2 (1995) 406-414. - See Henry Raynor, *A Social History of Music: From the Middle Ages to Beethoven*, London 1972 for one of the few earlier tries. - The methodology of social history sanctions the use of source material that has not been taken into consideration before in musical historiography, but it remains confuse on how to connect the data, it remains intuitive, or at best hermeneutical. A sociological theory like Bourdieu’s is stronger in this respect.

⁴⁶ Konrad Boehmer, note xxx.

Boehmer reports. One of the proponents of this view, Alphons Silbermann, stresses the point that the sociology of music “does in no way involve itself in analyses of the work of art itself, but concentrates its efforts on capturing their socio-musical workings. Thus it does not take interest in analysing sociologically the work of art in itself”. Adorno’s method stresses the opposite: his basic thesis is that “the differentiation of musical material in a composition is a relatively independent gauge of the level of social awareness reflected in it” in Boehmer’s words. Adorno, active as musician and composer himself, published extensively on music and society; he concentrated on the production of music to the detriment of the aspects of distribution to and reception by the listener. Historical materialism, a view toward which Boehmer himself inclines, “proceeds from the assumption that the entire area of musicology ... is to be the object of historical and materialistic investigation”. It is based on Marxist analysis of society by class, and attempts “to examine the various social mechanisms that cause music to be received aesthetically ... using research methods based on Lenin’s reflection theory”. This general theory has been formulated more precisely in Asafyev’s intonation theory which recognises in “the various forms of musical idiom ... certain *topoi* whose effect reaches beyond the individual composition and to which are attributed a fixed significance content”. The method and its results have been criticised, but its basic tenet reappears in later semiotic theories by Cooke, Ratner and Agawu, but now without its Marxist trappings. Hanns Eisler, a composer who took communist practice seriously and tried to make some valid theoretical statements, maintained that “the alteration of the material is forcibly determined by a historically necessary alteration of the function of music in society in general”. Coming away from Adorno’s essentialist view of the musical material he stressed the importance of new uses of existing material and composition techniques, the development of new material cannot be the only criterion.

But all of these activities have not established the sociology of music as an academic discipline; only a few of the names mentioned above belong to professional musicologists. The present state of this field of interest has been reviewed recently by Christian Kaden.⁴⁸ He notes that there are only three chairs in this speciality, in Vienna, Lisbon and Berlin. He alerts to a strong resistance to this field until into the 70s of this century.⁴⁹ The involvement of sociologists and the interaction with ethnomusicologists have been most helpful to the discipline. Kaden sees four reasons for the rise of interest in this field of study: Firstly, music sociologists have oriented themselves on the high standards of sociologi-

⁴⁷ Eberhard Preussner, *Die bürgerliche Musikkultur: ein Beitrag zur deutschen Musikgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg 1935; E. Rebling, *Die soziologischen Grundlagen der Stilwandlung der Musik in Deutschland um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts*, diss. Berlin 1935; Leo Balet, E. Gerhard [pseudonym of Rebling], *Die Verbürgerlichung der deutschen Kunst, Literatur und Musik im 18. Jahrhundert*, Strassburg 1936.

cal theorising and methodology. Secondly, the sociology of music has detached itself from political or ideological struggle. Thirdly, the differences between the sociological and historical perspectives on music have been slighted because the sociology of music became more interested in history on the one hand, while on the other historiographic work was undertaken using sociological categories and ways of thinking. He notes that the use of empirical methods on historical sources, that is on non-reactive data, has become an acceptable practice. (Bourdieu could be cited as one of the sociologists who adopted this stance.) And lastly, it is no longer taken for granted that music is a mere reflection or representation of social reality, but it is now seen as an independent social reality, a way of being in the world, a social practice. This perspective had already been developed within the field of ethnomusicology. It suggests “Musik primär nicht als gegenständliches Artefakt auszuleuchten, sondern im Gesamtzusammenhang von Hervorbringungs- und Rezeptionsbedingungen, vor allem jedoch als Ereignis, das vermittelt sozialer Strukturen sich realisiert ..., auch vermittelt sozio-ökonomischer Strukturen. Musik wird so in ihrer Gesellschaftlichkeit gleichsam ernster genommen, verbindlicher. [to investigate into music not primarily as an objective artefact, but, on the contrary, within the general relationships of the conditions of creation and reception, of production and consuming, and even more as an event that is realised through social structures, including socio-economic structures. In this way, music is taken more serious in its social character, more compromised]”.

iv

Musical analysis as a practice generally has not paid any attention to developing methods that would serve to investigate the social character Kaden speaks about. Kerman even maintains⁵⁰: “Those musical scholars who treat music as a series of autonomous objects or organisms, apart from the context of other pieces, repertoires, and so on, are typically not historians but analysts”. Ian Bent⁵¹ sees analytical activity mainly deployed by music aesthetics, which puts the musical score at the centre of attention; by musical composition, interested in the laws of musical construction; musical historiography, centred in investigations into style; and musical criticism, descriptive or evaluative, implying both aesthetics and analysis. Such an overview does not leave much hope for an interface of analysis and sociology. But some possibilities will be shown in the next section.

