

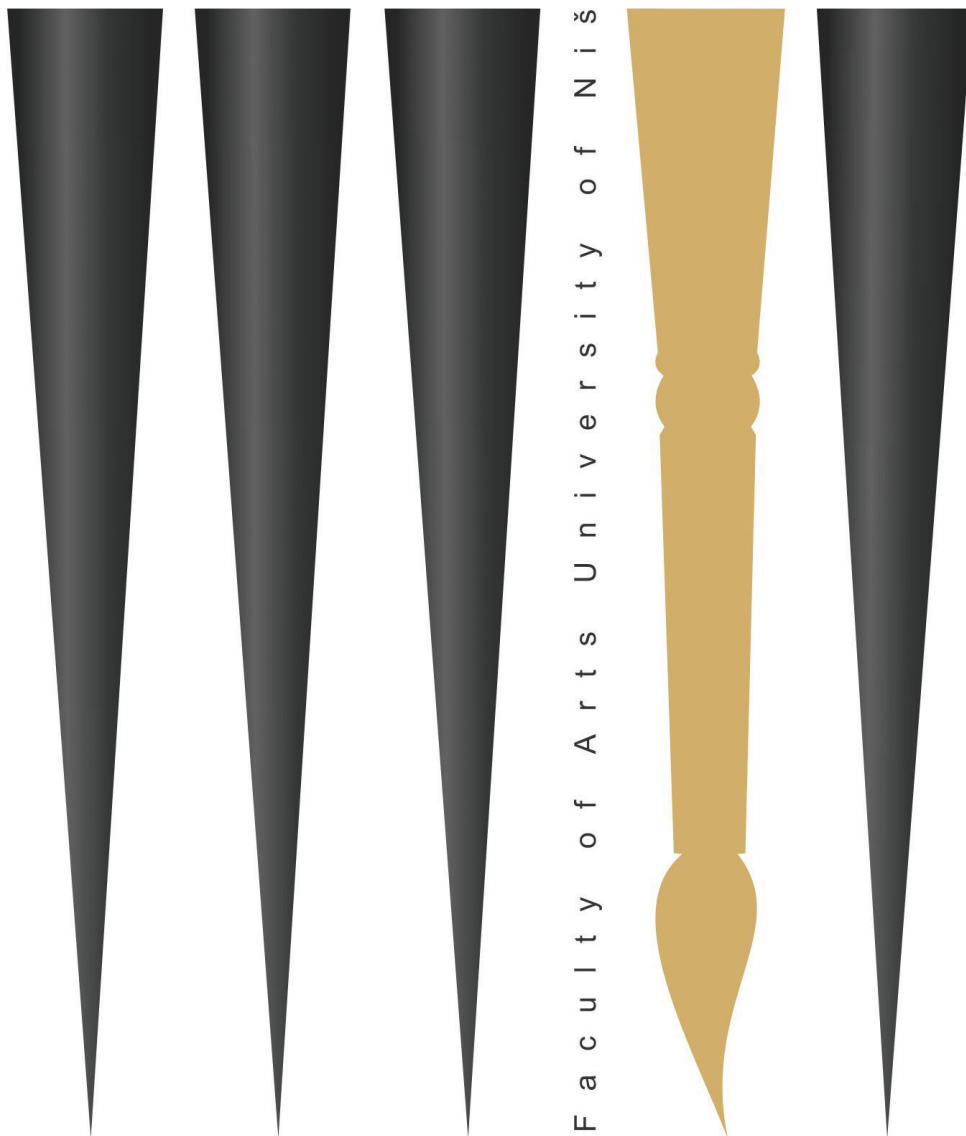
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Vol. 7, N° 2, 2021

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## Contents

**Zoran Dimić**

ARISTOTLE ON THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN A *POLIS* .....87–95

**Anka Mihajlov Prokopović, Marija Vujović**

MUSIC AND THE RADIO .....97–106

**Marko S. Milenković, Marko P. Janković**

HARMONIC LANGUAGE AND ITS FUNCTION  
OF MUSICAL HUMOUR IN THE *SEXTET K. 522*  
(A *MUSICAL JOKE*) OF W. A. MOZART .....107–122

**Danijela Zdravić Mihailović**

MUSICAL SYNTAX IN CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH STUDIES  
OF SERBIAN MUSICAL THEORETICIANS .....123–132



## ARISTOTLE ON THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN A *POLIS* \*

*UDC 14:[37.013.73:78] Aristotel*

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**Abstract.** *In Chapters 7 and 8 of “Politics”, Aristotle presents his most detailed version of the philosophy of upbringing and education (paideia). According to his understanding, paideia is firmly connected to politics and political practice. Each political order determines its own way of upbringing and education, which has to achieve the goals to which the respective order aspires to the best possible extent. Thus, in a democracy, democratic education should be developed, in oligarchy and in the oligarchic kingdom it should be the education that best serves the goals of the monarchy. In this context, Aristotle in Chapter 8 of “Politics” discusses in great detail what music education in the polis should be in order to best serve the goals that its citizens set for themselves. Unlike Plato, while avoiding any kind of interventionism, Aristotle does not intend to prescribe what music and dance should be in one polis. He simply analyzes all possibilities, and according to his general methodological inclination in “Politics”, leaves it to citizens and legislators in every political order to make a final decision on it.*

**Key words:** *education, politics, music, dance, polis, citizens*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the ancient period, we find two basic approaches and philosophical reflections regarding the purpose of art in the human community. According to one, whose most famous representative is Plato, politicians in the *polis* should keep art and mimetic artistic creation under control, since artists have a bad effect on the education of youth and citizens.<sup>1</sup> Plato did not even shy away from some kind of censorship in order to protect the youth and the citizens from the negative influence of the works of art. It is well

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<sup>1</sup> See in more detail: Platon, (1983), *Država*, BIGZ, Beograd, (377a-403c), pp. 57–86.

known from the later development of Western civilization and culture, and this also applies to Eastern ones, that many rulers, art theorists, as well as citizens were not unfamiliar with such attitudes. Human history is full of examples in which this or that art, this or that artistic creator are exposed to prohibition, and their works are censored. Likewise, in the modern world, we often encounter intolerance to certain artists and their works of art in our usual everyday discussions about art and works of art, especially those that strongly provoke our established moral or aesthetic attitudes.

However, the ancient tradition in considering the role of art in the human community also has another approach. The context in which Aristotle considers the importance of music for the life of citizens in the *polis* is the analysis and determination of the *paideia*. Since its content is very complex, this ancient Greek term is difficult to translate into any world language of today with only one linguistic equivalent. The meaning of this term in its original ancient use encompasses what we mean today by upbringing, education, culture, and teaching. In Chapters 7 and 8, Aristotle makes his most comprehensive interpretation of the significance of the *paideia* for the human “political community” (κοινωνία πολιτική). Similar to Plato, with Aristotle, we immediately understand unequivocally all the fateful connections of art with politics. Unlike some later epochs, in which purely aesthetic, romantic, or religious aspects of music and art, in general, were brought to the fore, in the classical age of antiquity, which is best witnessed by Plato and Aristotle, there was no doubt that art was in the most direct way connected to the political nature of man. All the differences that exist between Plato and Aristotle in understanding the role of art for the human political community, in fact, derive directly from the fundamental differences that previously determined their understanding of politics.

## 2. POLITICS AND PAIDEIA

While Plato derives his understanding of politics from metaphysics, that is, from the theory of ideas and teachings about the soul, following which he then shapes the central core of his political theory expressed in the doctrine of the ideal state, Aristotle places the whole matter of politics in a more diverse context, in which he completely relativizes and makes meaningless the idea of an ideal pattern of political order.<sup>2</sup> Plato’s firm and eternal ideal of the best possible political order is dissolved in Aristotle into four types of criteria for perceiving the political order: the absolute best rule, the relatively best form of government, the best form of government given the current political relations, and the best form of government on average.<sup>3</sup>

While the central place in Plato’s understanding of politics is occupied by philosophers-politicians who should shape each *polis* according to the ideal pattern of political order (πολιτεία), according to Aristotle, only citizens are the ones who should choose the most adequate form of political order and implement it realistically. According to Aristotle’s classification of knowledge, within which politics is practical, he is not able to say anything more explicit than this. Since politics is not theoretical knowledge consisting of principles and their application to individual cases, we are not able to simply apply examples of good political practice from certain *polis* to some new political circumstances in another *polis*. It is

<sup>2</sup> On Plato’s understanding of politics see in more detail: Barbarić, D., (1995), *Grčka filozofija*, Školska knjiga, Zagreb, pp. 103–105.

<sup>3</sup> See in more detail: Pol. 1288b 22ff.



this fact that makes policy-making so complex. For example, the Boethians cannot “copy” to their *polis* a good political order or political practice from Athens, but must themselves look for those solutions that suit them best. Therefore, dealing with politics according to Aristotle is always contained in discussing various possibilities, in examining the good and the bad sides of this or that solution. Precisely, the whole philosophy of politics in Aristotle, just the opposite of the way Plato imagines it, is actually a dispute, that is, a debate in which, according to the specific political circumstances in the *polis*, the best possible political solutions are sought.

Politics understood as a dispute is clearly visible in the key phrase of the entire *Politics* – “man is by nature a political animal (πολιτικὸν ζῷον)”.<sup>4</sup> Namely, since he belongs to the species of animals (ζῷον), but also has speech (logos) and the possibility of free decision-making (προαίρεσεως), which determines the way of decision-making in the *polis* and thus its political character, a man actually has two sides, which are in constant “dispute”. One, which is determined by instincts and nature, and the other, which is based on logos and free decision-making. Therefore, here we see once again why the constant discussion (ἀμφισβητεῖν) about what is good and useful for the citizens of the *polis*, and what is not, is actually the essence of a human political being. In that sense, the context in which we need to analyze Aristotle’s understanding of music and art is his definition of man as a political animal. Thus, the political practice of decision-making based on debate, as the inner essence of human political nature, represents the immediate context for understanding the role of music in the *polis*.

At the very beginning of Chapter 8 of *Politics*, Aristotle clearly states his position on the *paideia*: “No one can deny (ἀμφισβητήσετε) that caring for the *paideia* of the youth is primarily the duty of the legislator”.<sup>5</sup> Without any hesitation, Aristotle clearly indicates that the basic framework for upbringing and education in the *polis* is provided by legislators, i.e., politicians, who define the context in which the *paideia* will take place through legal frameworks and special processes. In the times we live in today, this thought is easy to understand. Laws regulating the field of upbringing and education (General Law on Education, Law on Primary and Secondary Education, Law on Higher Education, etc.) define all the important parameters in which educational processes take place. After that, all bearers of educational competencies, i.e., educators, teachers, and professors, act according to their duties within the existing legal framework. Like it or not, we cannot act against or outside the legal framework that significantly characterizes an educational system, precisely because in the entire European tradition, education is a legally regulated area.

To go further on, Aristotle connects *paideia* even more tightly with politics. Apart from the legislators, another important political fact significantly determines the *paideia*: “... Because every political order (πολιτεία) requires a special *paideia*”. Aristotle simply describes here what he finds in the existing political practice and notes that every political order, through laws and customs which rule in upbringing and education, forms by itself the kind of educational practice that affirms and maintains the existing order. Therefore, in a democracy, the *paideia* will be democratic, in the oligarchy oligarchic, and in the monarchy monarchist. In other words, upbringing and education in one *polis* should affirm the very form of the political order and help it to maintain and be successful.

<sup>4</sup> Pol. 1253a 3. *Politics* is cited according to a bilingual, ancient Greek-English edition: Aristotle, (1932), *Politics*, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of the citations are by the author.

<sup>5</sup> Pol. 1337a 10.

Aristotle observes a similar thing in the existing practice in the *polis* when it comes to morality: “Morality, characteristic of each individual political order, usually establishes a specific order and protects it from ruin. Thus, democratic morality preserves democracy, oligarchic oligarchy, and better morality always creates a better political order”.<sup>6</sup> Everything stated above seems very understandable. Namely, it is inconceivable that, e.g., in the monarchy, democratic customs in upbringing and education are being developed, or that, e.g., in a democracy, the way of upbringing and education that is characteristic to tyranny, or in today’s terminology, dictatorship. Morality and *paideia* in one order serve to shape both the citizens and the political form of the organization itself according to one political idea, i.e., the type of political organization. Therefore, Aristotle summarizes the analysis of the relationship between the political order and the type of *paideia* that is practiced in it: “As every *polis* has one goal, it is clear that the *paideia* must be unique and the same for everyone, and that it should be the concern of the *polis* and not of the individual”.<sup>7</sup>

Although it seems that everything works well in this context, from these last few words we can actually see where the problem lies. Namely, Aristotle simply observes that upbringing and education in practice are always divergent, since parents and teachers take care of children in their own way, and give them the kind of upbringing and education they want. Thus, in practice, the *paideia* is not implemented as one and unique form of a particular political order, but as many different ones. However, as we stated from the beginning, if we agree that one *polis* can be successful only if it has a single goal in terms of upbringing and education, which is in accordance with the specific political order and its key characteristics, then for that order itself it cannot be good if there are different practices of upbringing and education in it. However, as the practice in each *polis* is different, and the same is true today in every modern state, we can conclude that there is always a certain tension in the relationship between the political order and the practice of upbringing and education.

Thus, considering Aristotle’s understanding of *paideia*, we come to similar conclusions as well as in an attempt to understand his understanding of the essence of human political nature. The tension and controversy that characterize the way in which Aristotle understands political practice are at the same time features of *paideia*. Even though legislators pass laws that regulate educational practice in one way, individuals are inclined to interpret the *paideia* in their own way, and following that, parents educate their children, and teachers teach their students. That is how the *paideia* really takes place. Aristotle clearly outlines this tension in the *paideia* in the following way: “It is clear that there must be laws about the *paideia* and that it should be common to all (καὶ ταύτην κοινήν). Nevertheless, we must not lose sight of what the essence and method of *paideia* consist of. People argue (ἀμφισβητεῖται) about what school subjects should exist. People also disagree on what young people need to learn to achieve virtue or the best way of life. It is also unclear whether intellect or character should be influenced more”.<sup>8</sup>

As we can see from this short but important quote, many dilemmas exist in understanding the *paideia*, despite possible legal solutions that harmonize it with the basic character of the political order. Different parents raise their children differently, different teachers teach their students differently, there is no agreement on what subjects children should study at the

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<sup>6</sup> Pol. 1337a 15.

<sup>7</sup> Pol. 1337a 21.

<sup>8</sup> Pol. 1337a 34.

appropriate levels of their schooling, and there is no agreement on what exactly young people should learn to fulfill the main goals of the *paideia*. The most important thing, as Aristotle also clearly points out, is that there is no agreement on what should be the main goals of the *paideia* – is it the achievement of virtue, or rather the best way of life?<sup>9</sup> At the same time, it is also not entirely clear whether the development of the intellect of the ones who are educated should be influenced by their character. Today, some other dilemmas would be more topical in a debate about upbringing and education, such as whether mastering competencies and skills is more important in the educational process, or whether more attention should be paid to shaping a complete and free personality ready for a critical attitude towards social reality.

