

HETEROPHONY AS A WAY OF ORGANIZING OF THE MUSICAL SYNTAX

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SUMMARY. In this article we intend to present some aspects related to the origin of the concept of *heterophony* and the theoretical concerns of some Romanian and foreign composers on this subject. As a practical application model, we present an analysis of a musical text based on the model proposed by Teodor Tutuianu in his book *Eterofonii in partituri Bachiene*, the book underlying the Spectromorphy course that the author, as a professor, held at the National University of Music in Bucharest.

Keywords: Heterophony, musical syntax, Teodor Tutuianu, heterophonic wave, canon, imitation, superposition, singularity, plurality.

The term heterophony was introduced into musicology at the end of the nineteenth century by R. Westphal (*Griechische Harmonik und Melopoeie*, Leipzig, 1886), who sensed its presence in ancient Greek music. But the first to mention heterophony as a different sonorous phenomenon of harmony and polyphony, calling it “the third category of style besides homophony and polyphony” was G. Adler (1908)²

The origin of heterophony is found in folk culture. It was born from a song sang in group, either vocal or instrumental, in which process consciously or unconsciously the “performers” caused slight melodic or rhythmic deviations from the base song.

Heterophony was first theorized by Pierre Boulez: ... “generally, I define heterophony, as superposition from the primary structure of the same structure changed as appearance”³.

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² Uber Heterophonie „Jahrbuch der Musikbibliothek”, Peters XV, 1908, p. 24.

³ Boulez, Pierre. *Penser la musique aujourd’hui*, (*Thinking about music today*), Ed. Gonthie, Geneve, 1964, p. 9.



He then deepens the explanation “it is ordered in density after various settlements, somewhat like the overlap of several glass plates, on which the same varied scheme would be drawn. The basic dimension going from horizontal or vertical (...) this combination mode infers a collectivism of structures starting from an individual model”⁴.

The Russian teachers S. Grigoriev and T. Müller in *Polyphony Manual* also give a definition “the exposure to multiple voices, in which the main melodic voice is associated with other melodic voices, which appear as different branches of the first or as variants, duplications of it, is called heterophony or heterophonic type (Podgoloski = accompanying voices)”⁵.

The etymology of the word heterophony comes from the Greek: eteros = another and phone = sound, voice. Although it was theorized in the second half of the XX century, heterophony appears in the works of great composers: Stravinski, Bartók, Messiaen and especially Enescu. The one who has theorized and put into practice the technique of heterophony in the compositional plan is the one that Teodor Țuțuianu calls “one of the analytical coryphaei and practitioners of the heterophony phenomenon,”⁶ composer Ștefan Niculescu. He is the one who discovered the most constructive and expressive virtues in the technique of heterophony.

In his work *Reflections on music*⁷ regarding the heterophony phenomenon, Ștefan Niculescu defines this basic sound category as “an oscillation between the monovocal and plurivocal state, that is, the alternation between unison and plurimelody”.

“Heterophony is a kind of improvisatory disorder of unimelodic fluency, placed between unison stages (octave). Thus, the most general phenomenon of heterophony, resulting from the observation of an authentic archetype, is the oscillation of a collection of timbres between two distinct states, namely:

- a) the state of timbre merging in a monomelodic or univocal deployment (unison or octave);
- b) the state of timbre split in a typical multmelodic or multivocal deployment - heterophony itself - characterized by the simultaneous distribution, to various overlapping voices, of the same musical material presented in different variants for each voice depending on the improvisation mood of the performers”⁸.

⁴ Boulez, Pierre. p. 136.

⁵ Grigoriev S. și Muller T. *Poliphony Manual*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 1963, p. 9.

⁶ Tutuianu, Teodor. *Eterofonii in partituri Bachiene (Heterophones in Bachian scores)*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 2004, p. 276.

⁷ Niculescu, Ștefan. *Reflections on music*, Bucharest, Ed. Muzicală, 1980, p. 276.

⁸ Niculescu, Ștefan. p. 273-274.