⁴⁸ Christian Kaden, “Round Table V: Musikwissenschaft und Soziologie: Horizonte, Perspektiven”, *Acta Musicologica*, note xxx.

⁴⁹ Compare chapter “The Blocks against a Social Theory” of John Shepherd, *Music as Social Text*, Cambridge: Polity Press, cop. 1991; cf. Bourdieu; note xxx.

III

It would seem that the concept “music in society” would reach its limit in the possibility of “society in music”, that is the idea that social aspects can be traced within the fabric of musical activities or artefacts. Both expressions ask for the social meaning of music, one of the ways to ask for musical meaning, possibly even the most important. This is not to say that the meaning of music can be fully and exclusively expressed as social meaning; it is wise to keep Adorno’s remark in mind that analyses and theories never exhaust the meaning of music — there is always “das Mehr [the surplus]”. If the question as to what music *is*, normally stays in the background,⁵² the question what music *means* is regularly asked and answers are manifold. Answers on the level of the individual, both as producer and listener, are well developed. As to the general public, hardly anyone balks at the idea that character or emotion can be found *in* music.⁵³ Some of these answers are remnants from the theory of affects, some of them from the aesthetics of genius and character, and all of them unreflected as they live on among the interested public. Musicological thinking has staid within this circle too, in general. The possibility of social meaning being embodied in musical activities and artefacts is discussed here at some length, because it is usually denied by historical musicology and sociology of music. But the exploration of this possibility might even prove itself necessary in order to avoid a simplistic reduction of production and reception to “social forces”. The exploration of the limit is interesting because it might break the fetters of the aesthetic predicament; at these limits it might become clear that social meaning is not applied to music as if it were something exterior, but that it can be found in the very marrow of the musical bones. The idea that musical structures might incorporate social meaning seems to make many uneasy, but academic initiatives to investigate this interface are not completely lacking and some musicologists see a clear possibility to develop this line of thought. *Social meaning is supposed to be directly readable in individual musical structures*, be they activities or artefacts.

⁵⁰ Kerman; note xxx.

⁵¹ Ian D. Bent, “Analysis”, Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, London: Macmillan, 1980 [etc.], vol. 1, p. 340-388; also published in book format, slightly expanded.

⁵² I know of only two books that ask the question in their title: *Was ist Musik?: Ein Vortrag* by Friedrich Blume, 1959, (Musikalische Zeitfragen 5), which turns out to be a diatribe against electronic music, and *What is Music?: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Music*, edited by Philip Alperson in 1987, a collection of contributions by eleven philosophers and two musicologists reacting all on the article “Aesthetics of Music: Limits and Grounds” by the philosopher Francis Sparshott. - Consult also *Die Natur der Musik als Problem der Wissenschaft*, 1963, (Musikalische Zeitfragen 10). - The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, the leading musical dictionary within the English-speaking world, does not have an entry “Music”. - It will not go unnoticed that the question goes unresolved in this article as well; I permit myself to play on all of the meanings the word has acquired.

⁵³ Dahlhaus reminds us that every day language incorporates concepts as terms, but forgets the problems that originated the concepts. Note xxx.

Ethnomusicologists have been the most optimistic about the possibility; indeed it is one of the basic tenets of their discipline that relationships between society or culture and the corresponding musical activities can be found. John Blacking⁵⁴ advocates the description of both the music and its cultural background as related parts of a total system; as does Grebe.⁵⁵ Blacking⁵⁶ states: “The Venda taught me that music can never be a thing in itself, and that *all* music is folk music, in the sense that music cannot be transmitted or have meaning without associations between people”. He stresses that music primarily means music making, musical activity: he learned that for the Venda “it is the process of music making that is valued as much, and sometimes more than, the finished product”. Venda express this in a community dance, *tsbikona*. “The music of *tsbikona* expresses the value of the largest social group to which a Venda can really feel he belongs. ... *tsbikona* is valuable and beautiful to the Venda, not only because of the quantity of people and tones involved, but because of the quality of the relationships that must be established between people and tones whenever it is performed”. Thus Blacking goes one step further and sees a direct relationship between the musical structure of *tsbikona* and social structure of the Venda society, represented and recreated every time *tsbikona* is performed. “*Tsbikona* music can be produced only when twenty or more men blow differently tuned pipes with a precision that depends on holding one’s own part as well as blending with others, and at least four women play different drums in polyrhythmic harmony. Furthermore, *tsbikona* is not complete unless the men also perform in unison the different steps which the dance master directs from time to time. ... it is the example of the production of the maximum of available energy in a situation that generates the highest degree of individuality in the largest possible community of individuals”. And thus “the principles of musical organisation must be related to social experiences, of which listening to and performing form one aspect”. He goes into the aspect of learning within society and maintains that as the “cultural patterns of expression ... are always acquired through and in the context of social relationships and their associated emotions, the decisive style-forming factor in any attempt to express feeling in music must be its social content. If we want to find the basic organising principles that affect the shapes of patterns of music, we must look beyond the cultural conventions of any century or society to the social situations in which they are applied and to which they refer”. But not all that is socially significant is reflected in the surface structure and Blacking therefore warns that “an analysis of the sound cannot be conceived apart from its social and cultural context”. Blacking advocates a strongly down-to-earth approach, that stays very

⁵⁴ John Blacking; note xxx.