To make a long story short, we can conclude that – just as for Aristotle politics is a controversial activity since its basic content is a permanent discussion of the most important issues of a community, we can also conclude the same for *paideia*. Namely, the essence of the *paideia* in a political community is that people argue about what it should be like. This means that it is not something already determined, defined, which should then be implemented as a ready-made and indisputable thing, but quite the opposite – an inseparable part of the *paideia* must be a constant discussion of what it is, therefore, nurturing a culture of arguing about the most important issues connected to *paideia*. So, we could most accurately say that the essence of the *paideia* lies in the dispute over what it really is and how it should be implemented.

### 3. MUSIC IN THE *POLIS*

Aristotle determines the place of music in the *polis* following the understanding of the essence of the *paideia*, that is, in accordance with the understanding of man as a political animal.<sup>10</sup> In his analysis of music, he sees that it has a threefold function for citizens in the *polis*: the first is related to dance and entertainment, the second is educational, closely related to character shaping, and the third is related to leisure entertainment.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, he pays equal attention to each of these functions. He first says: “Today, most people do it for pleasure”.<sup>12</sup> Aristotle is aware that music combined with dance is a source of enjoyment for many people. Since music and dance, in general, played an extremely important role in the daily and ritual life of ancient peoples, the enjoyment that accompanied them has always been an integral part of their attitude towards the phenomena and problems that determine them. In this, we clearly see their cathartic role. Music and dance, accompanied by enjoyment, have actually served people since ancient times as a kind of vent from the hard daily struggle to sustain life. These are the moments when people understand music and “put it together with drinking ... and dancing”. This relaxation from everyday stresses, persistent efforts to obtain food, struggles to maintain security, etc., enabled people to cope more easily with all the problems that marked their daily lives. Having in mind this understandable human need,

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<sup>9</sup> See in more detail: Pol. 1337a 40.

<sup>10</sup> For a general critical review of the relationship between *paideia*, music, and politics, see: Destrée, P., (2013), “Education, Leisure, and Politics”, in: *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Politics*, Marguerite Deslauriers and Pierre Destrée (eds.), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 301–23.

<sup>11</sup> See in more detail: Pol. 1338b 13-1342b35. For a more detailed critical review of these three functions, see: Depew, D.J., (1991), “Politics, Music and Contemplation”, in: *A Companion to Aristotle Politics*, edited by David Keyt and Fred D. Miller, Jr. Blackwell, Oxford, pp. 367–374.

<sup>12</sup> Pol. 1337b 30.

Aristotle is in no hurry to condemn this sensual use of music and dance, but on the contrary, he shows open understanding for it. This use of music as a companion to the human need for enjoyment is simply part of the commonplace, and as such benefits the community because it allows people to relax from a hard and not at all comfortable life, as most people lived not only in ancient times but especially in other prehistoric times.

Aristotle defines the second function of music as educational, that which concerns the shaping of character and human personality. The following two quotations explain in more detail what exactly Aristotle means here: “It is clear, therefore, that music provides a certain *paideia* that should be given to young people not because it is useful or necessary, but because it is beautiful and worthy of a free man”.<sup>13</sup> A little further, he adds: “Music should be understood as a means of developing virtue which, like gymnastics, develops certain traits of the body, can educate certain traits of character, accustoming people to true and pure joy ...”. This function of music is as clear as the previous one. Since music has always been a part of our lives, people have been constantly arguing with each other about what kind of music is best for developing desirable character and personality traits. Aristotle does not present the second function of music here as something indisputable and clearly defined, but only describes the controversies that accompany it. First of all, there is no complete agreement among the members of the community about what are the desirable character traits that need to be developed. Also, attitudes about it differ among members of different communities. What character traits are desirable for members of one community, they are not for members of another community. At the same time, there is no less disagreement about exactly what music, what rhythms and harmonies, members of a community should listen to in order for music to fulfill its educational function. Moreover, Aristotle also raises the dilemma of how exactly music should look like as a special educational subject, and additionally – whether children who go to school should learn to perform music themselves or just listen to it. If we accept that children should learn to perform music on their own, then the dilemma consists in this: “what songs and rhythms should they learn and what instruments should they learn to play, because that is where differences also should be made”.<sup>14</sup> So, many dilemmas arise when considering the educational function of music, and it is also very difficult to reach an agreement on them.

The third function of music concerns its connection with the time a person spends at leisure. Aristotle simply signifies its application: “The ancients introduced it to have a good time”, and adds “... its purpose is entertainment during leisure, and that seems to be its application”.<sup>15</sup> Namely, if we understand leisure as something very important for human development, since it is a period of the day that a person does not dedicate to hard work and maintaining daily life, Aristotle points out that we will spend that time best if we “learn something that will fill free time”. For that reason, Aristotle points out that in ancient times, music was introduced as a school subject in order to bring people what other activities could not. Gymnastics is, e.g., useful for health and physical strength, the skill of drawing is useful to make it easier to evaluate works of art, and musical skill is important because it brings a person fun in leisure time. In order to make a clear distinction in relation to the first function of music, it should be noted here that Aristotle actually means elegant feasts “worthy of a free man”, in which conversations between

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<sup>13</sup> Pol. 1338a 22.

<sup>14</sup> Pol. 1341a 2.

<sup>15</sup> Pol. 1338a 22.

guests are accompanied by pleasant music performed by musicians. The key difference between the first function related to enjoyment and the one aimed at entertainment is that the latter is not accompanied by dance. The music performed by musicians at elegant parties serves more as a kind of “d cor” that should bring a more sublime tone to the conversations that the interlocutors lead or the poetry they recite and make the atmosphere even more pleasant for all of them. Quite simply, this is a type of custom that is a little harder for us to understand today since our time does not know this type of use of live music. Namely, today we are very inclined to treat music as a kind of aesthetic decor for our everyday life, by letting it “play in the background” while we are talking to our guests, or relaxing in the living room reading the newspaper, watching TV, or studying in our study room, but the above-mentioned use of live musicians in the modern world can only be part of some rare, almost bizarre situations in the lives of extremely rich people. However, at the time Aristotle is talking about, this was apparently a common practice at all feasts prepared not only by members of the nobility in the time of archaic Greece but also by members of the city elite in the classical era.<sup>16</sup>

In the whole context of Aristotle’s interpretation of the role of music in the *polis*, there is also an interesting discussion at the very end of Chapter 8 of *Politics*. Aristotle speaks here about whether the program of music as an educational subject should include learning all harmonies and rhythms, or whether some choice should be made, bearing in mind that certain melodies and rhythms affect the audience in a specific way.<sup>17</sup> Referring to the standpoints of some other philosophers, which unfortunately we cannot identify from his writings, he presents the division of melodies into those that educate, those that encourage work, and those that arouse passions. Each of these melodies is accompanied by the appropriate kind of harmony. Aristotle further analyzes the different effects of each of these types of melodies. Although at times it seems that in some situations he prefers one type of melody to another, Aristotle, following his general approach in *Politics*, avoids marking certain types of melodies as the best or ideal, and at the same time, he also avoids completely rejecting other types. As elsewhere in this writing, in the analysis of the *paideia*, he is not inclined to idealize certain things and absolutely reject or even forbid others.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Aristotle’s entire discussion of the role of music in the *polis* takes place in the context of the question of what kind of music education children should receive at school, that is, what kind of music they should listen to. In addition to considering the teaching aspects of music education, Aristotle of course analyzes here the broader effects that music has on the citizens of the *polis*. What is the specificity of his approach to this problem? What is the essence of the way Aristotle sees the role of music in the *polis*?

Aristotle pays equal attention to all the functions that music has. Although he sometimes seems to be personally inclined to put the educational character of music in the forefront, he still doesn’t really do that as a whole. Every aspect of music and every function of it, Aristotle sees not only from a musical or artistic point of view but above all, considering the overall function it has for the *polis* and its members. Therefore, he

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<sup>16</sup> See in more detail about these customs: Flaceli re, R., (1959), *La vie quotidienne en Gr ce*, Librairie Hachette, Paris, pp. 187–193.

<sup>17</sup> See in more detail: Pol. 1341b 19.

summarizes his consideration of music as follows: “Music is rightly classified in all three areas and seems to belong to each of these”.<sup>18</sup> Thus, Aristotle is not inclined to, e.g., music that is listened to in a state of leisure at feasts, mark as the music of less importance than educational music that has the task of forming a character. Also, he is not able to claim that for the music that accompanies dance and play and serves to enjoyment and relaxation from the hard everyday life. Just as he claims in the previous quote, all those types of music, that is, all those musical functions, have the right to be called music. The reason for the lack of tendency to grade different uses of music in any way lies precisely in Aristotle’s previous definition of the *paideia* in the *polis*. Since music is part of the *paideia*, and at the same time the essence of the *paideia* is determined by the fact that it has an essentially political character in the *polis*, i.e., that its essence always remains open to discussion and cannot be strictly declared, the role of music in the *polis* cannot be determined in some prescriptive and doctrinal way. There is no way to prescribe to the citizens of the *polis* which music they should listen to, i.e., which of the functions of music should only be practiced and which should be neglected.

The following sentence of Aristotle is the best evidence of that: “We believe that dealing with music brings not one but many benefits. In the first place, it is a *paideia* and a catharsis of feelings, and in the third place, music is used for fun, relaxation and rest from exertion”.<sup>19</sup> Considering music, neither from professional artistic frameworks, nor from narrow class prejudices, Aristotle in Chapters 7 and 8 of *Politics* manages to capture the role of music in the *polis* in a complex and comprehensive way, having in mind the practical benefits it brings to members of political communities. Thus, Aristotle’s view is not subject to only one aspect that a certain type of music carries within itself, or only to one function that it carries with it, but sees it in a holistic way, primarily having in mind the real benefits that the members of *polis* could have. If the phenomenon of music, i.e., the problem of the program of teaching music as an educational subject, is viewed in such a way, then indeed all three of the above functions of music must be taken as equally important. According to the first, yet not the most important place, like gymnastics that shapes the body of students, music shapes their character, or in modern language, their personality. Appropriate rhythms and melodies shape one type of personality, and some others form a different type of our character. It is a function of music that has long been noticed in the whole of European civilization, and according to this insight, different types of music are chosen for different occasions, i.e., different educational purposes.

However, no less important is the function of music that is related to play and dance, that is, the enjoyment that accompanies those actions. In the above quote, Aristotle finally explains to the end what it is all about. A function that he describes as cathartic, i.e., the one that aims to purify and release certain feelings, is equally important for the daily life of *polis* members. Since dance was associated with many rituals, but also with many other everyday situations in which it meant celebrating something or simply satisfying the need for sensual enjoyment, this type of use of music was an extremely important component in people’s lives, not only in the political community such as the *polis* was but also in all previous forms of association in prehistoric times.

Finally, the third type of function of music, since it concerns the time we spend in leisure hours, has the purpose of bringing people fun and relaxation from the busy everyday

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<sup>18</sup> Pol. 1339b 17.

<sup>19</sup> Pol. 1341b 35.

life. Although this understanding of music might be criticized for looking at music as a lower and secondary thing, which should only “beautify” the atmosphere in which we spend leisure time, and that in that sense it is something less valuable, Aristotle is very clear and precisely assigns a significant place to it. Since the way of life of a person in the *polis* is most often related to hard daily work, the human need to relax and have fun at the end of the day is deeply understandable. This use of music frees members of the *polis* from tension and nervousness, which were certainly largely followed by the ordinary day of most people. Aristotle does not see this function of music as any less important than, for example, an educational function that deals with some, conditionally speaking, higher aspects of people’s lives.

From all the above, it is clear that Aristotle cared equally about preserving and nurturing all the three functions of music in the upbringing and education of members of the *polis*. Since he considers all aspects of people’s lives in the political community to be equally important, both sensory and material, but also moral and spiritual, he simply cannot allow any of the functions of music to prevail at the expense of the other two. For Aristotle, speaking in modern terminology, the cognitive aspects of personality are as important as the conative ones, or the social and emotional ones. Also, the sensory and material aspects of enjoyment are just as important as the spiritual and aesthetic ones. He, therefore, refuses to give any of the above functions of music any priority, precisely because he considers all three functions necessary for the development of a happy member of the *polis*.

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### ARISTOTEL O ULOZI MUZIKE U *POLISU*

U 7. i 8. glavi “Politike”, Aristotel iznosi svoju najdetaljniju verziju filozofije vaspitanja i obrazovanja (*paideia*). Prema njegovom shvatanju *paideja* se čvrsto vezuje za politiku i političku praksu. Svaki politički poredak utvrđuje svoj način vaspitanja i obrazovanja, koji ima da u najboljoj mogućoj meri ostvaruje ciljeve kojima dotični poredak teži. Tako u demokratiji treba razviti demokratsko vaspitanje, u oligarhiji oligarhijsko, a u kraljevini ono vaspitanje koje najbolje služi ciljevima monarhije. U tom kontekstu Aristotel u 8. glavi “Politike” vrlo detaljno razmatra kakvo treba da bude muzičko obrazovanje u *polisu* da bi najbolje služilo ciljevima koje njegovi građani postavljaju pred sebe. Za razliku od Platona, izbegavajući pritom bilo kakvu vrstu intervencionizma, Aristotel nema nameru da propisuje kakvi treba da budu muzika i ples u jednom *polisu*, već naprosto analizira sve mogućnosti, i prema svojoj opštoj metodološkoj sklonosti u “Politici”, ostavlja građanima i zakonodavcima u svakom političkom poretku da donesu konačnu odluku o tome.

Ključne reči: vaspitanje, politika, muzika, ples, polis, građani





## MUSIC AND THE RADIO

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**Abstract.** *This paper discusses the role of music and the radio, starting from the hypothesis that the main role that music has today on radio programs in Serbia is related to the realization of the program concept of a radio station. The choice of music during the all-day program of a radio station clearly speaks about the musical identity of the radio station. It differs from radio station to radio station, and the biggest difference can be noticed when analyzing the music programs of three different types of radio stations. They are public radio stations such as Radio Belgrade, with four channels, commercial radio stations, which have the most of the channels, and alternative radio stations, such as Radio Apparatus. It should be added that in the media system of Serbia since 2008, there are also religious media stations whose music program is aligned with the concept of religious radio. The mission of the public radio services also includes the choice and quality of the music program of the radio station, similar to the normative high standards of other programs – informative, cultural, scientific, educational, children's and entertainment. This paper considers that in addition to its important role that music has on the radio, in practice there are other roles that have different levels of importance. These are: the role of music in filling in the gaps in broadcasting (as a break), the role of music in illustrating a certain topic in a show, and music is the main topic of a show or some other journalistic genre forms. In addition to broadcasting music, there is also debate about music on the radio. The conclusion is that all these roles of music can be found on public radio stations, and in a reduced number and volume on commercial, alternative and religious radio stations.*

**Key words:** *music program, radio, public media service, Radio Belgrade, commercial radio, alternative radio*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In our analysis of the role of music the radio today, we will start with research on the role of the media in a changed, digital environment. This new environment puts the audience in the position to listen to music through other, digital technologies, and puts radio in a situation where the competition is growing. This mainly refers to YouTube and the way in which the music industry has developed to this day. It has led to music lovers being able to access a certain music track by downloading it from the Internet (Todorović 2020, 177). How has the ability to share music online affected the music industry? Some research shows that the impact is not always the same for all music albums – in some cases sales go better if the album is not available online, but when it comes to less successful debuting albums there is a promotional effect that online presence of these albums brings (Hiller 2016, Zhang 2016). On the other hand, the Internet has enabled traditional radio stations to broadcast their program via the Internet in live streaming<sup>1</sup>, and today a large number of traditional radio stations use it in Serbia. In this way, the music program of the radio seems to be another possible personal music list that can also be listened to via a mobile phone in the manner of a personal medium. Of course, the competition is significant in the modern digital world – when we say that we are faced with an abundance of information, it also applies to music.