The author proposes three main hypostases for the presentation of heterophony:

- 1) rarefied heterophony “rarefied event sounds”, is the hypostasis in which the variational events are spaced between them, often being unable to “incorporate in the same fluency”;
- 2) detailed heterophony “detailed event sounds”, presents the elements noticeable in themselves or in relation to the previous or the following elements;
- 3) crowded heterophony “crowded event sounds... events are so multiple on the minimum time unit of our perception that we can no longer hear them distinctly, but globally, integrated into a whole, sonorous beings who lose their individuality and adapt themselves to a new, collective being, thus generated”⁹.

He synthesizes this phenomenon which he finds in various historical and stylistic periods, concluding as follows: “All the systems that have emerged in the course of the history of this music - modal, tonal, serial - control the detail and have the reason to be only when triggering sound events whose perception is analytical. The events in the crowded area or those in the rarefaction area have only begun to appear in recent years: concentration at Xenakis, Stockhausen, Ligeti..., rarefaction at John Cage, American school¹⁰”

Composer Dan Voiculescu also performs a synthesis between the elements from the thinking of Ștefan Niculescu and that of Pierre Boulez and proposes a differentiated vision on the heterophony in his book *Aspecte ale polifoniei secolului XX*¹¹. The author says that heterophony is a “polyphonic process” besides others (attack polyphony, punctual polyphony, repetition polyphony, group polyphony and mass polyphony). Like Pierre Boulez, Voiculescu recognizes two types of heterophonies:

- 1). “divergence” equivalent to “node-venter” heterophony from the conception of Ștefan Niculescu;
- 2). “convergence” consisting of “oscillating repetitions of a melodic idea in several plans” generating “imitations, fragmentations, reductions, melodic variations and rhythms”, etc.

Theodor Grigoriu says that “heterophony as a synergistic phenomenon is, at its limit, the sum of infidelities performed simultaneously” which “includes in it what is not lost, a <<stimmung>>, an unmistakable ethos, that

⁹ Niculescu, Ștefan. p. 274-275.

¹⁰ Niculescu, Ștefan. p. 275.

¹¹ Voiculescu, Dan. *Aspecte ale polifoniei secolului XX (Aspects of 20th century polyphony)*, Revista Muzica p.7-9, June 1974

of the matrix"¹² Once again Grigoriu distinguishes a "heterophonic polyphony", which is "established between the fidelity and the infinity of infidelities", unlike the relationship between "subject and counter - subject"¹³ of the classic concept.

In addition to the theoretical concerns in Romanian music, heterophony has become a technique of creation of great utility. Romanian musicologists say that George Enescu foresaw this concept, and genuine heterophonic moments can be found in his creation.

In *Dixtuor*, a masterpiece of the chamber genre, the work that I have conducted, for example, thematic processing has an advanced stage of processing in this technique of creation, "the technique of heterophony".

Clemansa Firca in the study "*Heterofonia în creația lui George Enescu*"¹⁴ surprises remarkably the inclusion of the heterophonic phenomenon "flowing" from "Enescu' lab", and this example is quoted by Teodor Țuțuianu in his work "*Eterofonii in Partituri Bachiene*."¹⁵

In other words, in the heterophonic discourse there is a consciousness of the unique melody, representing the firm principle, the stable element, in the fluctuating process of distances and returns, in this case, in the performance of variations.

Not only this conditioning to the unique melody, but also the great availability in conducting the voices of the heterophony - a replica of the free will of the folk heterophony - are at Enescu the consequences of adaptation, equally, to the modal quality of a melodic material that covers only minimal and sporadic support (sometimes at most using harmonic support of elementary consonances), as well as to improvisatory rhythm << rubato >> and flow - often conjugated features - own to the same material and assimilated in the style of the composer."

The concept of heterophonic in the current sense is a technique of creation with multiple availabilities. The composer Ștefan Niculescu has long been an important name in the European musical life. The heterophony adopted as a basic creative principle finds carefully thought-out formulations organized in his creation.

He composed, among other opuses, a group of works "*Isonos*"¹⁶ and "*Cantata a III-a*".

¹² Grigoriu, Theodor. „*Muzica si nimbul poeziei*” (*Music and the nimbus of poetry*), Editura Muzicală, Bucharest, 1987, p. 467-468.

¹³ Grigoriu, Theodor. p. 467-468.

¹⁴ Firca, Clemansa. *Studii de Muzicologie (Musicology studies)*, vol. IV, Bucharest, Editura Muzicală, 1968, p. 309.

¹⁵ Tutuianu, Teodor. p. 17.