⁵⁵ Grebe; note xxx.

⁵⁶ John Blacking, *How Musical is Man?*, [Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973; cited after the edition] London: Faber and Faber, 1976. - I retain Blacking’s ideas, even though he has subsequently been criticized for his field work. What is of importance here is that he is convinced of the possibility of “society in music”.

close to the actual activity. I have quoted him at some length, because some of his preoccupations are important to Bourdieu too, as will become clear in the next sections. Another thrust was given to an ethnomusicological investigation between sound and society by Alan Lomax⁵⁷ in the cantometrics project he developed with Victor Grauer. Their goal was to find a relation between particulars of vocal style and individual traits of culture. The method was comparative, he used samples from all over the globe. The project has been severely criticised, especially on grounds of his choice of data, and the comparative method was hardly fashionable when he undertook its realisation, but the basic idea is an interesting one.

Sociologists have sometimes thought in similar directions. Kurt Blaukopf⁵⁸ proposes a “general” or systematic sociology of music which deals with “the relationship of music’s social function and the construction of the tone system”. John Shepherd⁵⁹ advocates his own version of these relationships. Both proposals have met with scepticism on the part of the discipline, principally because of their high degree of abstraction from actual activities. The musician, philosopher and sociologist Theodor W. Adorno has maintained that the sociological concepts should remain of value even within a purely musical system and that the formal constituents of music should be explained from a social point of view⁶⁰. This is not just one of his characteristic dialectical expressions; his own individual analyses of several popular songs, published in the twenties and little known, are based on this idea and were written even before he adopted Marxist premises.

Even some musicologists think that the idea holds for music in Western societies as well. Dahlhaus, in a somewhat cryptic remark in *Die Idee der absoluten Musik*,⁶¹ seems to support the proposition that musical compositions contain their social meaning in their structures, or at least that they are able to do so: he notes that Beethoven composed his Razumovsky Quartets for public concerts, in a time in which the genre was primarily music destined to sound in the privacy of aristocratic or high bourgeois chambers: “in opus 59 ist die Änderung des Sozialcharakters der Gattung gleichsam mitkomponiert [in Opus 59 the change in social character of the genre has virtually been included in the composition]”. Others have maintained the same argument for Haydn’s Apponyi Quartets, composed for Salomon’s public concerts in London.

Music theorists have not often thought in this direction, as Kerman’s remark on analysis cited at the end of section II shows. My own analysis of the first movement of the String Quartet op. 33 nr. 2 by Haydn shows that he composes

⁵⁷ Alan Lomax, et al., *Folk Song Style and Culture*, Washington, DC, 1968; id., *Cantometrics: a Handbook and Training Method*, Berkeley 1976

⁵⁸ Kurt Blaukopf, *Musiksoziologie*, St. Gall 1950.

⁵⁹ John Shepherd; note xxx.

⁶⁰ Cited by Boehmer; note xxx.

a musical image of society and what he knew of it, seen from his own position, through the collage of fragments from different musical genres. Curiously enough the way Haydn's contemporaries tried to make sense of his string quartets was through the simile of conversation; the explanation uses a social metaphor. One is led to understand that the conversation of the coffee-house, not that regulated by French manuals of conversation is referred to. However, the presuppositions in analytical method are often highly formalist and leave the composer, the musician, the listener, society out of consideration. Bourdieu⁶² warns of two tendencies which can be observed in literary studies (but the first applies to musical analysis quite nicely): to see the works — formalists are strongly biased towards the use of already highly formalised material — as texts that are either to be treated only in themselves, or completely reduced to their contexts. In the first case man disappears from the theoretical frame — as in structuralism, Foucault and the theory of intertextuality, for instance —, in the second the works — as in the biographical method, in statistical analysis, or Marxist theory, amongst others —. Bourdieu proposes another view on meaning in music, which will be exposed in the next section, involving a "théorie du champ, des microcosmes sociaux" in which the authors appear as "agents" and the works as "œuvres".