What is the role of music on the radio in Serbia today is a research question that we will discuss in this paper. We will start from the hypothesis that the main role that music has today on radio in Serbia is related to the realization of the program concept of radio stations.

In the first part of the paper, we will present the relationship between radio and music as well as music as a means of expression of the radio. Starting from this relationship, in the following text we will analyze music and music program on public radio, commercial radio and alternative radio stations<sup>2</sup>. In conclusion, we will establish the role of music in these different types of radio stations.

## 2. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RADIO AND MUSIC

### 2.1. Music as a Means of Radio Expression

The authors Martin Shingler and Cindy Wieringa believe that music is a method of radio expression in addition to speech, sounds and silence (Šingler & Viringa 2000). Speech is the most important method of expression for radio, even for those radio stations that mainly broadcast music because it “represents the context in which music appears as entertainment with a specific purpose” (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 74). Speech is a key element in determining the identity of a radio station, because although it is determined

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<sup>1</sup> Live streaming means delivering live content over the Internet (Crnobrnja 2014, 115).

<sup>2</sup> The paper starts from the understanding of alternative media by Olga Bailey, Bart Cammaerts and Nico Carpentier (2008, 7 in Drašković & Kleut 2016) who observe four approaches: community service, alternative to the mainstream, part of civil society and rhizome (the concept of rhizome introduced by Deleuze and Guattari is accepted). Alternative radio stations in Serbia are established as media of the civil sector, which is provided by the Law on Electronic Media (2014, Article 44). Their founders are non-governmental organizations and citizens' associations. After 2002, when the legal possibility for the establishment of radio and television stations as civil society stations was adopted for the first time in Serbia (Broadcasting Law, 2002), their number was not large. Following the enactment of this Law, the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church established their own radio stations in Serbia as civil sector stations (Radojković 2008).

by the choice of music (for example, radio stations that broadcast only rock or classical music), it is not enough to achieve the uniqueness of a radio station. According to the authors Shingler and Wieringa, the content and style of speech is important to attract listeners. “Many people in the UK, for example, may choose to listen to *Classic FM* instead of *BBC Radio 3*, not only because it broadcasts a more popular repertoire of classical music, but also because of the presenter’s style (i.e. DJ style speech) is more informal than the one used by the radio hosts of classical music programs on BBC radio” (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 75).

Music as a means of radio expression appears in several forms: to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the type of station, making the sole content of a music program of a particular radio station, in jingles, as a music intro and as a “musical accompaniment” in shows and radio dramas. The listener “floats on the music waves and imagines” and so the music on the radio contributes to the radio being a “medium of imagination” (Valić Nedeljković & Pralica 2020, 121). Music is very suitable for radio broadcasting, because the listener experiences it intensely, because there is no visual component that would distract attention. Thus, radio increases the power of music (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 123). This is in line with Gordon Graham’s view that music has a unique ability to “expand and explore the audiences’ experience” (Grejam 2000, 114). Graham goes on to answer the question, “And what is so significant about audiences’ experience?” He says, “It seems that the only possible answer to this question is that human auditory experience is part of human experience and by exploring this aspect of experience, music helps us to more fully understand what it means to be a human being” (Grejam 2000, 114).

On the other hand, music is a significant factor in the identity of a radio station, it also contributes to its popularity and so it affects the economic status of a particular radio station. If it wants a bigger audience, the radio station can resort to the formula of broadcasting several different music styles. Some local stations in Serbia that developed rapidly in their program broadcast different music genres that were separated by time or were broadcast on special channels if the station had two or more channels. Thus, on its second program (which was first called Radio Bubamara, and later Radio Bum), Radio Studio B broadcast folk and popular music in certain time intervals (Ćirić and Nikolić 2020, 151). A certain type of music and a music program based on that type will attract people who share the same musical taste and very likely belong to a similar social and cultural milieu. “A thing that is disliked by one person may delight another, not because of some absolute quality of the music itself, but because of what that music means to him or her as a member of a certain society or social group” (Bleking 1992, 42).

Jingle is a musical form that was created thanks to the radio (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 126). In this form, the utilitarian role of music is achieved (Bleking 1992, 59), and it often becomes a characteristic identification of a radio station, or a radio show. The music that makes up the jingle together with the spoken part is in line with the musical identity of the radio station itself, with its image. It is often the case that radio stations have a number of different jingles with the same basic idea expressed through a slogan<sup>3</sup>.

Another form in which music over the radio is “musical accompaniment”, i.e., thematic music that is used to bridge the gap in radio dramas and shows, as well as to evoke the

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<sup>3</sup> One such slogan was the Radio Index slogan: “Everyone listens to us; we don’t listen to anyone”. From today’s radio practice, we quote the slogan of Naxi Radio, which reads: “Relax and enjoy”. The jingle can be used for various purposes: for example, for the purpose of advertising products and services in a commercial radio program.

atmosphere, epoch or location. For this purpose, BBC produces original music adapted to the radio station. Namely, radio, due to its technical and technological characteristics, requires a different approach because musical arrangements made for concert halls can rarely be broadcast on radio (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 129). In radio dramas, speech is still the most important aspect, and music is heard occasionally. “Most music editors on the radio save music for those moments of the highest emotional charge, precisely in order to convey extremely strong feelings that overwhelm the characters at certain moments and to manipulate the listeners’ feelings towards those characters: e.g., sympathy or horror” (Ibid., 131).

The illustrative role of music is at work here. The radio drama appeared on the Radio Belgrade program in 1929, the same year that Radio Belgrade was founded. It was a radio dramatization of the work “Deacon Stephen and Two Angels”, “accompanied by a cello” (Popović 1987, 7). “A listener who listened to the dramatized folk song ‘Deacon Stefan and Two Angels’ on March 24, 1929, on the day of the ceremonial release of Radio Belgrade, accompanied by the cello and performed by Dara Milosević, Sava Todorović, Dobrica Milutinović, Jovan Antonijević and Radomir Plaović, he had no idea that he was attending the birth of a new drama genre in our environment” (Đurđević 1979, according to Miletić 1982, 9).

The first “golden wave” of radio drama in the 1950s, created by talented writers, was dominated by text / speech, and music rarely appeared. The use of music in this genre and in this period was most often at the beginning or end of a radio drama and sometimes during the work described, for example, as: “a musical accent that then turns into a musical background” (Popović 1987, 23) or “short musical transition” (Popović 1987, 25). With the development of technical conditions in Radio Belgrade, such as the purchase of new modern mixers for mixing sound and voice and the synchronization of all elements of radio drama, the construction of the so-called deaf rooms and the introduction of stereophony, the dominance of radiophonycity over written text in radio dramas begins. It enables a greater role of music at the expense of text. Radio dramas become “joint authorial contributions of directors and men setting the tone on the radio, while the playwright slowly disappears into the background” (Popović 1987, 17–18). Music editors and associates, and even composers, play a significant role in the realization and creation of radio drama. For example, in Ivan V. Lalić’s radio drama “Master Hanus”, which premiered in 1965, Ludmila Frajt is mentioned as a music composer (Depolo & Jeftović 1979, 142).

In the debate “World of Radio Drama” Gojko Miletić defined radio drama in this way: “Radio drama is a specific acoustic art based exclusively on auditory means of expression, whose ideological and aesthetic consequence is imaginatively and technically expressed in the space of the poetic and discursive” (Miletić 1982, 168). Radio drama, like some other genres on radio, such as live broadcast, is a radio spectacle or radio scene, which “directly simulates or metaphorically evokes associations of different origins and intensities and which indicates the very wide possibilities of the radio medium” (Đurđević 1979, 251). In this case, radio listeners are exposed to messages that provoke psychic processes of identification and projection, especially when the listeners themselves are very interested in the content (Đurđević 1979, 251–252). Today, radio drama has its place in the program of Radio Belgrade. “The Radio Belgrade 2 Drama Program broadcasts daily reruns and premieres in the series *Small Stage*, *Spider Web*, *Radio Game*, *Second Program Drama*, *Star Hours* and *Documentary Drama Program*” (Drama Program, July 5, 2021). Music in its instrumental role – as an illustration, is represented in radio drama, which is an

artistic genre, and also has its place in journalistic genres on radio such as reportage (Ugrinić and Veljanovski 2014, 148).

The role of music in the radio programs can also be determined by the degree of activity. Mirjana Nikolić thus classifies the role of music over the radio programs into passive, active and illustrative. Music plays a passive role in shows in which speech dominates, and music is a kind of a break. We talk about the active role of music when music is the main topic of the show in conversations about pieces of music and music authors, when top lists are broadcast or when reviews of music or concerts are discussed. The illustrative role of music is realized when music illustrates a certain topic of a show or radio drama (Nikolić 2006 in Arnautović 2012, 60). In the earlier period, as well as today, the public radio services used music in its active role: in this role, popular music was broadcast on the Radio Belgrade 2 and Program 202, where radio shows with top lists, music competitions and shows dedicated to a certain music genre or current music event were prepared and broadcast very often (Arnautović 2012, 60). Vlada Janković Jet, a Belgrade rock musician, started and hosted the *Hit 202* show on Program 202 from June 1979; this radio show is now hosted by Olga Kepčija (Dimitrijević 2019, June 28). This show, which has gained great popularity, has not changed its concept since it has been launched: “The general concept is still being used to this day. People call and vote every day, and at the end of the week the music hit of the week is chosen” (Dimitrijević 2019, June 28). Zoran Modli<sup>4</sup>, radio journalist, started the show *Ventilator 202* on Radio Belgrade in 1979, in which he played Yugoslav demo rock groups alongside popular ones. The show soon gained popularity and reputation (Arnautović 2012, 165). Classical music that was played on the Radio Program 3, as Arnautović said, played an active role and shows which dealt with various aspects of classical music were dedicated to it (Arnautović 2012, 60). The radio show called *Encounters* (Serbian: *Susretanja*) on Radio Belgrade 1, which is intended for fans of art music and which has lasted for forty years, gives this type of music an active role. Thanks to the team preparing this show, the music was performed outside the studio and broadcasted on radio waves. “One of such successful actions was to animate musicians to perform chamber music in *ad hoc* ensembles with unknown colleagues and thus potentially form new chamber ensembles” (Stojković 1983, in Arnautović 2012, 53).

One of the current examples of the active role of music on radio program is the top list that is broadcast in the show *Super Men* (Serbian: *Super meni*)<sup>5</sup> on Radio Aparatus (Serbian: Radio Aparat), an internet radio that was founded in 2016. The program of this alternative radio consists of “socially-engaged, musical, cultural-educational and entertainment shows”<sup>6</sup>. On the other side of the radio spectrum we also find an example of this role of music. Commercial, formatted Naxi radio broadcasts the program *My 50* (Serbian: *Mojih 50*) in which the guest - public figure offers his choice of 50 music tracks (in a series of 5 episodes) that are important to this person with short stories that accompany this musical journey.

## 2.2. Talking about Music and the Radio

Talking about music over the radio takes many forms - from simpler when music broadcasting is accompanied by the host or journalist speaking, followed by journalistic genres such as news and reports on certain musical events, and including interviews with

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<sup>4</sup> Zoran Modli (1948-2020) was a Serbian journalist, radio disc jockey, pilot and flight instructor. He hosted the show “Ventilator 202” until 1987, when he switched to his pilot’s career (*Wikipedia*).

<sup>5</sup> It is a play on words.

<sup>6</sup> Radio Aparat, [https://www.mixcloud.com/RADIO\\_APARAT/](https://www.mixcloud.com/RADIO_APARAT/), visited on July 2, 2021.

music authors and reviews of musical compositions, albums, concerts or festivals. According to Snežana Nikolajević, these journalistic genres whose content is dedicated to music are broadcast in various shows on the First and the Second program of Radio Belgrade (Nikolajević 2015, 135). Thus, for example, on Radio Belgrade 2 in the show *Portrait*, which broadcasts stories about artists, musicians also have their place. This is evidenced by the guest appearance of Stefan Milenković, a world-famous violinist and pedagogue in this show in July 2021 (show *Portrait*, July 6, 2021). Talking about music on the radio is also connected with the reception of music, because “every listener will interpret the discourse of music and the discourse of the media about music in different ways” (Šuvaković 2010 in Arnautović 2012, 24).

Art critique is a genre that can be heard on Radio Belgrade 2 in the show *In the first five – Top five cultural events of the week* (Serbian: *U prvih pet – kulturni događaj nedelje*), and also in shows: *Cultural Circles* (Serbian: *Kulturni krugovi*) and *Eye of the Balkans* (Serbian: *Oko Balkana*) (Mihajlov Prokopović 2017). Here is what a short description of *In the first five – Top five cultural events of the week* on the Radio Belgrade 2 website reads: “Journalists and critics at Radio Belgrade 2 single out the best, most important cultural events in all fields of art during the past seven days and comment on them. The guest of the show is an artist, theorist or art critic, who talks about his own work, about the art he creates, but also about how art and culture are presented in our media and how to design the cultural strategy and cultural policy of Serbia” (*In the first five – Top five cultural events of the week*). This is even more important because art critique is a genre that is not usually present on commercial radio stations, yet it is part of Radio Belgrade 2 program (Mihajlov Prokopović 2017; Veljanovski & Valić Nedeljković 2016). This is pointed out by the edition “Music in the eyes of critics 2017” which contains a collection of reviews published on the program of Radio Belgrade 2 (2018). “The decision to dedicate this edition, the first one published by Endowment of Ilija Kolarac, to the selected programs broadcast on Radio Belgrade 2 stemmed from the recognition that the given program earned with enviable continuity and regularity of reporting about the capital’s music events. Over the not so wide media horizon, where only certain unique, and in their orientation lonely institutions with a dose of courage, and even the risk of non-commercial activity, persist in cultivating critical thought about music. Radio Belgrade 2 has undoubtedly gained the status of the leading media in our country” (“Music in the eyes of critics 2017” 2018, 6–7).