¹⁶ Râpă, Constantin. *Teoria Superioara a Muzicii (Higher Theory of Music)*, vol. I, Editura Media Musica, 2001, p. 321.

Theodor Grigoriu composed a work entitled even “*Eterofonia*”. Sigismund Toduță calls his part I of “*Oratoriul Miorița*” “*Eterofonia*” also. The composers: Paul Constantinescu “*Se ceartă cucul cu corbul*”, Anatol Vieru “*Silabe 6*”, Constantin Râpă “*Sonet*”, Vasile Herman “*Paleomusica*”, Viorel Munteanu “*Glasurile Putnei*” and others wrote the listed works in the same compositional practice.

Teodor Țuțuianu joins the “Theoretical composers” Pierre Boulez, Ștefan Niculescu, Sigismund Toduță, Dan Voiculescu, Constantin Râpă and others¹⁷ developing a new system of analysis based on the heterophonic concept. In-depth connoisseur of polyphonic principles, starting with the musical weave and culminating in the run-off on several themes, he develops this new concept on a scientific basis.

In the work “*Eterofonii în partituri Bachiene*” the author introduces us to a fascinating universe. Using a poetic - philosophical language, abstract at first reading through the originality of expression and the plasticity of the word, captivates you and urges you to meditation.

“Everybody’s power is reborn or succumbed, after the chosen offer. <you're an original or a copy. As a gift, you have such a generous field in possible cultures of probations and perceptions, a universe so comprehensive and damp in penetrations and inquisitions to decrypt the process of subtle organization, beyond order and chaos, the formatting of geometric communication or finesse, in finding the edict of intimate finding, of inner clarity, from the expressible from here to there, to the inexpressible that belongs to him beyond”¹⁸

His analysis system is original and is based on Bach’s heterophony. “Bach’s heterophony, supporting this approach, is noted not so much at the primary level, with blockages sprinkled over the course of a unisound melodic thread, at least at two voices, as for subtleties enciphered in the industry of underground hidden intimate organizations, at the level of parametric tinting, with evidence sometimes masked, melted and lost in the civilized jungle of ornamental colorations specific to Baroque”¹⁹

As a state of manifestation, the author tells us convincingly, “heterophony as polyphony, harmony or monody, manifests itself anywhere, anytime, everywhere, through everything surrounding us in a subjective perception” ... A concrete definition of heterophony is presented to us in the chapter *Aspects of the definition of heterophony* “...An idea loaded sometimes with collateral, adjacent ideas, supported by distinct subjects, is a heterophony.”²⁰ Or another description in a suggestive plastic language:

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¹⁸Tutuianu, Teodor. p. 5.

¹⁹ Ibd. p. 8.

²⁰ Ibd. p. 13.

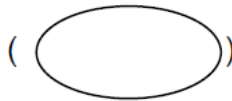
“Regarding the heterophony in music, a deployment with variable pulsed densities, between a standard <<formula> and its perturbations, through extensions or returns to origins is pursued, generating a sound liana whose linear surface configures, through the mobility of its delimitations, a flexured, discontinuous river course, with golf oases that deform, on one side and /or on the other, the longitudinal filar carrying their variedly arranged load”²¹.

In this work, Teodor Țuțuianu prevails a specific, analysis instrument, *the heterophonic wave*, with the help of which the “cuts” concrete, objective and logical knowledge paths with a mastery of neurosurgeon and with scientific meticulousness. This represents two distinct, alternating hypostases, “linear, monodic enunciation”, as heterophonic line, and the “plurifilar”, the heterophonic loop.

Heterophonic wave represented:

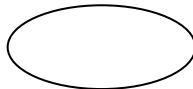


There is an alternation between linear, singular (—————) and parallel presences.



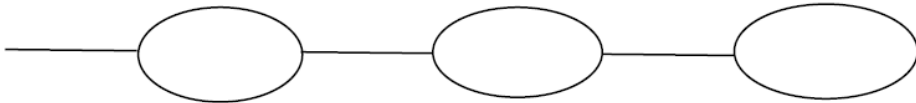
Singularity: —————

Plurality, heterophonic loop:



Following the theory of the heterophonic phenomenon, the author concludes by distinguishing “three species with heterophonic specific”, namely:

1. “Super *positional heterophony*” (*synchronic*), *simultaneous concentrations*;



2. “Conducted *heterophony*” (*diachronic*), *para-tactical concentrations*:



²¹ Ibid. p. 14.