In sum, in view of the situation presented in sections II and III it can be maintained that the individualistic, romantic view of music imagines "music, without society", or rather "music, disregarding society"; the view that is at least prepared to take social aspects into account presents "music and society"; and the view that tries to establish reasoned relationships between the two, "music in society", and even "society in music".⁶³

IV

In search of the social meaning of music it would be very useful to dispose of or develop a model of society which explicitly integrates concepts and notions regarding social structure, methodologies of empirical and statistical investigation, history and historiography, and the field of the arts, especially music. But it seems that after two centuries of "absolute music" and a century of musicological discipline trapped in an "aesthetic predicament", other perspectives on the social aspects of music are hard to come by in the discipline. It would seem to me that Pierre Bourdieu might be of importance to find a new point of view and that his model of society takes the concepts and notions mentioned above into account.⁶⁴ On first sight Bourdieu's ideas on music may not look inviting to musicologists: those interested in social questions would not agree with

⁶¹ Dahlhaus; note xxx.

⁶² Pierre Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques: Sur la théorie de l'action*, cop. 1994, cited after edition Paris: Éditions de Seuil, [1996], (Collection Points, Essais 331).

his characterisation of music as having no signification⁶⁵ and might discard him from the outset, and those of formalist conviction would not be likely to read him because of their disinterest in sociological literature and the blind eye for the aesthetic predicament.⁶⁶ But even so, I think Bourdieu's theory can be of great use to musicologists, whether their interest lies primarily in historical, ethnological and social, or analytical investigation. The basic idea of this section can be stated very succinctly: *Social meaning in music appears, instead of directly in the activities and artefacts, through the mediations within the model. All music has social meaning.* The implications of this statement should be unfolded; I will try and do so in the two final sections of this paper.

Bourdieu presented his model in a series of lectures in various countries outside France; in collecting them under the title *Raisons pratiques: Sur la théorie de l'action*⁶⁷ he gave an opportunity to review his basic tenets, presented by him in a concise and accessible form. He maintains to have presented his thoughts on the most elementary and fundamental level in this collection. A formal presentation of the use of Bourdieu's theory should of course also contain a discussion of the problems it generates, but I must postpone this to a later moment. Here I will present its basic thoughts to show its use to musicology. In any case, Bourdieu's model seems to give an opportunity to escape from the aesthetic predicament and at the same time to solve some knotty problems about the workings of music in society.

Bourdieu locates meaning in *differences*. In fact, he repeatedly cites a phrase by the linguist Émile Benveniste: "Être distinctif, être significatif, c'est la même chose". Most significant in the study of society are the differences between people — between either individuals or groups —, their activities and the goods they own seen within the global⁶⁸ possibilities existing in society. In order to be able to study and interpret these differences, they have to be translated into a theoretical model, which Bourdieu constructs on the basis of what he

⁶⁵ On this pair of expressions: Charles Seeger, "Music and Society: Some New-World Evidence of Their Relationship", [*Proceedings of the Conference in Latin-American Fine Arts, June 14-17, 1951*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952, 84-97; reprinted with substantial revisions: Washington: Pan American Union, 1953;] reprinted in: *Studies in Musicology 1935-1975*, Berkeley [etc.]: University of California Press, cop. 1977, 182-194, esp. 182-184. - On Seeger and his manifold interests in music and society: Ann M. Pescatello, *Charles Seeger: A Life in American Music*, Pittsburgh; London: University of Pittsburgh Press, cop. 1992.

⁶⁴ I do not hold much of methodological eclecticism; I think it more fruitful to stick to a single hypothesis, theory, model or method up to the very end, because only then the remaining problems, both of the source material and of the base of investigation, become clear.

⁶⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *La distinction: Critique sociale du jugement*, [cop. 1979, cited after edition] Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, [1992], Collection "Le sens commun" [s. n.], cited below. - Bourdieu is reporting the generally accepted view on music.

⁶⁶ "La sociologie est là sur le terrain par excellence de la dénégation du social" says Bourdieu, speaking of investigation into taste.

calls “une philosophie de la science que l’on peut dire *relationnelle*, en ce qu’elle accorde le primat aux relations”. Therefore “la science sociale doit en chaque cas *construire et découvrir* (au-delà de l’opposition entre constructionnisme et le réalisme)⁶⁹ le principe de différenciation qui permet de ré-engendrer théoriquement l’espace social empiriquement observé”.

Thus Bourdieu reconstructs a basic *social space* theoretically through the investigation of two main principles of distinction, which he describes as two forms of “capital”:⁷⁰ “L’espace social est construit de telle manière que les agents ou les groupes y sont distribués en fonction de leur position dans les distributions statistiques⁷¹ selon les *deux principes de différenciation* ... le capital économique et le capital culturel”. These two forms of capital become most significant, that is theoretically most fruitful, by combining them: taken together they form a global capital, which is specified in each case by the relative proportion which the two forms have in it. These two theoretical constructs define two of the model’s dimensions. In the topology created by these two dimensions the statistical results show dense areas which indicate a concentration of agents of relatively great similarity. Now theoretical classes⁷² can be constructed which take the agents as similar as possible together to distinguish them from the agents as different as possible. Bourdieu pretends his model to be universal — that is, of use to the study of all societies, all over the globe, actual and historical —, because it is designed to “saisir l’invariant, la structure, dans la variante observée” through the construction of a topology based in two principles of distinction. This makes that the model is of interest within ethnological and historical perspectives.