### 3. MUSIC PROGRAMS ON THE RADIO

#### 3.1. Music Program on Public Radio Services

Since its beginnings in 1927 in Great Britain, when the BBC was declared a public service by a charter (Ugrinić and Veljanovski 2014, 48-49), the public radio service has been based on several important principles to which all radio stations established as public radio are dedicated today. “The definition of public service broadcasting usually includes the following characteristics:

- universal service available to everyone regardless of income or geographical location;
- striving for a balanced program and balanced schedules that include different program genres;
- balanced and impartial political program; and
- a certain degree of financial independence from both the state and commercial bodies” (Kuhn 1985, 4, in Negrin 2005, 358).

In Serbia, public radio services include four programs of Radio Belgrade (Radio Belgrade 1, Radio Belgrade 2, Third Program and Program 202) and Radio - Television of Vojvodina with four radio programs (Radio 1, Radio 2, Radio 3 and O radio). In accordance with the provision of a universal service that is available to everyone, the music concept of the public radio service is designed so as to satisfy the widest possible range of listeners' needs. On the other hand, this diversity of music genres should be harmonized with the quality standards characteristic of the public service program, which should represent a kind of barrier to music of dubious quality (Vulić 2017). In the past, insisting on a certain conventional approach to music has led to the loss of young audiences. It is a paradigmatic example of the BBC in the 1960s, which did not want to broadcast new popular music, so young listeners enthusiastically embraced pirate radio stations that broadcast from ships outside the jurisdiction of the British state. These radio stations were characterized by "having the freedom to broadcast popular music shows, soap operas and guest shows" (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 62). According to Shingler and Viringa, it was claimed that "until the early 1960s, the total number of listeners of pirate stations and Radio Luxembourg was over twenty-four million" (Šingler & Viringa 2000, 63).

Radio Belgrade developed in the period from 1945 to 1991 as part of the state radio and television. After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the Radio Television of Serbia (RTS) was established on the basis of the Law on Radio and Television of July 31, 1991. "By this law, Radio Television Novi Sad, Radio Television Pristina and Radio Television Belgrade were integrated into one large, centralized broadcasting system, which in the 1990s was the basic propaganda lever of the then new regime. The above mentioned law was for the most part the founding act of RTS, because only a dozen of its members spoke about broadcasting as a whole. RTS was then founded as a public company over which the state had all the competencies, from the election of the Management Board, CEO and editors-in-chief to directing the editorial concept" (Veljanovski 2016, 152).

The transformation of state radio and television into a public radio service has been going on since 2002, when the Law on Broadcasting was passed and enabled it, until 2006, and since 2014 this area has been regulated by the Law on Public Media Services (Mihajlov Prokopović 2014). Accordingly, the Regulatory Body for Electronic Media (REM) monitors the work of the public media services. In the Report on the Ways of Fulfilling the Legal and Program Obligations of the Radio Television of Serbia for 2020, it is possible to find the share of the music program on all four radio programs within RTS ranging from 30% on Radio Belgrade 1, over 34% on Program 202 to 38% on Radio Belgrade 2. By far the largest participation (88%) is achieved by the music program on the Third Program of Radio Belgrade, which differs from other programs because it is primarily a "program of art, culture and theoretical thinking" which is "equally accepted by critics, but also the wider cultural public and sophisticated audiences" (Regulatory Body for Electronic Media 2021, 42). The music program of each of these four public radios is part of the program concept. Radio Belgrade 1 is defined through its orientation towards the widest audience and "a collage program, in which informative and musical contents dominate. The informative program occupies the largest part of the reception of Radio Belgrade 1 and forms the backbone of its own production. In addition to entertainment, cultural, artistic and sports programs, as well as scientific and educational shows, it offers a range of content that is mandatory in the program scheme of the public service" (Regulatory Body for Electronic Media 2021, 40). Radio Belgrade 2 fulfills an informative and educational function, and Program 202 is an urban radio station with recognizable shows and an entertaining and informative program (Regulatory Body for Electronic Media 2021, 41, 43). Compared to commercial radio stations, the public

radio service retains the great advantage that the choice of music is entrusted to music editors who are guided by certain professional rules when it comes to the quality of music and the placement of new music tracks and compositions as well as when it is necessary to connect speech and music as a whole of an original radio show.

### **3.2. Music Program on Commercial Radio Stations**

The music program of commercial radio stations makes up a large part of the overall program, and the manner of its realization is determined by the nature of these stations which are directed towards a certain category of listeners as a target group which they “deliver” to their advertisers and which mostly belong to formatted radio. Formatted radio is a narrowly specialized radio intended for “narrow target groups” (Ugrinić and Veljanovski 2014, 60). The music program is adapted to a certain format, and music is often the “basic carrier of identity” of a formatted radio station (Ugrinić and Veljanovski 2014, 63). The music program is realized through playlists to which many give negative features: “By pre-calculated positions of certain music categories, precisely calculated number of tracks and uniform music fundus, and arranging songs at random or random/shuffle principle without any rounded thoughts, ideas, meaning, message, formatted radio has become a robotic mass media that, instead of listening and responding to the needs and aspirations of the audience, it imposes on the listeners the presumably desired contents” (Karan 2019, 150).

### **3.3. Music Program on Alternative Radio Stations**

In the media space of Serbia, alternative radio stations represent a few endeavors that often achieve their importance by supporting those groups of listeners who belong to minority and marginalized social groups or groups that share narrow interests it is the case with the already mentioned internet radio Radio Apparatus. “Radio Apparatus is conceived as a community radio, so, as the definition itself says, we offer a third alternative to public service and commercial radio stations. The third for us is an opportunity for minority and marginalized social groups to get their voice, to promote the alternative and underground art scene, then to hear current and diverse music and to nurture in listeners a personal attitude towards that music (which we believe should be much more popular than it is), that, by opening a debate space and supporting various types of activism, we care about the local community, to encourage critical thinking among both authors and listeners, and especially to constantly try to reconcile and reduce the gap between different ages and cultural groups that are ubiquitous in our society” (Svetlana Đolović<sup>7</sup> in Martinoli 2018, 136). This radio, like some other alternative radio stations, broadcasts music that listeners cannot hear in mainstream music programs.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

The relationship between radio and music is multilayered. It has been noticed in the paper that the dominant role of music lies in the realization of the program conception of radio and the identity of radio. There is a clear difference between public radio services, commercial radio stations and alternative radios when it comes to music programs. The public radio service remains committed to quality music and broadcasts different music

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<sup>7</sup> Svetlana Đolović is Editor-in-chief and Music Editor-in-chief at radioaparat.com.



genres to satisfy the different tastes of the mass audience, commercial radio resorts to formats, i.e. a program for a narrower target group that offers only one type of music that the target group wants to listen to and alternative radio uses music as a means to present its alternative identity. It should be added that in the media system of Serbia since 2008, there are also religious media whose music program is harmonized with the concept of religious radio<sup>8</sup>. This most widespread role of music is at the same time the most important in the contemporary radio space.

But it is not the only one. Other roles that music has, such as, for example, music as the theme of the show, music in jingles and spikes, and music that is part of radio drama and reportage, are important for the public radio service, while some of these music roles appear on commercial stations – in almost all – music in jingles, and in most commercial radio programs, music appears as the theme of the show. Talking about music on commercial radio stations is often realized through chatting, while music critique is almost non-existent on these stations (Mihajlov Prokopović 2017). The conclusion is that all these roles of music can be found on the program of the public radio service, and in a reduced number and volume on commercial, alternative and religious radio stations.

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<sup>8</sup> The importance of music in the program of religious radio is a topic that requires special research.

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## MUZIKA I RADIO

Ovaj rad razmatra ulogu muzike na radiju polazeći od hipoteze da je dominantna uloga koju muzika ostvaruje danas na radiju u Srbiji vezana za ostvarivanje programske koncepcije radija. Izbor muzike tokom celodnevnog programa jednog radija jasno govori o muzičkom identitetu radija koji se razlikuje od radio stanice do radio stanice, a najveću razliku možemo uočiti kada analiziramo muzičke programe tri različita tipa radija. To su javni radijski servis poput Radio Beograda koji ima četiri programa, komercijalne radio stanice kojih ima najviše i alternativne radio stanice poput Radio Aparata. Treba dodati da u medijskom sistemu Srbije od 2008. godine postoje još i verski mediji čiji muzički program je usklađen sa koncepcijom verskog radija. Misija javnog servisa odnosi se i na izbor i kvalitet muzičkog programa radija, slično kao što normativno propisuje visoke standarde ostalih programa – informativnog, kulturnog, naučnog, obrazovnog, dečjeg i zabavnog. U radu se utvrđuje da pored ove važne uloge koju muzika ima na radiju, u praksi postoje i druge uloge koje imaju različiti značaj. To su: uloga muzike u popunjavanju praznina u programu kao predah, uloga muzike u ilustriranju određene teme u emisiji i muzika je tema emisije ili rubrike. Na radiju pored emitovanja muzike postoji i govor o muzici. Zaključak je da se sve ove uloge muzike mogu naći na programu javnog radijskog servisa, a u redukovanom broju i obimu i na komercijalnim, alternativnim i verskim radio stanicama.

Ključne reči: *muzički program, radio, javni medijski servis, Radio Beograd, komercijalni radio, alternativni radio*

**HARMONIC LANGUAGE AND ITS FUNCTION  
OF MUSICAL HUMOUR IN THE *SEXTET K. 522*  
(*A MUSICAL JOKE*) OF W. A. MOZART**

*UDC 781.41:785.76 Mozart W.A.*

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**Abstract.** *The paper offers a review of the most significant papers dealing with the musical sentence, the underlying layers (fragmental structures) as well as with the supra-sentential level, i.e. the permeation of the characteristics of the musical sentence and the period. Relying on the consulted literature, the paper considers the attitudes of the musical theoreticians in the recent publications. Relying on comparative analysis with an emphasis on different approaches, the paper aims to highlight some opinions which can serve as a reliable foundation for the pedagogical practice in teaching courses on musical forms. Different approaches and methodological steps in the analysis of musical syntax unequivocally indicate the complexity of the phenomenon of the musical sentence. This means that in the process of studying the musical form, it is important to offer different theoretical standpoints, as well as numerous examples from the literature. Such an approach definitely opens wider perspectives, not only for understanding the definitions of the musical sentence, but also for its appearance in a variety of styles and genres.*

**Key words:** *Mozart, harmonic language, chord, tonality, modulation, humour*

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“Mozart is more a composer of the twentieth century than of the nineteenth century,  
And more of the nineteenth century than of the eighteenth century“  
(Чичерин 1987, 71)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the history of music, one of the most popular Austrian and world composers, W. A. Mozart (1756–1791) was recognizable by his extensive opus and authentic musical quality, although it was manifest within a short lifespan and creative age. The composer to whom the great Tchaikovsky “owed” the life dedicated to music, wrote his *Sextet K. 522*, i.e., *Divertimento for two horns and string quartet* in his mature creative period (1787), when he had the premiere of his famous opera *Don Giovanni*.

The subject of our paper is the final cadence of the third slow movement of *Sextet K. 522*, especially its final, polytonal cadence, which is the most prominent not only among all Mozart’s but also among the classical pieces, due to its harmonical and tonal boldness, and strong contrast to the harmonic texture of the whole work. To the primary aim of our work – explanation of polytonal context of the stated cadence and the means by which Mozart achieved it, thus stylistically announcing the twentieth century even as a joke – we added another aim, the extension of theoretical and analytical approach in musical pedagogy by using specific similar examples. They enormously differ from standard and stereotypical solutions in individual styles as well as the styles of the epoch. We found the paragon for dealing with this and similar examples in the textbook *Harmony with Harmonic Analysis* written by D. Despić, Serbian member of Academy of Science and Art, composer, music pedagogue and writer (Despić 2002). Here, the author explains Mozart’s obvious, early example of polytonality, done more than a century before the occurrence of polytonal musical thinking by “Mozart’s playful spirit ... [that came up with] .... slightly ridiculous illustration of untuned instruments and performing ignorance of rural musicians.... [so that in final cadence] five different adjacent tonics: Eb,F,G,A,Bb simultaneously sound in five different scores.”

In his previously written book, Despić concludes: the composer ingeniously devised to conjure up out-of-tune playing of a village orchestra by simultaneous leading the parts of the score in various keys, as their vertical contrasting, superposition etc. Despić’s brilliant analytical insight into ‘justified’ occurrence of polytonality in Mozart (Despić 2002, 395–396) and methodological approach to traditional harmonic analysis, combined with hermeneutic insight, intrigued and inspired us to explore not only the final cadence, but also specific harmonic language of the whole piece with the function of musical humour. For that reason, we applied a historical method using undeniable facts from Mozart’s extensive correspondence with his father with critical views of abundant studies of musicologists, culturologists and a psychiatrist related to the issue of musical humour and the appearance and meaning of *A Musical Joke*. Besides harmonic trivialities used by Mozart in order to illustrate an imaginary amateur-composer, our analytical attention was drawn by naïve, clumsy thematic development in the formation of form, as an additional component of musical humour in the form of classical anti-aesthetic. The described mockery at ruling, well-established and conventional types of cadences in *A Musical Joke*, as one of stylistic paradigms of classical musical heritage, made us explore other elements of musical language in the role of humorous, paradoxically ironic means of musical expression. Mozart’s conscious making mistakes in his humorous presentation

was primarily directed towards an imaginary composer and the virtual performers. Mozart could not take his immediate predecessor Haydn as his ideal, to whom he dedicated string quartets, but Maria Goeth states that “intentional amateurism consistently appeared as a strategic means of creating musical humour as early as from the Renaissance” (Goeth 2015, 37). Let us here recall “false” recapitulation of Beethoven’s *Eroica*, two bars before real beginning, which, besides symbolising humour as a performer’s mistake, refers to “neglection of conventions aimed at forming a new style” (Ibid., 35).

## 2. HISTORICAL SOURCES. UNJUSTIFIABLE CRITICISM

Taking into consideration the theses of malicious critics, alluding to the Oedipus complex of the composer related to the time when *A Musical Joke* was created, which was only seventeen days after the death of his father Leopold, let us review relevant historical data. A short interval between his father’s death and the appearance of the humorous piece generated a great number of reviews which became meaningless by the insight into Mozart’s correspondence with his father, as an undeniable factual source. Although some “months, even years of Mozart’s short life are for us wrapped in darkness”, this was not the case with *Sextet K. 522*, whose roots can be found as early as in 1777, i.e. ten years earlier, when Mozart informed his father on musical circumstances in Augsburg and his acquaintance with the composer Friedrich Hartmann Graf. The description of Graf’s *Concerto for two flutes* explained everything: “Concerto was not good even for the ear. It was not natural. It often marched with tones... all these without a bit of mastery” (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 437). To make the disaster bigger, Graf „was standing like somebody who believed that something special was happening during this journey through tones, thus finding that he could be even more special, and, regardless to his hearing began striking upon the clavichord; in a word, everyone was amazed” concluded Mozart (Mozart 2003, 69–70). On the other hand, in a letter to his son next year (1788), Leopold described „the scene from life in Salzburg, not sparing on sarcastic remarks which included contours of future ‘Musical Joke’. Namely, a group of amateurs led by Count Chernin intended to congratulate the birthday to the Countess Lodron. They composed music themselves, and they also performed it. Both produced a series of critical ridicules in Leopold” (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 437).