3. “Dystonic fluctuation heterophony”²²

The reference standard unit, the place from which the heterophonic wave starts, is the primary standard. Starting with the sound, with the interval, the chord takes the form of “reference standard models”²³ next to “The tonal network, the tape of trebles, the complex sound surface”²⁴.

In another chapter he proposes standard models of abstraction of detail “heterophonic elimination of a musical entity of reference or arbitrarily detached from the context”²⁵, (melodic node, melodic slope, level curve, etc.).

Rhythmic pile, metric rank pile, metric and rhythmic pile, melodic pile, melodic and rhythmic pile, and others Another complex chapter *Specific standard units* “as model for some selective melodic waves” we mention “heterophonic arrhythmia, parallel melodic heterophony, functional heterophony”²⁶.

All chapters and sub-chapters are detailed and accompanied by clear examples. Each theoretical explanation has attached an example with practical application.

The author provides us with a laboratory equipped with everything required to proceed to a different analysis.

He also urges us to carry out this practical approach in a unique and particular style. “which incites, disturbs and triggers an inner clarity, an inner clarity, in which you are the finder, the discoverer, the creator of a universe, and through sound lands spoken in a landscape populated by the flora and fauna of the meanings that give you the chance of option and not the handcuffs of imposition”²⁷

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

GIUSEPPE VERDI - REQUIEM

No. 7. Libera me domine Bars 312 - 321

Libera me, domine, de morte aeterna, in die illa tremenda.

Release me, God, from the eternal death on that dreadful day.

²² Țuțuianu, Teodor, *Eterofonii in partituri Bachiene*, Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 2004, p. 20-21.

²³ Ibd. p. 22.

²⁴ Ibd. p. 30.

²⁵ Ibd. p. 34.

²⁶ Ibd. p. 51-56.

²⁷ Ibd. p. 6.

Li_bera me Do_mi_ne de mor - te æ - ter - na in di - e

mor - te æ - ter - na in di - e il - la tre - men - da

æ - ter - na in di - e il - la tre - men - da

di - e il - la tre - men - da Li_bera me Do_mi_ne de

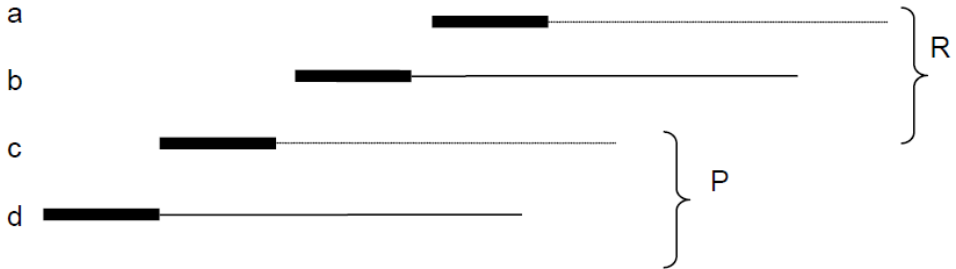
il - la tre - men - da Li_bera me

This “thematic body” is a canonical imitation with full exposure to four voices. “The tandem made up of original”, the model exposed to the deepest voice (Bass) “and its variants”, the subsequent statements, brought by complete overlaps in stretto at tenor, alto and soprano.

According to the analytical model, from Chapter 3, the example is integrated into the category of *Subtle Heterophonies*.

From this point of view, it is a heterophonic canon of four voices, whose components, *proposta* and *risposta* appear identical to the bass and alto voices as well as to the tenor and the soprano.

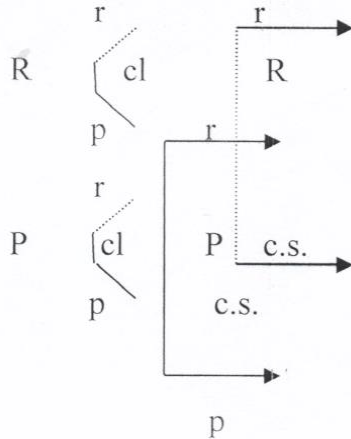
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The canon (loose - c.l.) (strict - c.s).
 Imitation }
 Superposition }

The canon (loose - c.l.) (strict - c.s).
 Imitation }
 Superposition }

Here is the report of representation and the relations between the voices that establish the character of the heterophonic canon in this example.