Social space now appears in theory as an “*espace*, ensemble de positions distinctes et coexistantes, extérieures les unes aux autres, définies les unes par rapport aux autres”. In theory social space always has to be considered in its global structure in order to make sense of the positions within them. (This spatial metaphor should sound familiar to professionals in music: tonal space, notes, intervals show a comparable organisation.) This structure of social space is not

⁶⁷ Bourdieu; note xxx.

⁶⁸ One should keep in mind that global does not mean, or even imply, total.

⁶⁹ This opposition coincides with another Bourdieu seeks to overcome: “Il faut ... dépasser ... l’opposition entre une vision physicaliste du monde social qui conçoit les rapports sociaux comme des rapports de force physique, et une vision “cybernétique” ou sémiologique qui en fait des rapports de force symbolique, des rapports de sens, des rapports de communication”.

⁷⁰ The basic principles for constructing a model of society have to be chosen with care so as to correspond to what the agents in society hold as most important. Economic capital is a valid choice for the Western world; in other societies one might see different criteria at work, for instance the accessibility to public property and services to personal ends in the former East-European communist countries.

⁷¹ Bourdieu interprets statistical data reciprocally. On the first pages of *La distinction* he states his way of reading data: “La relation statistique manifeste et cache à la fois une relation sémantique qui enferme la vérité. On n’a rien expliqué, ni rien compris lorsque l’on a établi l’existen-

fixed; as it is based on the results of actual observation, the topology allows for a dynamic analysis of the conservation and transformation of the global structure determined by the acting agents, their activities and goods. Bourdieu considers the term “*champ*, field” more appropriate than “space” to indicate this dynamic aspect, for it has two pertinent metaphorical significations: force field, which implies that the agents involved accomplish their actions under constraint; and battle field, which implies that the agents confront each other, each according to their own means and goals. The predeterminations and constraints, the tensions and struggles determine the transformations of the field. The basic tensions can be conceptualised by creating theoretically the field of power, which should not be confused with the field of politics. “Le champ du pouvoir ... est l’espace des rapports de force entre les différents espèces de capital ou, plus précisément, entre les agents qui sont suffisamment pourvus d’une des différentes espèces de capital pour être en mesure de dominer le champ correspondant”. Through this dynamic aspect historical processes come into view. Bourdieu considers the changes in time both in global capital and in the internal proportional distribution to constitute a third dimension of social space. He considers the transmission of cultural capital — necessarily a process in time as well — to function mainly through the schooling system, which thus contributes to reproduce the structure of social space, that is, of society.⁷³ Furthermore, the social agents construct the social space through cognitive structures which are historically constituted; it is possible to follow the social genesis of these structures.

Observation shows that many social practices are directly related to the basic dimensions of social space: at every given moment of a given society the topology of social positions is tied to that of activities and goods (of concerts and concertinas, to give just two musical examples) — themselves structured through marked relationships — by homological relationships; the different fields coincide in a significant way. Because of the complexity of these homologies, comparisons should be made globally, between systems, not between single activities and goods (thus performance situations and musical instruments, keeping to the same examples). The homologies are a first condition for an adequate

ce d’une forte corrélation entre une variable dite indépendante et une variable dite dépendante: aussi longtemps qu’on n’a pas déterminé ce que *désigne* dans le cas particulier, c’est-à-dire dans chaque relation particulière, chacun des termes de la relation la relation statistique ... reste un pur donné, dépourvu de sens. ... Ce sont les deux termes de la relation qu’il faut mettre en question, en chaque cas, ...”. Bourdieu speaks of “l’identité réelle des deux termes reliés qui se définissent dans leur relation même”.

⁷³ Bourdieu warns that these classes are theoretical constructions; real classes are formed by political action, and are part of the tensions within the relatively autonomous field of politics, he says: “On ne passe de la classe-sur-le-papier à la classe “réelle” qu’au prix d’un travail politique de mobilisation ... L’existence des classes, dans la théorie et surtout dans la réalité, est, chacun le sait par expérience, un enjeu de luttes”.

reading of the connections between the social positions, the dispositions or *habitus* of the agents — individuals or groups — and the “prises de position”, that is, the “choices” made by the social agents in the various fields of social practice to confirm and consolidate their positions. The workings between the three indicated elements can be stated precisely: “l’espace des positions sociales se retraduit dans un espace des prises de position par l’intermédiaire de l’espace des dispositions (ou des *habitus*)”. (Here we touch on the basic “philosophie de l’action” with lies at the basis of Bourdieu’s thinking, a philosophy “désignée parfois comme *dispositionnelle* qui prend acte des potentialités inscrites dans les corps des agents et dans la structure des situations où ils agissent ou, plus précisément, dans leur relation”.)