In a study of the American psychiatrist A. Esman (Esman 1951) the relationship between the father and the son was treated with an emphasis on Leopold’s key role in the formation of the creative genius of his son. As a prominent musician from Salzburg, Leopold was a “domineering personality in Mozart home”. As an “author of internationally known treatise on playing the violin” “methodically meticulous” and ambitious Leopold was a real ideal and authority. On Wolfgang’s journey to the stars, a strict and religious father with “a sharp eye for commercial advantage” played a significant role. Esman reminds that Mozart “never went to school and never had any other teacher but Leopold, either in musical or general studies, which provided him with more than customary opportunities to adopt his father’s ideas and principles, thus identifying with him.” His father’s influence, not only in his religiosity, but also in everything else was so great, that as Esman says “Mozart’s words are often quoted: ‘After God, Dad!’”. However, over time, after his mother’s death, “during Mozart’s maturation, especially while he was travelling in Europe without his father, the signs of revolt were more and more apparent.” Esman finds them in Mozart’s independence in “personal business management... unrealistic and impractical

financial schemata which Leopold accepted horrified and unsatisfied... unsatisfactory marriage... deviation from church dogmas and finally entry into the Masonic order.”

In light of the consideration of their relationship, Esman favours the thesis of the separation of father and son, “weakening of Mozart’s feelings for his father”, thus expressing the climax of his partiality by stating: “He accepted Leopold’s death in 1787 with prominent calmness, advising his father in a letter immediately before the event to accept his death as a friend, without fear, but with great expectations” (Esman 1951, 603–607). However, Esman is not wrong when he claims that Mozart’s “emotional maturity”, or to be more precise immaturity “took him to economic disaster” (Ibid., 608). Further analysing Mozart’s unsuccessful “emotional maturation through the relationship with women” this author goes into banality by combining Mozart’s hostility and “indignation at his father’s superiority... his aspiration to outpace and conquer him.”

We find another paradox in Esman’s conclusion that was the source of Mozart’s insatiable urge for composing. Here, we simply can only wonder: did Leopold not subordinate and invest his whole life in realisation of his idea to make Wolfgang outpace him? In Freudian manner of psychological analysis, the same author even dares to ascribe Mozart’s valuable creative work as “return to blessedness on his mother’s bosom... unconscious negation of hostile impulses towards his father...even mitigating the risk of castrations”. We would not like to sound sarcastic, but it seems here that Esman knows much more about Mozart’s emotion and reasons of his creative zeal than Mozart himself did! Finally, stating the fact that Mozart „created most brilliant, most beautiful and most joyful music in the period of his life that was at least very hard”, the author unconsciously provides the answer that we need “humour to feel happy” (Ibid., 600–610). Besides, it is just the correspondence between the son and the father (Миленкович & Здравич Михайлович 2021, 106) that genuinely illustrates the roots of the idea of *A Musical Joke*, much earlier, as a parody of amateurish composers and performers whom they daily met. Until the “date of Leopold’s death on 28 May 1787, a larger part of the piece had already been composed” (Keefe 2017, 452). More than that, only two years before, Leopold had the satisfaction of hearing Haydn proclaim his son ‘the greatest composer known to me’ (White 1991, 47). Here, we simply cannot but quote J. Haydn, the oldest representative of Vienna School: “I tell you as before God and as an honest man: your son is the greatest composer of all I know personally and by name; he has excellent aesthetic sense, and above that he has the most extensive knowledge of the science of composing” (Kremnev 1968, 79). Another referential connoisseur of Mozart’s life and creation, the English musicologist J. G. Rush states that *A Musical Joke* “had been started several months earlier” and denies “interpreting this piece as mockery of Leopold, or the powerful statue music in *Don Giovanni* as a sign of guilt towards a parent he had betrayed. The statue is not Don Juan’s father, and the musical joke celebrates a sense of humour that Mozart shared with Leopold, who was no less inclined to castigate musical incompetence in performers and composers alike. Both come under Mozart’s lash. K. 522 which is a composition lesson in itself, a catalogue of what not to do, with its lame formal and contrapuntal procedures, including crude modulations...and the enthusiastic ending in which all the players cadence in different keys” (Rushton 2006, 156). Finally in the analysis of Mozart’s early aesthetic evolution, learning musical heritage and absorption of current stylistic models into his own musical thinking and speech, an Austrian culturologist M. Wagner provides us with the answer to the issue of the key role and importance of the father. Wagner explains this phenomenon within the “range from a concentrated process of musical socialization, which comprised an exclusive preoccupation

with music, to the specific fact of his travelling activity at that time (approx. 10 years of Mozart's life) to his good fortune in receiving, as a natural accompaniment in life, a musical education which was focused exclusively on high standards and enabled Mozart to become acquainted with almost the whole of the central European intelligentsia, to a consciously economic way of working which helped him to translate his experience of life into a work of art" (Wagner 1998, 115–117). Here, we would shortly conclude that Leopold completely succeeded in the realisation of his aim to create a prodigy child and later unsurpassed musical genius within the parameters of light and beautiful musical thought of the classical era, primarily thanks to his unselfish, persistent and perhaps phanatic musical education.

### 3. THEORIES ABOUT HUMOUR RELATED TO MOZART'S MUSICAL HUMOUR

First time we experience the piece, we find that Mozart's *Sextet K. 522* includes obvious parameters of musical humour and according with the attitude of Junk-Kaizer and Dietrich „it seems to be predestined to work as a reference object for 'humorous musical' genre, which is expressed by wrong tones and primitive amateurish sentences (Ute Jung-Kaiser & Stephan Diedrich 2015). It was just in Mozart's "deformation" of motif and tonal development that we recognised a strong element of musical humour. However, before the observation and analytical discourse about humorous means, let us present a short insight into linguistic theories of humour, and then musical humour as a theoretical framework aimed at establishing a referential musical tool. Musical humour undoubtedly arises from linguistics, which is described by many authors (Vuksanović 2015; Palmer 2015; Jung-Kaiser & Diedrich 2015). The basic problem we are faced with here can be found in the musical research of humour, where it cannot semantically, and naturally reach precise verbal expression of humour in spoken utterances. We consider that incongruity theory is a baseline, and it is also supported by numerous philosophers, theoreticians, pedagogues and musicologists. The American musicologist G. Willock detects incongruity in the "creation of possibilities for subversion of traditional categories and hierarchies, when used in strange combinations and contexts" (Palmer 2015, 5). The American philosopher J. L. Salamone states that "there has been no satisfactory theory of humour so far". His thesis is that "instead, scholars have advanced a variety of lenses through which we can appreciate the many facets of this complex human emotion". Salamone further writes that "combination of traditional theories of humour in combined approaches helps with the development of complex understanding of humour [therefore] the incongruity per se is scarcely sufficient to make something humorous" (Salamone 2017, 46). Comparing the theories of humour of the philosopher Michael Clark that "it is not mere incongruity that produces humour, but subjective recognition, acceptance and enjoying incongruity", which again demands "a basic level of knowledge by the recipient" and that of the philosopher Mike Martin, based on the criticism of the former, Salamone states that "both remain within the incongruity theory" (Ibid., 47). The incongruity theory is also supported by the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer, who locates laughter in the centre of humour "identifying it as a 'very exceptional phenomenon', a response to incongruity" (Ibid., 48). Salamone finally concludes that understanding the humour in music "must necessarily combine the aspects of the three theories: the relief theory, the superiority theory and the incongruity theory", where "musical understanding relies to a great extent to normative expectations, thus preparing the listener to recognise unexpected

deviations” (Ibid, 49). When we include contemporary psychological approaches in this network of various theories, the insight into musical humour and its source and effects becomes clearer. According to the above mentioned theories we can conclude that humorous potential is higher if the recipient’s musical knowledge is greater, therefore Salamone presents the thesis that “the musician alone is the agent of the humour” (Ibid., 56).

When it comes to musical humour, we would add a multitude of factors to the basic criterion of incongruity, where an abrupt contrast to the predominating conventional and stylistic expression is primary. In this respect, the previously mentioned absence of the expected, stereotypical final cadence and suspension of affirmation of the tonal centre in the form of its transformation into polytonality, creates a humorous effect to a (musically educated) recipient, thus offering by an inappropriate sense of ending the final reconciliation with the previous meaningless development. German musicologist and sociologist V. Kalisch presents the thesis that in his *Musical Joke*, “Mozart confronted the phenomenon of kitsch and musically expressed it... In breaking the rules, a moment of irony echoes, the composer hides the criticism behind irony, thus revealing that he is worried for the kitsch of his time and the kitsch in general” (Kalisch 1992, 55–57). The author detects Mozart’s realisation of a joke through the “negation of stereotypical expectations, which is manifested at various musical levels, not only in non-fulfilment of certain (typical) norm, but also in partial fulfilment, remarkable fulfilment and exaggerated fulfilment” (Kalisch 1992, 57). In that context, L. Lister considers *A Musical Joke* “from two perspectives”: on the one hand he understands the sextet as a “parody to adequacy of composing”, and on the other as a “humorous game with musical grammar” (Appel 1997, 143).

We shall first come to know a series of humorous means in Mozart’s *Musical Joke* from the point of view of the previously mentioned Russian authors Lucker and Susidko. Although this Divertimento is entitled *Sextet of Village Musicians*, “it is hardly possible”, according to their claim, “that the ensemble is really rural, (but) the parody was addressed to independent urban orchestras who perform serenades outdoors.” Sharing the same opinion with the German musicologist H. Abert that the real object of “parody are not the musicians who perform this sextet, but the implied author”, an ignorant composer, these authors take the *Joke* as an example of how “music should not be written”, as “musical anti-debate on the art of composing, where the rules can be judged based on the wrong” (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 437–438).

From the very beginning of the Divertimento, a listener notices Mozart’s abandoning of the ideals of Italian melody in favour of thematic ideas without more pronounced individuality. Even if the theme is pretentiously exposed, the first impression conveys constraint and thoughtlessness of its development. The piece is apparently structured in a typically classical manner using too simple composing technique, so we would say that this is a piece of Mozart from his earliest youth, which, in semantic sense points to the composer’s looking down on incompetent musicians, who stick to predetermined rules, unfortunately, insufficiently mastered. Therefore, in the musical score a whole series of musical-grammatical imprecisions and imperfections emerge: typical schematic development based on simple melodic-rhythmical, multiplied and persistent repetitions with naive variations and sequencing, without adequate classical, logical development of musical thinking, until bad mistakes. To express that “wrong” sound and approach to musical piece and aesthetics, Mozart had to employ non-conventional means. In fact, it was a “transition from perception and fancy to manipulation of outer signs”, described by D. Wellbery while dealing with issues of semiotics and aesthetics (Rumph 2012, 25). In the description of



Mozart's "masterful psychological analysis" on the example of "operatic masterpiece" *The Abduction from the Seraglio*, the Croatian musicologist Andreis refers to Mozart's words that "a man overwhelmed with fierce anger rejects all rules, all borders beyond measure; he cannot recognize himself anymore; hence music cannot recognise itself either" (Andreis 1976, 99). Finally, Mozart's experience and developed sense of drama and reality of the scene, fully-developed psychological analysis and characterization of the characters on stage, and characteristics of opera buffa must have had a significant influence on the composer's concept of jokingly-parodic sextet. In that context, an interesting intertextual interpretation is offered by the musicologist P. Kovačević, who in the "scenario of *Musical Joke* recognises elements of *dramma giocoso* or *commedia dell' arte*... which is presented by instruments in the ensemble" (Kovačević 2018, 124). In Mozart's violins, Kovačević recognises "a couple – like duets of consent in opera .... with establishment of the relationship between a dominant lover (Don Giovanni) and all those ladies that constantly gravitate towards him (Donna Anna, Donna Elvira and Zerlina)" (Ibid., 125).

In accordance with the contents of the piece, psychological portraying is not related to the characters on the scene here, but to an imaginary amateur-composer. The Bergamo-Koren writes that "humour in Mozart is the product and result of necessity and the aid in realisation of his basic artistic concept and creative credo, the tendency to make a musical piece most genuine, although poetic reflection of real life" (Bergamo-Koren 1985, 93). The question arises whether Mozart might have exaggerated in his humorous criticism of ignorant musicians, within a multitude of expressive means from parallel fifths, "otherworldly" whole-tone texture, until the polytonal musical texture, although he boldly, stepped into the future through joke.

We are faced with this outstanding, ingenious, parodic stylization of bad composers thanks to Mozart's enormous creative talent, his lucidity and artistic freedom of unrestrained spirit. And as the sextet develops, the line of Mozart's humour grows simultaneously, we would say, beyond real life, extremely depicting the conditions in art, criticising, warning, admonishing and finally acting educationally and instructively. On the back cover of their book, Lucker and Susidko justifiably conclude that "for Mozart, composing music was a joy, a game, a spiritual rest. He did not draw the contrast between light and darkness, heavenly ascension of spirit and hell abysses, out of his personal experience and life events. His inspiration was primarily drawn by artistic and aesthetic impulses" (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008).

#### 4. HARMONIC LANGUAGE THAT FUNCTIONS AS MUSICAL HUMOUR

To this day, the final cadence of the *Sextet K. 522* captures us with its harmonic-tonal boldness and strong contrast with harmonic texture of the whole piece and the overall musical heritage. The expected, authentic cadence, as a general stylistic characteristic of classical style and musical thinking was subject to Mozart's individualism, the set goal and musical dramaturgy, by replacing it with "inappropriate" polytonal cadence in his illustration of out-of-tune performance of ignorant musicians, both rural and urban. This type of cadence formula, as a stylistic exception, is an authentic harmonic-tonal and composing phenomenon in the individual style of the composer, and the style of the epoch, with direct announcement of a polytonal texture characteristic to the twentieth century music. Mozart's polytonal "speech" in only three final bars of the piece appears as a climax of humorous techniques, stylistic inconsistency, but primarily stylistic

negation (!), as well as negation of complete musical heritage. Russian musicologist Mihailov states that “final cadence contains expressive and formative-communicative function, with clearly expressed predominance of the last one. Besides, it resembles Casella’s selection of final perfect cadence as ‘formal invariability’ [and illustration] of its diverse changes through the evolution of European harmony within nearly a thousand years” (Михайлов 1990, 242). However, in the core of classical style, in Mozart’s creation, we find incongruent, strongly contrasting cadence as an undoubtedly stylistic-aesthetic phenomenon.