↓ ↓
 (c.s.)(c. l.)
 C.S. (c. l.)
 C.L. (c. s.)

Canon:	Imitation (loose cannon):	Superposition:
d - b strict	d-c loose	d-c
c-a strict	b-a loose	b-a
d c - b a strict	d b-c a loose	c-b
		d b-c a

From a heterophonic point of view, the four active voices based on the musical statement accompanied by the literary text form the wave of the melodic linear syllabaries. Several sounds corresponding to a single syllable form the plurality configuring the heterophonic wave.

IV.

Li be ra me Do mi ne de mor te ae ter na in di e il la tre men da
 Sing _____ Pl _____ Sing Pl Sing Pl Sing _____

III.

Li be ra me Do mi ne de mor te ae ter na in di e il la tre men da
 Sing _____ Pl _____ Sing _____

II.

Li be ra me Do mi ne de mor te ae ter na in di e il la tre men da
 Sing _____ Pl _____ Sing Pl Sing Pl Sing _____

I.

Li be ra me Do mi ne de mor te ae ter na in di e il la tre men da
 Sing _____ Pl _____ Sing _____

The diagrammatic representation below the lyrics consists of a horizontal line with three ovals. The top oval is the largest and is positioned under the words 'mor te'. The middle oval is smaller and positioned under 'na in di e'. The bottom oval is the smallest and positioned under 'il la tre men da'. This visualizes the 'heterophonic wave' where different parts of the text are emphasized simultaneously in different voices.

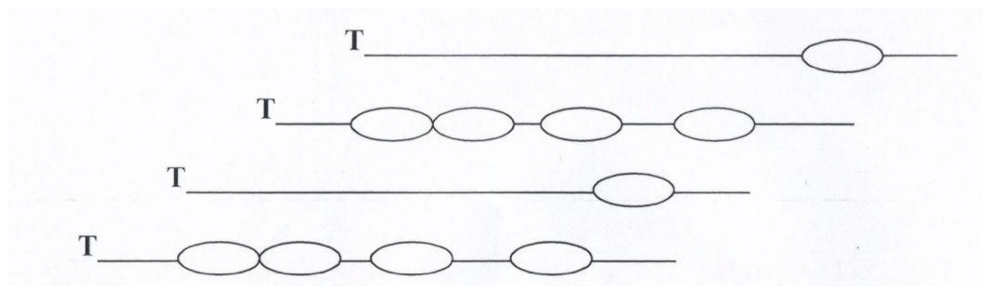
From the heterophonic point of view, the thematic body is enunciated by complete stretto overlaps based on singularities and concentrations of the stated theme.

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I. TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT
 II. TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT
 III. TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT
 IV. TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT TTTT

The image shows a musical score for four voices (I, II, III, IV) with the lyrics: "Li be ra me Do mi ne de mor te ae ter na in di e il la tre men da". The score is written on four staves. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some words split across lines. The music consists of a series of notes, with some notes beamed together. The lyrics are: "Li be ra me Do mi ne de mor te ae ter na in di e il la tre men da".

Thematic density wave: from a heterophonic point of view, in this example we encounter concentrations and singularities of the theme stated by overlaps in stretto, in the form of canonical imitation.



This original system of analysis offers, from a theoretical perspective, a new, analytically speaking vision of the syntax of the musical text. The poetry of a musical creation allows the connoisseur of the musical grammar, a multitude of solutions for dissecting the whole in order to reach the primordial semantic meaning, which must be as close as possible to the intentions of the creator.

“But, let's get back to the formula for defining the heterophony and the ways of expressing and evaluating this acoustic phenomenon. Heterophony consists in the partial, periodic reactivation of a sound column by disturbances that alter the boundaries of an original, which if not exposed to these deformities - whose forces come from somewhere in the mishandling of the search to have, of its own self to be manifested and noted, of each entity that is in the environment of communication through emission and perception - would continue its unaltered course, without events that load routes with reference areas in subsequent re-evaluations.²⁸“

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²⁸ Țuțuianu, Teodor, p. 18.