The *habitus* is the generating and unifying principle that converts the characteristics of a social position into a unitary life style (of which musical taste is a part), which shows itself in the choices of persons, practices and goods. It is observable as a bundle of homologous relationships, but it also interiorised, incorporated in each of the social agents. The various *habitus* corresponding to the social positions can be recognised and identified by all of them (the visitors of a concert with a string quartet and one with an accordeon orchestra “recognise” each other). In their dynamic aspect they are the generating principles of different and diversifying practices, because they guide the agents,⁷⁴ who are active and knowing, with a “sens pratique”, an acquired system of preferences, principles of (vision and) division (usually called “taste”), durable cognitive structures (result of the incorporation of objective structures) and strategies for action which orientate the perception of the situation and the response adopted. In their static aspect *habitus* are strategies of ordering, principles of classification, principles of vision (and division) or “taste”, and serve to make judgments, evaluations. In the definition of the concept the strong meaning of “taste” in Bourdieu’s theory comes to the fore; taste in his view is never arbitrary. *Taste, and by implication musical taste, indicates the divisions that run within society.* It is possible to go even one step further: the choices made according to this principle of vision and division constitute symbolic differences and create a veritable language. Capitals become symbolic capitals at this point: “Le capital symbolique, c’est n’importe quelle propriété (n’importe quelle espèce de capital, physique, économique, culturel, social) lorsqu’elle est perçue par des agents sociaux dont les catégories de perception sont telles qu’ils sont en mesure de la connaître (de l’apercevoir) et de la reconnaître, de lui accorder valeur”. The differences in taste associated with the different social positions function as “signes distinctifs”, which can be read and interpreted within every-

⁷³ Again: other societies have different means for this reproduction than the state-controlled school-system.

⁷⁴ “véritables agents (et non de simples “supports” de la structure)”.

day practice by the social agents — often in unconscious ways —, and by the sociologist within the model, consciously.

For societies in which no activities are strongly separated from other activities in social space, a general model is sufficient to explain and understand particular activities as they do not constitute their own relatively independent field within society. (Ethnomusicologists may find themselves confronted with this situation; explanations given in this discipline of the nexus between music and society embrace the complete gamut of theoretical possibilities provided by cultural anthropology, sociology and musicology but might not always choose the most fitting one.)

But some special activities can become so important that they constitute fields that become relatively autonomous in regard to the general social field; this usually occurs in the evolution of societies. Bourdieu mentions for instance the social, political, economic, bureaucratic, artistic fields, and those of power, of schooling. These fields have fundamental laws which are usually tautological. The activities within these semi-separate fields thus run more and more according to their specific habits, and less and less in connection with the general social field. “On a ainsi des univers sociaux qui ont une loi fondamentale, un *nomos* indépendant de celui des autres univers, qui sont auto-nomes, qui évaluent ce qui s’y fait, les enjeux qui s’y jouent, selon des principes et des critères irréductibles à ceux des autres univers [i. e. fields, ww]”. Thus factors external to such fields — from the general social field or from other autonomous fields — can only exert their force through the transformations of structure of the whole of the field, not in just a part of it. External factors are always mediated by the global field. But these fields ultimately remain *relatively* autonomous, they are always hitched on the basic social space. The homologies between all of the fields greatly increase in complexity by the presence of autonomous fields, of course.

If relatively autonomous fields are considered to be *completely* autonomous, the changes that occur in them can hardly be explained any more, as the fields have tautological basic laws. (Musicology as a discipline based itself just in this predicament: it assumed that basic musical laws could be formulated by studying the works “in themselves”, apart from any other considerations. But it has found itself just in the trap Bourdieu indicates: explanations of stylistic change are impossible (in fact, a discussion on the subject is avoided), and it limits itself to a description of the subsequent stages in a history of styles, or invokes ad hoc explanations such as the composer’s intentions, the changing fashions, the demand of the public, etc.)

The *agents* involved will take a strong interest in these autonomous fields; Bourdieu uses the expressions “intérêt, investissement, *illusio*,” and even “*libido*”. To society at large these specific interests and the action they justify are not always understandable; actually they can be fully understood only in the light

of the specific rules of the corresponding relatively autonomous field. Two of these fields are of primary importance to the discussion at hand: the artistic and the scholarly.