Namely, final thematic recapitulation in the part of horns, on the material of the first theme of rondo, in the recognisable structure 1+1+2 (from bar 429) leads to general fragmentation of one-bar series based on broken tonic triad. Although the confirmation of tonic seems to be redundant and excessive, an acceptable and potential ending of the piece occurs in bar 454. However, a new thematic impulse of double two-bar material, as a supplementary cadence is introduced into horns, for which other performers seem not to be prepared. For that reason, horns are probably the only instrument in the ensemble which, in three final chords of the whole piece, confirm basic F major key. Other performers, potentially “surprised” with the post-cadence which horns begin without them, perform cadences in various keys: Violin 1 in G major, Violin 2 in A major, Viola in E $\flat$  major and Cello in B $\flat$  major. By vertical reduction we determine that the first chord appears as a product of conflict of tonics of adjacent keys, consisting of eight tones: B $\flat$ -C-C $\sharp$ -D-E $\flat$ -E-G-A (B $\flat$ : T (tone B $\flat$ ) + A: T (tones A-C $\sharp$ -E) + G: T (tones G-D) + F: T (tones C and A) + E $\flat$ : T (tones E $\flat$ -G=B $\flat$ )). The next chord brings stronger dissonance because the tone C from the previous chord disappears, but the tones F and B are added as key tones in F major and a third in G major (absent in the previous chord). Finally, the third and final chord of the piece is much less dissonant, therefore it can conditionally represent the illusion of more consonant chord as a final resolution of a series of contradictions. Normally, that incongruity is obvious and pronounced, acting as a gross mistake, standing as a symbol of amateurism and exceptional means of humour.

Although a listener might expect a “false” ending, this is in fact the final cadence which does not interrupt the previous, but seems to negate it with its tonally inhibiting meaning. Mozart aimed at the psychological aspect of perception of polytonal relationships and strong contrast in relation to ruling reasoning, thus subjecting to parody the programmatic contents and aims – the wish of bad musicians for effective finalisation, and paradoxically, their confidence in doing their best. The earliest classical example of polytonal bizarreness is Mozart’s symbolical element of humour in the fight for classical art. Vertical sum of the final three chords of the Divertimento, created as a result of “erroneous” handling the parts of individual instruments, has both expressive and colouring significance, with non-functional, polytonal sense of the final sound. Entering the nature of their functional and tonal character would make little sense due to their polytonal nature, but we tried to make a step further in that sense. Polytonal structure with unresolved dissonances, without clearly expressed final key, or with clearly expressed five keys, ruins the unity of the whole. That type of anomaly is the break with tradition and whole classical style and heritage, thus spreading the horizons of musical expression until the distant future of the twentieth century.

A particular curiosity is that Mozart, like in polytonal notations of the twentieth century, orthographically noted the stated keys in synchronic sound, thus realising, according

to the idea of performers, a gradational ending, but in fact – harmonic opposition. By the polytonal cadence, the end is emphasized as a specific relief after 458 bars of absurd polytonal sound at the time, which per se generates perception of the strange and the sense of comic. The strength of contrast and sound differences from the previous musical progression and the effect of unexpectedness do not allow moderate effect of the final balance, which should be brought by the cadence. The previous sound reduction is replaced with fullness and density of tonal material for targeted effective completion. The activity of final chord is related to its final character, whereby instead of stability and serenity, a sharp dissonance appears.

### Example I

The musical score for Example I consists of four staves. The top staff is for Violin I, the second for Violin II, the third for Cello/Double Bass, and the fourth for Bassoon. The key signature is C major. The score shows a complex harmonic progression with multiple tonal centers indicated by letters and symbols: F: T, G: T, A: T, Es: T, B: T, and S. The final chord is marked with a question mark, indicating a sharp dissonance.

The mere location of a slow movement (*Adagio cantabile*) in the position of the third movement of the sonata cycle points to a kind of oddity. Established classical norms do not only propose a slow movement in the position of a second movement, but also minor key as a contrast to major from the previous sonata *Allegro*. Such type of unfulfillment of classical formal standard points to the deviation from the usual order, which is justified by creative evolution and extension of individual limitations, or style of the epoch, or, as in this case, symbolises a joke and Mozart's mockery of ignorant composers. The impression of a joke and mild irony is intensified with „wrong” development of the melodic component. Namely, the cantabile melody in violin 1 moves quite vividly. The composer's ambition is aimed at captivating the listeners with melodic eloquence and refinement of expression. The two-bar motif contains kinetic potential of punctuated iambic motif and dissonant energy of sharp subdominant degree (tone F $\sharp$ ) which additionally (after escape on the tone A) resolves in the tonic fifth on latent, and then real harmonic base. Successive appearance of the second tone F $\sharp$  brings the harmony of secondary dominant, but the third occurrence of the tone F $\sharp$  makes strong discrepancy, deviation from classical standards due to the “opposite” descending movement of the sharp subdominant degree, although on the base of the chord DD<sup>7</sup>. The described Mozart's melodic manipulation does not stay on the melodic element only, but leads to a specific tonal game and ambiguity. Namely, triple occurrence of the leading tone F $\sharp$  imposes the phenomenon of tonal ambiguity between C major and G major. The initial harmonic progression in C major: T – DD<sup>7</sup> – D can theoretically be rethought, and by using multi-functional properties of chords translated to G major: S – D<sup>7</sup> – T, accordingly expressed through diatonic scale chords of main degrees. Nevertheless, C major prevails not only because of completely authentic confirmation that follows, but also because the third chord – C major dominant in a third position - cannot sound as confirmed tonic and adopt the status; although by “free” treatment of tone F $\sharp$  a “clumsy”

composer seems to alter the musical progression into G major, thus provoking incongruent ambiguity and combining akin tonal spheres.

### Example 2

*Adagio cantabile.*

C: T — DD<sup>7</sup> — D — II — ² D<sup>5</sup> — ⁷ — T  
(G: s ————— D<sup>7</sup> ————— T —————)

The middle part of the slow movement begins with the previously described two-bar motif from the beginning of the movement, now in G major. Self-confident melody with triple occurrence of alteration of the sharp subdominant degree and harmonic accompaniment T – DD<sup>7</sup> -D, brings melodic-harmonic and tonal association to dominant D major. Successive descending sequence by a second alters musical progression into F major with inclinations towards C major. Opposite to the interpretation scheme of musical progression by the American musicologist I. Godt, tonal predominance is nevertheless on G major (first two-bars) and F major (the second two bars). However, Godt is right when he says that “our hero (rem. by M. M.: Mozart’s imaginary composer) having failed to effect harmonic development where it was called for in the allegro, blunders into it here where it disrupts the repose that might have been more appropriate in a movement that sets out to be decoratively lyrical” (Godt 1986, 35–36). Unpretentious tonal plan in the first movement is replaced by emphasized tonal dynamics: G major -F major - (A minor) – E minor – A minor - D major- C major - E<sub>b</sub> major -G major. Instant accent on vertical component of musical texture in the first phase brings organised tonal movement in descending by seconds: G major – F major – (A minor) – E minor, with prominent chromatic modulation. “Our hero” begins the formation of the key order in the second phase of development by following the principle of ascending fourths: E minor – A minor – D major – C major, but even now, like in the first phase, he does not keep to the same scale type, but uses the opposite type for the third key. In accordance with his intention to create gradation, modulations into A minor and D major bring sharper tonal reversals achieved by chromatic, elliptic turns. In the third phase the keys are organised more freely, by future Romantic principle of a third, now of major scale types C - E<sub>b</sub> - G. In addition to harmonic expressiveness in the form of chromatic breaks, the avoidance of resolution in terms of elliptic turns for “presentation of knowledge” in modulations, we also notice the contrast of scale types, especially when instead of major, a minor tonic appears, even as a modulatory means (bar 35 and bar 37). In the final tonal turn from E<sub>b</sub> major to G major we “find the proof” that the imaginary composer mastered the technique of enharmonic modulation by using a seventh chord consisting of major triad and minor seventh. The above mentioned chord gives the impression of DS<sup>7</sup>, however in resolution, the real sense of this chord is revealed in enharmonic movement towards double diminished four tone chord on the sharp subdominant in G major, although both in sound and stylistically, a darker G minor would rather be expected.

In the presented imaginary composer's confrontation with the problem of development of melodic thought and architectonics of the tonal plan, we find an obvious discrepancy between his ambition and real capacity. Musical progression does not emit recognisable softness of Mozart's melodic thinking that would delicately and elegantly move through keys. Tonal plan of the extreme modulatory frequency is reduced to less distant keys with modulation frame of 5. Mozart tells us about the elements of competence of the imaginary composer by using tough and raw modulations, manipulation with scale types which are not only poorly combined, but are also presented by simpler harmonic means. The naivety of musical development is seen in musical progression which seems to have no aim, no gradational movement towards culmination, but sounds as if the composer did not know what to do while modulating into one key, thus "finding salvation" in a new key. In that marching of tones, Lucker and Susidko find the base for „unsuccessful harmonic oscillations which permeate the slow movement of Mozart's 'Joke'. Thirteen bars of development (bars 24-36) 'march' over keys 'without a bit of mastery': tonal deviations are clumsy and conceived, while ellipses are exactly what should provide bad knowledge of composing" (Луцкер & Сусидко 2008, 438).

Example 3

The image displays three systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment, each with a corresponding line of harmonic analysis below it. The notation includes treble and bass staves with various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The harmonic analysis uses letters (G, F, D, T, S, K, C, Es) and Roman numerals (DD<sup>7</sup>, D, D<sub>III</sub><sup>6</sup>, VII<sup>7</sup>, D<sup>6</sup>, S, D<sup>7</sup>, D, D<sup>6</sup>, T, S, K<sup>6</sup>, D, C, D<sup>6</sup>, T, DD<sup>4</sup>) to denote chords and scales. Some chords are enclosed in boxes, and there are arrows indicating relationships between them. The analysis for the first system is: G: T DD<sup>7</sup> D F: T DD<sup>7</sup> D D<sub>III</sub><sup>6</sup> VII<sup>7</sup> D<sup>6</sup>. The analysis for the second system is: t S D<sup>7</sup> a: D<sup>6</sup> t s D D<sub>III</sub><sup>6</sup> D: D<sup>6</sup> T S K<sup>6</sup> D C: D<sup>6</sup> T DD<sup>4</sup>. The analysis for the third system is: D (Es: T) Es: III D 7 T S.

T ————— II<sup>7</sup> ————— D<sup>7</sup> ————— T ————— D<sup>7</sup>-VI ————— DS<sup>7</sup> ————— G: VII<sup>3</sup> ————— D ————— 7 ————— T ————— DS ————— S ————— D —————

After a trivial exposition in the first movement, even more trivial part - development follows. Mozart realises its musical parody using naive thematic development, naive and rough modulations in “correct”, relational keys (dominant, subdominant and parallel dominant), but without adequate order and preparation of modulation moment. Considering that the development begins with the material of the first theme, which even in the exposition arouses considerable suspicion related to musical quality and aesthetic value, we conclude that it is without any individuality and expressiveness, and is, according to Godt’s claim even “a musical content close to absolute zero” (Godt 1986, 28).

Since “our hero” knows that the development includes work with motifs from the exposition in various keys, he does it. The initial two-bar motif of the first theme is harmonized in C major: D<sup>6</sup><sub>5</sub> – T. In the varied, repeated two-bar material, a whole rhythmical naivety is visible in a kind of diminutive work with motif. The third two-bar material, as a part of simple, rudimentary development/completion (!) of the imaginary form of 6-bar sentence, brings darker expression of unchallenged (!) minor tonic as a mutual chord with B<sup>b</sup> major and, it seems to us, premature cadence. The following 6-bar phrase, conceived on the same principle, also without adequate development and harmonic preparation brings modulation to A minor, although, due to renaming T<sup>6</sup> in B<sup>b</sup> major to Neapolitan sixth chord in A minor we can find justification for harmonious musical development. However, in the next modulation (into the basic F major) roughly realised and in a very narrow region over Phrygian fifth chord in A minor, which probably remained in the memory from the previous modulation (!) of the imaginary composer, we find a distant similarity with future, unexpected modulations of Prokofiev for the sake of cadence.

Mozart conducts an interesting tonal game at the beginning of the fast final movement (Presto). The first theme in the form of ternary song (aa<sub>1</sub>a<sub>2</sub>) is untypical of its monothematic principle of composing, and even more unusual by its tonal characteristics. The first four-bar phrase (b. 1–4) is based on the movement from tonic to dominant, and similar to many classical examples, the second one is expected to respond with corresponding movement from dominant to tonic. However, the second four-bar phrase of the first part (b. 5–8) with clumsy, but likeable<sup>1</sup> motif development of the first phrase, in the form of sequential descending repetition of a third, leads to completely authentic cadence of parallel D minor. Tonal progression F major – D minor seems to have arrived unexpectedly in a “wrong” parallel minor, hence Mozart, on behalf of the imaginary composer, added two more bars of completely authentic cadence, but in basic F major, as

<sup>1</sup> It seems that Mozart, as much as he wanted, could in no way hide his melodic talent and all ingenuity of melodic development which arose out of every written note.

Example 4

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Example 4. Each system consists of a piano part (treble and bass staves) and a bass part (treble and bass staves). The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth notes. The bass part provides a steady accompaniment. Below the piano part of the first system, the harmonic analysis is: C: T ——— D<sup>5</sup> T ——— D<sup>5</sup> T ——— B:  $\text{II}^6$  K<sup>4</sup> D<sup>7</sup> T ——— D<sup>5</sup> T ———. Below the piano part of the second system, the harmonic analysis is: D<sup>5</sup> T ——— a: N<sup>4</sup> k<sup>9</sup> D<sup>7</sup> t ——— F:  $\text{II}^6$  S<sup>7</sup> D<sup>5-6-7-8</sup> S ———  $\text{II}^6$  S<sup>7</sup> D ——— T ——— D ——— T ———.

if the previous cadence in parallel minor had not happened (!), on a “never mind” principle (Atkinson 2019). However, a subsequent thought, harmonized by a completely authentic cadence seems to correct the “mistake” by bringing the musical progression back to the basic F major. The second part (a<sub>1</sub>) consists of two four-bar phrases deprived of the melodic element, reduced to repetition of the chord tones. The established harmonic model T - S (b.11–12) is repeated in an ascending sequence of a second, but clumsily, because instead of harmonic progression II – major D, the turn II – minor D occurs. (!) The chord of the minor dominant (b.14) is a mistakenly selected modulatory connection with mediant A<sup>b</sup> major, where the previous four-bar material is exposed as: T-S (b.15–16) and II – D (b.17–18). By using a minor dominant, the composer obviously made the keys closer and found a mutual chord, but such overcoming of the „critical” point of modulation moment F major - A<sup>b</sup> major resulted in a rough impression of an inorganic linking of the two-bar material, like a tonal jump in the wrong segment of form. In an untypical recapitulation (a<sub>2</sub>), the first four-bar phrase (b.19–22) ends on A<sup>b</sup> major dominant, while the second one (b. 23–26) in sequential a third-descending repetition ends in completely authentic cadence in F minor. Mozart’s composer easily solved the problem of tonal completion of the first theme by inserting a two-bar supplement of cadence in F major (b.27–28). This is followed by a typical example of *fugato* with real response on the dominant, together with additional composing problems of the imaginary composer.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Mozart's musically expressive means of humour in *Sextet K. 522* are significantly more extensive in comparison to those presented here. In addition to tonal deviation in the form of unexpected, clumsy and rough tonal development, incongruity in the form of humour is also symbolised in motif-rhythmical absence of ideas, in conceiving *grosso modo* themes, and their simplified, rigid and schematised elaboration in the form of etude-like scale sequencing and chord breaking. Mozart applied the suspension of musical grammar and classical conventional norms in a more extensive range: from whole-tone melody in the solo cadenza of the *Minuet* (s. Миленкович & Здравич-Михаилович 2021), a transformation of a Minuet character by using fanfare motifs, the incorporation of Mozart's motif *Alleluia* as a symbol of "theft" of Mozart's melodic idea by the imaginary composer, parallel fifths, mistakenly applied dynamics, ornamentation, the orchestration which leads horns to sound bizarre for a while, until polytonality and the absence of the classical ideal of nice, harmonious and moderate expression without Mozart-like charm, grace and subtlety.

Mozart's *Musical Joke* shows perfect aesthetics of humour realised by an ingenious composer. Einstein emphasizes that composing this piece was probably "kind of violence against own self, a sort of compulsion to something unacceptable and unnatural for Mozart. A musician with such a 'sharp ear' must have tended to adjustment because every false note, in his opinion was an insult to the whole world order" (Ейнштейн 1977, 207). Mozart composed this piece out of the need for reproach and correction of amateur-composers and their counter-aesthetics, probably not only because of the strong internal impulse but also for pleasure. His criticism is expressed from the viewpoint of an uncompromising musical authority, a genius with perfect knowledge of overall musical culture and heritage, stylistically, technically and ideologically unrivalled. During his whole life Mozart fought for spiritual independence and creative freedom, and his whole nature probably urged him to resist, through music, to the activity of amateur-musicians and mediocrities. They undoubtedly horrified Mozart and spoiled his life and peace, although some of them were accepted in certain social circles, such as poor F. H. Graf, whom Mozart mentioned to his father with contempt. Anyway, precious work was left to heritage, and for us clear evidence of a moment in social and cultural life, the music that bears criticism, resistance and other secrets of the great artist's heart. *A Musical Joke* is the composer's criticism against society, kitsch and absence of not only musical education, composing style and technique, but also a measure and taste to which Mozart, as still a synonym of musical perfection, could not and did not want to stay immune to and without adequate answer through the language of music. In that respect, Einstein justifiably considers Mozart the "bearer of musical-theoretical wisdom... great dramatist... the keenest, incorruptible and ruthless observer of human passions" (Ейнштейн 1977, 207).

The power of Mozart's humour and tragicomical relationship with ignorant composers as anomalies of social and cultural life in his era, lies exactly in Mozart's absorption of unexpectedness and break with conventions in musical and expressive means and musical architectonics and form. A harmonic component contains extraordinary musical potential which the composer used in musical segments of developmental type, i.e., modulatory progression with unpredictable tonal plan, until the final polytonal expression, like the eighteenth century "atomic bomb", due to strong rule of traditional harmony. Polytonal modernity of this cadence hardly has a rival in the history of music. In that context, a Norwegian musicologist Eriksen states that "even today, these measures may be simply



perceived as bizarre by listeners not knowing that the work was probably (com. M. M.?) meant to depict incompetent composing as well as bad playing. The author concludes that “bad playing” representing the normal and expected in this context, and the musical style the violation, the conclusion of Mozart’s work calls to mind the incongruity between the ideal (the purity of the musical style universe) and the imperfect (an unfortunate rendering of this universe)”.

Final cadence of the *Sextet K. 522*, as the most specific harmonic segment of the piece and the whole classical style should certainly have more significant position in studying the harmonic language of W. A. Mozart. With it, Mozart “betrays” his listeners and artistic percipients of the piece, as much as various “musicians”, composers and performers probably betrayed him by most of their compositions and interpretations. At any rate, *Divertimento* is a suggestive, metaphorical musical picture which, in the sum of anti-musical associations actualizes the handicap of amateur musicians as well as their inclination towards exposure. Insufficiently trained musical professionals, proud of their “musicality” lead the final cadence to the aspect of bizarre, grotesque, even unnatural. Obviously, all these are different perspectives, aspects of Mozart’s view of such music and musicians, but thanks to them, ingenious W. A. Mozart two centuries earlier practically “opened the door” to a new aspect of tonal organisation, characteristic to the twentieth century. This joke as an expression of Mozart’s humour is a genuine presentation of his artistic and human strength, dynamic but still a classically refined view of the social phenomenon in music at the time, thus challenging not only amateur-musicians, but also the whole heritage: “music can express everything”! That is why Mozart was, as lucidly Petar Konjović, a classic of Serbian musical culture bore witness “one of the masters of the past who take command over the eternal present era” (Konjović 1922, 43).

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## HARMONSKI JEZIK U FUNKCIJI MUZIČKOG HUMORA U SEKSTETU K. 522 (MUZIČKA ŠALA) V. A. MOCARTA

*Mocartov* Sekstet K. 522 predstavlja kompozitorovu kritiku društva, kiča i nedostatka ne samo muzičkog obrazovanja, kompozicionog stila i tehnike kompozitora-amatera, već i mere i ukusa, na šta *Mocart*, kao sinonim muzičkog savršenstva, nije mogao, ni želeo da ostane imun, bez adekvatnog odgovora jezikom muzike. Harmoniska komponenta sadrži izuzetan humoristički potencijal koji kompozitor koristi u muzičkim segmentima razvojnog tipa, tj. modularnog toka, sa nepredvidivim tonalnim planom, sve do završnog politonalnog izraza, kao „atomske bombe” 18. veka, usred snažne vladavine tradicionalne harmonije. Politonalna modernost ove kadence gotovo da nema premca u istoriji muzike. U radu je dat prikaz politonalnog koncepta pomenute kadence kojom *Mocart* najavljuje XX vek, kao i ostalih harmonijskih postupaka, u prvom redu tonalne devijacije u vidu nečekivanog i nespretnog, grubog tonalnog razvoja kao svojevrzne tonalne igre koju *Mocart* sprovodi. Kao muzičko-izražajno sredstvo humora, kompozitor koristi i motivsku melodijsko-ritmičku bezidejnost prilikom koncipiranja tema *grosso modo*, te njihovu simplifikovanu, krutu i šematičnu razradu u vidu etidnog, lestvičnog nizanjanja ili akordskog razlaganja. Suspenzija muzičke gramatike primenjena je na širokoj skali: od celostepene melodije u solističkoj kadenci, preobražaja menuetskog karaktera fanfarnim motivima, inkorporacije *Mocartovog* motiva *Aleluja* kao simbola „krađe” *Mocartove* melodijske ideje od strane imaginarnog kompozitora, paralelnih kvinti, pogrešno primenjene dinamike, ornamenata, orkestracije koja horne na momenat dovodi do zvučne bizarnosti, do politonalnosti i uopšte nedostatka klasičnog idealna lepog, skladnog i umerenog izraza, bez *mocartovske* ljupkosti, gracioznosti i suptilnosti. I upravo zbog toga *Mocart* jeste, kako to lucidno svedoči klasik srpske umetničke muzike – *Petar Konjović* – „jedan od gospodara prošlosti, koji gospodari večnom sadašnjošću.”

Ključne reči: *Mocart*, harmonijski jezik, akord, tonalitet, modulacija, humor

## MUSICAL SYNTAX IN CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH STUDIES OF SERBIAN MUSICAL THEORETICIANS

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**Abstract.** *The paper offers a review of the most significant papers dealing with the musical sentence, the underlying layers (fragmental structures) as well as with the supra-sentential level, i.e. the permeation of the characteristics of the musical sentence and the period. Relying on the consulted literature, the paper considers the attitudes of the musical theoreticians in the recent publications. Relying on comparative analysis with an emphasis on different approaches, the paper aims to highlight some opinions which can serve as a reliable foundation for the pedagogical practice in the teaching courses on musical forms. Different approaches and methodological steps in the analysis of musical syntax unequivocally indicate the complexity of the phenomenon of the musical sentence. This means that in the process of studying the musical form, it is important to offer different theoretical standpoints, as well as numerous examples from the literature. Such an approach definitely opens wider perspectives, not only for understanding the definitions of the musical sentence, but also for its appearance in a variety of styles and genres.*

**Key words:** *musical flow, syntax, musical sentence, fragmented structures, period*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In linguistics, the science of language, syntax is a central discipline dealing with words and sentences, researching the ways of combining words into sentences, i.e. the ways of building sentences from words. Originating from the Greek word *sýntaxis*, it signifies order, stacking, sequencing, being at the same time a part of grammar dealing with the sentence and its constituent parts, i.e. words and forms (Vujaklija 1980, 847).

Musical syntax, as a segment of the study of the musical language, plays an important role in musical analysis, so it is a frequent subject of researchers' interest. Several publications focused on this issue and reviewed in this paper originated primarily as parts

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of the literature for teaching musical theory (music forms) taught in high schools and faculties of music (Popović 1998, Ristić 2009, Stambolić 2003, Zatkalik, Medić and Vlajić 2003, Zatkalik and Stambolić 2005, Zdravić Mihailović and Vasilakis 2017). Numerous individual papers also make significant professional contributions (Grujić 2015, Popović 1998, Sabo 2006, 2015, Stambolić 2004, Zatkalik 1999, 2004, Zdravić Mihailović 2014, 2015, 2017, 2020a 2020b).

## 2. MUSICAL PLAINS

The analysis of musical syntax is based on the approach to a musical piece that involves determination of stability and instability of its specific sections. Stability and instability, as well as their function and effect on the entire musical flow are determined on the basis of the characteristics of musical planes (thematic, tonal and structural).

Consideration of the **thematic aspect** of a sentence is based on an analytical insight into the motif-related contents.

In addition to identifying motifs and determining the types of motif work for understanding the thematic plan, it is also important to single out a larger segment – the theme. The terms motif and theme are often treated as synonyms in the literature, which is not entirely acceptable, and necessarily requires differentiation. Also, in order to understand the features of the thematic plan, it is sometimes necessary to introduce the notion of ‘thematic material’. This term is used when considering various musical content that is not necessarily part of the theme or motif, and belongs to the segment of musical flow that is the subject of analysis (fugurations, passages, layers of sound created by introducing new material or significant development of the familiar one, and so on) (Sabo 2012, 45).

The **tonal plan** implies the manifestation of all keys in the course of one composition, within which the basic key prevails by appearing more often, and is especially represented in major thematic and formal moments in the course of the presentation of the crucial thematic material, reprise, introductory and final sections. However, it should be emphasized here that key is “only one, especially and distinctly systematized type of tonality” (Despić 2002, 11) and that almost the entire corpus of European art music in the period from the 17th to the end of the 19th century and partially in the twentieth century up to this day rests on it. In the conditions of abandoning the tonally functional orientation in the vertical sense, gravitational processes leading to a certain tonal center come to the fore, so that determining the tonal center becomes a key pillar of tonal plan analysis (Sabo 2012, 46).

The **structural plan** is most often observed on the basis of defining the musical sentence (basic syntactic unit), supra-sentential structures (broader syntactic units – periods) and fragmentary structures. Interpretation of the structural plan of the musical flow as a whole or of its specific segments cannot be substantially explained without taking into account the features of the thematic and tonal plans. “Although all plans interact with each other, the structural plan has the most pronounced unifying properties of the musical flow, as a kind of ‘reinforcement’” (Sabo 2012, 47). Although there is relative agreement among theoreticians about the importance of all three planes in the analysis of musical flow, it is noticeable that similar agreement is lacking when it comes to musical sentences.

### 3. ABOUT A MUSICAL SENTENCE

In one of the most frequently used coursebooks on musical forms (Skovran & Peričić 1991, 38), a musical sentence is defined as a musical thought rounded up by a harmonic closure – cadence. Although generally accepted, this definition of the musical sentence has certain constraints. One of them is related to the concept and meaning of the cadence, so some theoreticians (Popović 1998) propose the term ‘boundary’ instead of cadence, because the term cadence stems from the classic tradition which mostly applies to tonal music, with the sequence of harmonic functions clearly determined. Being that the analysis of musical flow is not based only on the compositions of a single style, and that the role of harmony as a constructive factor keeps changing, we take a stand that musical analysis acquired a significant tool for analytical interpretation with the term ‘boundary’.

Anica Sabo (2012, 49) concludes that the boundary consists of two elements: the end signal (conclusion) and the start signal. They are equally important for the process of demarcation, but the degree of expressiveness and manner of their placement varies depending on very different circumstances (from the historical-stylistic context, through the genre determinant of the work to the author's personal musical language). Therefore, the boundary at the same time separates, but also connects individual parts in the musical flow, which means that “without boundaries, which segment the musical flow, form is practically impossible” (Popović 1998, 143). Also, without a more detailed consideration of the boundary, it is not possible to make a distinction (sometimes very subtle) between sentential and fragmentary structures, or to determine the existence of the whole of a higher order (a period of two or three sentences, double periods, etc.).

Abstracting the closure of a musical thought (cadence or boundary) Popović also assumes that musical sentence is the smallest integral part of the music flow. It is identified as the smallest because there is no other full or complete part that can be broken down without losing the purport specific for the properties of the entire musical flow (Popović 1998, 236). On the other hand, the smaller syntagmatic groups (fragments) are dependent entities prone to further continual regrouping throughout the musical flow, which causes permanent redistribution and change of their identity to a considerably greater extent than it is the case with the musical sentence/phrase. In the musical language, musical components and their elements (rhythm, melody, dynamics, texture, harmony, agogics) get their unique meaning by being mutually combined, exclusively within a limited domain. The most flexible and the most efficient limited domain (thanks to memory) is the musical sentence which manifests itself as the basic syntactic unit. This means that, differently from the fragment, the musical sentence sometimes exists as independent (typical form for folk songs), thus becoming a complete musical flow.

What is present in the considerations of most theoretical approaches to the musical sentence in the literature of Serbian authors is its consideration in the context of the thematic, tonal and structural plan. This means that, after presenting the properties and influences of each of them, their role in building the musical flow is clarified using the various examples from musical literature. However, it should be borne in mind that this approach has certain limitations that accompany each of the mentioned plans. For example, the features of the tonal plan can be considered in tonal music, i.e. in the works of Baroque, Classicism, Romanticism, partly Impressionism and the so-called neo-styles (Neo-Baroque, Neo-Classicism, Neo-Romanticism). Yet, in circumstances when there is no tonal basis in terms of a certain key, important analytical pillars lose their role. It is

similar when it comes to the influence of the thematic plan, because in conditions when music becomes athematic (e.g. serialism, dodecaphony and other forms of expression in contemporary music), the existence of the “thematic plan” should be understood strictly conditionally. All the mentioned circumstances show that a universal approach cannot be applied in analytical observations, inasmuch as it is possible in certain situations, but that one must equally strive to understand the pertaining context (time, style, author, etc.).