The *artistic field* is circumscribed — especially as regards the creative activities — by Bourdieu in a long sentence: “Les champs de production culturelle proposent à ceux qui y sont engagés un *espace des possibles* qui tend à orienter leur recherche en définissant l’univers des problèmes, des références, des repères intellectuels ..., des concepts en -isme, bref, tout un système de coordonnées qu’il faut avoir en tête — ce qui ne veut pas dire à la conscience — pour être dans le jeu”. This space of possibilities is thus defined in regard to the agents, but it transcends the individual agents at the same time. All agents who enter the field are objectively situated in relation to each other within it. The field of products, of genres, styles, forms, rhetorical manners, themes, and “works” (in the strong sense of artistic objects) can be considered as a means of taking position. It is possible to establish homologies with the field of authors and schools which can be considered as the field of production. Now the changes within the artistic field become accessible to reasoned discussion within the model. The process which generates the works is the result of the struggles between the agents, who are interested either in conservation or subversion of the artistic field. There is a historical dimension to these struggles, as they take place not only between artists of a roughly equal age, but also between the “tenants et les prétendants”, between successive generations. The direction these changes take depend on the global state of the field, the possibilities available — partly inherited from earlier struggles —, and on the specific interests of the agents, which in their turn depend on the position they occupy within the field. These struggles incite the changes within the field. As in any relatively independent field, the changes that occur in the artistic field are independent of the chronologically coinciding external changes in the social field at large to the extent in which the field has made itself autonomous. What happens in the artistic field is more and more depending on the specific history of the field, and progressively harder to conclude or foresee on the basis of the state of the social space at large (economic, political situation, etc.) at the chosen moment. Paradoxically, the production in this field which is a continuous breaking with history and tradition tend by the same token to become entirely historical. It should be noted that it is history which saves from “absolute” art; the formalist stance that supports this idea is based “sur l’oubli du processus historique au cours duquel se sont instituées les conditions sociales de la liberté à l’égard des déterminations externes, c’est-à-dire le champ de production relativement autonome et l’esthétique pure qu’il rend possible”.

For the *individual author* this model means that he or she as an agent exists and subsists only in relation with the structured constraints of the field, but also that he or she affirms the differentiating distances to others which are constitu-

tive of his or her position or point of view. The expression has to be taken in its literal sense as a view taken from a specific position within the field of possibilities, and taking position in relation to others. But, as observation shows, these positions are not taken without respect to the position of the author in the general social field. An extraordinary correspondence between the hierarchy of positions within the relatively autonomous fields and the hierarchy of social origins, and thereby of the dispositions associated with them, can be observed. And because the author enters a previously structured field, he or she is limited by the constraints it imposes. “Situé, il ne peut pas ne pas *se situer, se distinguer*, et cela, *en dehors même de toute recherche de la distinction*: en entrant dans le jeu, il accepte tacitement les contraintes et les possibilités inhérentes au jeu”. The relationship which establishes itself between each of the agents, and thus of their *habitus*, and the forces of the field, become objective in a trajectory and an oeuvre, corresponding to the fields of production and products. The trajectory is the series of successive positions of an author within the successive stages of the artistic field. To see this otherwise is to fall into the trap of “l’illusion biographique”. (What this might look like from the artist’s point of view can be learned from Harold Bloom’s theory of artistic production and interaction, which will be mentioned below.) Within Bourdieu’s theory the possibility for *analysis* of specific works presents itself as a study not of the artist’s personality, character, biography, received influences, etc., but of his position in the artistic field and its changes. The analysis of works is that of the correspondence between two homological structures, that of the products and that of the production, which is a force field and a battle field just as any other. For the *reception* of the products, the artefacts, the works, this means that a naïve way of seeing and listening is not possible; the more the field is constituted as relatively autonomous, the less its products can be approached unprepared. Even the aficionado is obliged to accept this situation, if he or she wants his or her reactions to be taken seriously. Even the aficionado can enter the field only on condition of accepting its constraints.

The *scholarly field* is relatively autonomous as well as the artistic. In this field thoughts and propositions freed from the constraints and limitations of a historical conjuncture (*context free*) are produced. In order to really enter this field one has to dispose of time, of *skholè*, and also of the disposition of playing gratuitous games which is acquired and reinforced in situations of *skholè*. The scholar’s theoretical view is based on the neutralisation of practical interests of the object of study, which are kept in an indefinite state. In fact, “la skholè est ce qui permet ... d’accéder au méta-discours sur la pratique du discours”, and the typical scholastic fallacy consists in reversing the order of discourse and meta-discourse. But on entering this field (analogous to the absolutist or formalist stance in the artistic field) the thinkers leave the presuppositions of their thought in an unreflected state (*doxa*), and thus the social conditions of the possibility of the scholastic point of view and its unconscious dispositions acquired through the experiences of schooling and academic formation. (It is thus that

musicology continues in an aesthetic predicament; the practice of accepting an aesthetic a priori is doxa, and orthodoxy.)

The scientific or scholarly field is a social universe just as any other, in which are in force, just as elsewhere, power, capital, relationships of power, battles in order to conserve or transform the relationships, strategies of conservation or subversion, of interests, etc., and a separate world, which has its own way of functioning which makes that all the elements just mentioned work in a way that is specific to this field, and to this field alone. If its scholarly practice leaves the interests of the studied object up in the air, it is guided in its turn by the specific interests of its own field, which are not always stated clearly. Combined with the scholastic fallacy mentioned above, the confusion can become considerable. There is a great danger of mixing up the games, i. e. the interested practices, if the scholar is not aware of the basic condition of working in the academic field; if his scholastic view is applied without any critical thinking to the practices which originate in a completely different vision, the one held by the agents of the practice studied. (It can be assumed that this occurs regularly in musicology. The requirement for musicologists to play an instrument or to sing by itself blurs the distinction between academe and conservatory already. In Spain musicology is even taught at conservatories, beside universities. Pasler notes that a separation between the practitioners of the scholarly and the artistic field is quite strong in the United States and very weak in the rest of the world. Ethnomusicologists of the school of Hood train to play an instrument of the foreign culture they study, and thus become practical musicians too. Thus musicologists and ethnomusicologists are prone to mix up the games.) For instance, within the academic field at large the artefacts produced in the artistic field, the works of art, are often interpreted according to the unspoken presuppositions of the academic discipline; especially internal readings are in their most usual form the work of *lectores*, of all academics in the scholarly field. As far as these readings are supported by the continuity of academic institutions, there is not even a need for them to be constituted into a body of doctrine, and can remain in a state of *doxa*. The scholastic field is not absolutely autonomous either. In Bourdieu's view even rationality, the guiding light of academic enterprise, is not alien to social practice: reason has its own history, which is coextensive with that of the social microcosms in which the social conditions for the development of reason were instituted little by little. This is why Bourdieu reckons the social agents in general to be reasonable, but not necessarily rational. The scholarly *habitus* predisposes the activities in the field; the necessities of the field and the structural constraints of a given moment are mediated here.

The artefacts of the artistic field are most often presented by scholars in two possible ways: as "*explications externes*" or as "*interprétations internes ... ou formelles*", as "l'oeuvre comme texte" or as their "réduction au contexte". Both of these methods are reductionist to an extreme degree. But even though Bourdieu criticises them, he does not let these readings by the board; all results

and exigencies of the internalist and externalist, the formalist and the sociologist approaches can be preserved by relating the field of the works with the field of authors and schools, says he. (This means that the results obtained so far in musicology can be usefully integrated within the model. No new beginnings are needed, and little effort is wasted. But they will have to be reordered and reinterpreted within the theoretical model.)

But Bourdieu does not imply that scholars always understand what is going on in the artistic field, and the reason is again confusion of the characteristics of two different fields: “s’il est vrai que tout ce qui se produit dans les champs de production culturelle a pour condition de possibilité cette sorte de mise en suspens des fins externes ..., s’il est vrai que nous sommes dans un univers qui est celui de la gratuité, de la finalité sans fin [a formula of Kant which Bourdieu adopts as the specific *nomos* of the artistic field, ww], n’est-il pas compréhensible que nous comprenions si mal l’esthétique? Que ... il y ait des questions que nous ne posons pas à l’esthétique parce que les conditions sociales de possibilité de notre réflexion sont aussi celles de la posture esthétique ...”?

I have quoted Bourdieu at length to show where his basic philosophy of relational thinking leads. Some of the advantages and particular traits of his views will be resumed now. Bourdieu keeps to an approach that can be characterised as down to earth without being simplifying; and his treatment of what moves people to action is rich and complex. He also breaks down some persistent views which usually present themselves as oppositions, and which do not seem to solve any of the urgent questions about social life. Individual and society, the individual and the collective, the objective and the subjective, the public and the private, mind and body are not oppositions within the perspective of *habitus*; this concept can mediate between each of the supposedly opposed terms, and the mediation even gives them their full sense. *Habitus* also gives a new twist to the opposition conscient vs. inconscient; the mediation makes that this aspect of intentions, strategies, actions becomes less central. Body and mind likewise coincide in this concept in a fruitful way. *Illusio* gives a much better idea of how and why the social agents are interested, involved, engaged in the fields of action; it likewise proposes how actions can be reasonable without being “rational” in the usual sense. Idealism and materialism, the spiritual and the material come together in the concept of symbolic capital. In the model and its accompanying method theory and empiry, statistical and ethnographical, micro and macro views, constructionism and structuralism, quantitative and qualitative (in the structuration of the capital, for instance), and causal and intentional explication turn out to be only seemingly contradictory.

Bourdieu developed his model in contradistinction to more habitual ways of investigating social life. The polemical component is quite present, and shows the pertinence of his analysis of academe. (Here, by the way, another advantage of Bourdieu’s theory shows: it does not construct a meta-level, but still is able to give an account of its own genesis.) His basic philosophy oppo-

ses essentialism and substantialism by concentrating on relationships. The insistence on the reciprocity of these relationships keeps him safe from functionalism. His reluctance to give meaning, also on the theoretical level, to social action of the concrete agents opposes him to structuralism and semiotics. His model does not imply any determinism, nor relativism. It takes a global view without insisting on or necessitating exhaustiveness. It gives a plausible view on struggle and conflict, without falling into the traps of biological explanations. The model generates an interesting view on the concept of time.