According to features of the thematic plan, musical sentences can be classified as developmental, selective, developmental-selective and motif-indivisible (Popović 1998, Sabo 2020, Zatkalik, Medić, Vlajić 2003, Zatkalik & Stambolić, 2005, Zdravić Mihailović & Vasilakis 2017). Developmental sentences are the ones whose entire content emanates from a single motif, and whose musical flow is built upon the transformation of that motif. On the contrary, selective sentences contain various motif materials (instead of working with a single motif, they give priority to the exposure of several motifs). Developmental-selective sentences are of a greater scope and more complex structure. They contain different materials where some are subject to developmental processes, while motif-indivisible sentences retain an uninterrupted flow which does not allow their splitting into motifs (these are the sentences in which the content is given ‘in one breath’). So, the principle of “diversity unites” comes to the fore here. Any separation of motives in such concepts would be unnatural and in some way violent, because it would deviate from the very musical-aesthetic nature of the given formal whole. However, this does not mean that motives do not exist and that it is not possible to single them out, but only that such separation is not ‘supported’ by musical means.

In the handbook for the *Analysis of Simple Forms* (Zdravić Mihailović & Vasilakis 2017) the authors present a well-known definition of the musical sentence along with some other topical concepts and conclude that it is impossible to come up with a universal definition: “All proposed definitions can give a listener (analyst) a chance to get a higher quality insight into the characteristics of the musical sentence; however, the abundance of different compositions, as well as the very (artistic) nature of music, escape theoretical generalizations in much the same way” (Zdravić Mihailović & Vasilakis 2017, 18). Other theoreticians, too, discuss the issue of flexibility of the sentence emphasizing, among other things, the terminological problems (see: Sabo 2006) or the issue of context: “although the musical flow at certain points becomes independent and starts showing the features of the musical sentence, the issue of what comes next appears as an equally important and equal factor in the final defining of the entire content of the observed musical flow” (Zdravić Mihailović 2015, 44).

Another noteworthy work is the one of Zatkalik and Stambolić who propose a division of the sentence on the basis of the structural plan. Aside from the basic sentential formula  $n+n+2n$  (statement – repetition – progression with a signal of closure), it also includes other structures such as  $2n+n+n$  (reversed basic formula),  $n+n+n$  (shortened basic formula),  $n+n$  (two half sentences), or  $n+n+n+n$  (four similar, most often two-bar segments).

Presentation of the structural plan of the sentence can be met with understanding, but can also cause aversion because of the numerical mould that formula implies by itself. For this reason, numerical relations should be understood only as approximate, because the mentioned formulas definitely cannot embrace all structural options for sentence construction, but they can be helpful to determine the starting point for the considerations within any of the offered models. The same authors emphasize that the sentence also implies movement toward a goal, i.e. musical event that most often appears as a set of specific pitches (cadence and the like), where it is important to notice that the movement

towards the set goal is such as to make the listener wait for that event, with awareness of the moment when the event will take place, so when it really happens, the listener has a feeling that the goal has been accomplished, i.e. that the musical flow has come to a point targeted from the very beginning.

In the book *Prolegomenon to the Theory of Musical Syntax* (Ristić 2009), the author clearly and systematically sets forth the concept of a standard musical sentence involving the following formula:  $n+n+2n$ . Such a formula applies to the sentences particularly frequent in the works of the Vienna classicists embodying the following process: half phrase + its repetition + four-bar development of the previous motifs that usually ends in a cadence (2+2+4). Setting up of the standard model (the norm) is explained by the need to present the complex material of the musical sentence in a relatively systematic way.

Further considerations of the musical sentence take place in the direction of expanding the concept of 'standard model' understanding the variability of the musical sentence and its correlation with the genre, medium, style, etc. The special value of this publication is a detailed analysis of carefully selected examples, which, in addition to the analysis of motives and work with motifs, also includes harmonic analysis. This makes all the important constituents of the musical sentence clear.

It is well known that the study of the phenomenon of musical sentences is always related to the (broader) context, and that it is not enough to observe it separately. However, it must be emphasized that most of the mentioned theoreticians offer a good systematization of the musical sentence which is applicable to all the levels of the study of music forms.

#### 4. FRAGMENTARY STRUCTURE. SPECIFIC SITUATIONS.

For reasons that are primarily methodological in nature, after establishing the principles on which the musical sentence is based, it is resorted to determining the characteristics below and above the sentence level.

A fragmentary structure, with its properties basically opposed to the sentence, is considered to be dependent and, to a certain extent, subordinated to the sentence, and it can endure only as an integral part of the musical flow. If motifs and musical syntagms do not make progression, but merely repeat or, if a group of motifs fails to get a convincing closure, the musical flow is observed as sequencing of fragments which do not get integrated into an independent rounded up whole such as the sentence (Zatkalik, Medić & Vlajić, 2003). Such structures are seen as unstable, with a tendency to become stable, i.e. sentences. This can be compared with the tendency of the dominant to get resolved to the tonic where one can notice the essential pattern of the musical flow: tension – resolution.

Fragmentation of the structure most often occurs as a consequence of frequent repetition of motifs or in the circumstances when a certain group of motifs does not get a constructive ending - cadence. This means that the musical segment, defined as fragmentary, has an exposition followed by the repetition of certain metric-formal units (often as a two-bar or four-bar structure, although one-bar and three-bar structures can be found as well, and less often five-bar and larger segments). Due to simple (literal or sequential) repetition, the musical flow is deprived of the moment of development, i.e. progression, which is necessary for the formation of a whole of a higher order, i.e. sentence. Then the exposed segments do not get integrated into a whole of a higher order, but remain separated from

each other due to the intermission (caesura) that is the result of repetition. So, the principle comes to its full expression here: literal or sequential repetition does not bring forth a whole of a higher order.

Sometimes development is achieved by repetition, so that the fragmentary structure can be very close to a sentence because a fragmentary section, just like a sentence, can begin with an exposition of motives, and continue with repetition. In that case, what differentiates the fragmentary passage from the sentence based on repetition refers mainly to the treatment of repetition and cadence. If the repetition of the motif is not carried out to a greater extent, and the musical flow has a cadence at the end, we can talk about a sentence. If repetition is the dominant compositional procedure with no cadence, or if that segment is separated from the next by some other means, then it is certainly a fragmentary section.

In tonal music, the harmonic component plays a very important role in the differentiation of sentence and fragmentary structure. However, in the music of the 20th and 21st century, when the harmonic means get significantly transformed, a number of questions arise related to the delimitation of these entities. Since the primary pillars of the musical flow, i.e. analytical arguments, have been significantly changed, the question that arises concerns the conditions in which the musical sentence i.e. the fragmentary structure is profiled. Such questions are a great challenge for the analytical interpretation of the music created in the mentioned period. Yet, it is not so uncommon for certain doubts to arise even in the analysis of examples of the musical heritage of Classicism or Romanticism too, so some considerations of musical syntax are aimed to shed light on some 'debatable' situations. Tatjana Ristić (2009, 152–156) highlights the so-called boundary cases with under- and supra-sentential levels and points out that the very boundary line between the fragmentary structure and its raising to a higher hierarchical level is the zone where the cases of structural organization relying on the 'standard' model are to be found, in terms of a clear analogy with the model's internal logic. The point here is the impairment or leaving out of certain constituents of the 'standard' model (statement, repetition, development, cadence), which brings the structure of the sentence close to fragmentary. Aside from the internal organization of the segments, some theoreticians point out that the harmonic component is a very significant factor of stability in the construction of the musical sentence. For example, Gordana Grujić (2014, 221), emphasizes that the sections which have not been sufficiently supported harmonically to be classified as a stable structure but at the same time cannot be seen as a regular way of presenting fragments, remain in the form of structures with both fragmentary and sentential elements.

##### 5. SUPRA-SENTENTIAL LEVEL. PERMEATION OF FORMAL PATTERNS

In some examples from the literature, one can see the fragmentation of a higher level – a sentence string. It is a whole formed by two or more sentences, which is, due to its instability, sometimes identified in the literature as a fragmentary structure: "instead of 'solid' sentential or periodic wholes, 'loose' structures come to the fore – two-bar strings, sentence strings, etc." (Skovran & Peričić 1991, 65). What is actually meant here is higher-level fragmentation; these are sentences, stable and rounded, but at a higher level; in their 'stringing', they do not integrate into the periodic form, but remain somewhat



'disjointed'. Although it sounds paradoxical, it is still possible for stable structures (such as sentences) to be unstable under certain conditions.

On the other hand, the theorists' attention is drawn to some situations in the musical flow in which the distinctive properties of one or another formal model are not manifested, i.e. sentences that are divisible in such a way that they could be characterized as periods. In them, the first segment is insufficiently independent, i.e. "the developmental stages of such first sentence of the period are reduced, meaning that some of them are omitted and this is exactly where the variability of this type of musical sentences is reflected" (Ristić 2009, 157). The author gives an example of the second theme (section B<sub>1</sub>) from the third movement of Beethoven's Sonata for piano, Op. 27, in which the first four-bar section is not independent enough to be seen as a musical sentence, while the next 19 bars can be characterized as the second sentence of the period. She, therefore, proposes a formulation "in character close to the sentence, but also to the periodic organization" (Ibid., 160). A similar dilemma characterizes the first theme (section A<sub>2</sub>) of the third movement of Mozart's Sonata KV 332; hence the author concludes that the analytical interpretation depends on the musical plan which has been given priority.

In addition to the example of the genre of piano sonatas by Mozart and Beethoven, Haydn's music offers – even pronouncedly so – permeations of the mentioned formal models. It is known that the sonata cycle got crystallized in Haydn's works, as well as some other forms, above all the sonata form and rondo, but it can also be said that the process of forming certain musical forms entailed profiling of the musical sentence. It is in his works that one can find extremely specifically organized musical syntaxes. For example, the initial course of the Minuet from the Piano Sonata Hob. 5 is very provocative for analytical considerations. The permeation of the elements of the (large) sentence and the (open) period is reflected in the divisibility of the first section - the first four bars have a typical summation structure of 1 + 1 + 2 and the closure on a weakened tonic of the basic key. At the same time, the composer does not give a convincing cadence, but the closure is represented by the connection VII – T on the unstressed beat of the bar. The second segment begins with a subdominant function and brings contrast in the initial part of its course, while in the further course (in the second two-bar section) a similarity with the first part is established. The section ends with a semicadence on the dominant. The ending of the section on the dominant of the basic key is not rare in Haydn's early works, but in this specific example the provocative question is whether this is a single sentence or a whole of a higher order. If it is a whole of a higher order, should it be characterized as a string of sentences or as a period? Taking into account the fact that the first sentence of the period has a weakened cadence, and that it does not have to show a greater degree of independence, then the first segment (bars 1-4) can certainly be characterized as the first sentence of the period. The question is how to understand its relationship with the second sentence, i.e., the entire section. To remind ourselves, two sentences that have the inverse cadence relationship from the standard period (T–D) can be understood as an open period. If we take into account the fact that the period can also be formed by two sentences that are not thematically similar, then one gets the impression that it is quite acceptable to interpret this section as an open contrasting period.

The possible interpretation that we came to was the result of an expanded understanding of the period, but it is especially important to point out that in fact there is an overlap between the expanded understanding of the period and a whole of a higher order, which is described in domestic literature as a string of sentences. If the period occurs in its basic form (standard period), the difference between it and a string of sentences is obvious and quite clear.

However, the expanded understanding of the period, which implies neither similarity of sentences nor harmonic dependence, leads to the point where these two categories overlap, so that it cannot be reliably said whether it is one or another whole of a higher order. In fact, the interpretation of an example should be supported by concrete theoretical viewpoints. In any case, if the second segment were based on the repetition of the first, we would unequivocally conclude that this is an (open) period. However, as the context often determines the whole, it is necessary to consider in more detail what follows. Since development and cadence occur instead of repetition in the musical flow, it seems quite acceptable to interpret this section as one sentence. In this context, the first segment can be explained as a potential sentence, bearing in mind that "syntagms that show a greater degree of independence are called potential sentences" (Zatkalik, Medić and Vlajić 2003).

## 6. CONCLUSION

The previous observations clearly indicate that defining of the structural level can sometimes hinder the analysts' attempts to take a specific stand. However, aside from the fact that it should not be an end in itself, it can often provide significant information on a particular musical style. Hence, some theoreticians conclude that "the properties of musical syntax, together with other features, provide an opportunity to get familiar with individual compositional style, in this case with the musical sentence or periods in Haydn's works" (Zdravić Mihailović 2017, 169). Authors emphasize that understanding the language of music through the style analysis, and not only through the formulas ( $n+n+2n$ ;  $n+n$ ;  $2n+n+n$  etc.) regardless of the stylistic affiliation, leads to a full analysis which should be the final goal of understanding of music. Also, in one of the previous studies it is emphasized that Haydn's works provide grounds for some "very unusual formal solutions that 'flirt' between the sentence and the period, two-part and three-part form of the song and the like" (Zdravić Mihailović 2014, 206).

Due to different manifestations of musical syntax, and different analytical approaches, certain situations open dilemmas when it comes to defining musical syntax. Yet, it is important to emphasize that the objective of the analytical technique is not mere 'measuring' and searching for pros and cons. "In the analytical interpretation, arguments should lead to an understanding of the structure itself, as well as of the wider context, i.e. the work within a greater whole" (Zdravić Mihailović 2020a, 283).

If one starts from the standard model of the musical sentence, it is possible to realize that it has its properties, but on the other side, the listener (analyst) expects that the logic of the musical sentence always manifests itself in that particular way. It turns out, however, that the analyses are usually unnecessarily burdened by facts that the musical flow does not always unfold in accordance with what is seen as "regular". In this context, it is important to point to the negative side of the methodological procedure based on the rule – exception principle. Moreover, observations from a wider, not merely syntactic perspective open some new perspectives regarding the regular and irregular concepts of a specific syntactic formula or a specific type of form: "(...) the issue of 'regularity' and 'irregularity' remains open, i.e. conditioned by the contexts of time and style" (Zdravić Mihailović 2020b, 106).

Studying the problems of terminological determination of the elements of the structural plan of the musical flow in more detail, Anica Sabo (2006, 77) concludes that the problem requires inclusion of the analysis of interpretation which is always an

important test of each asserted statement. Acceptance of analysis as a form of interpretation and establishing links with instrumental and vocal interpretation could be very important in the process of understanding different relations governing the structure of the musical sentence.

Different approaches and methodological steps in the analysis of musical syntax unambiguously point to the complexity of a concept such as the musical sentence. It follows that it is still impossible to give a fully rounded and generally acceptable definition of the musical sentence. It means that in studying musical forms it is important to offer different theoretical standpoints as well as numerous examples from the literature. Such an approach definitely opens wider perspectives, not only for understanding the definitions of the musical sentence, but also for its diversified manifestations in various styles and genres.

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## MUZIČKA SINTAKSA U SAVREMENIM ISTRAŽIVANJIMA SRPSKIH MUZIČKIH TEORETIČARA

*U radu se daje prikaz najznačajnijih radova posvećenih muzičkoj rečenici, ali i celinama ispod rečeničnog nivoa (fragmentarne strukture), kao i iznad rečeničnog nivoa, odnosno prožimanja karakteristika muzičke rečenice i perioda. Na osnovu konsultovane literature razmatraju se stavovi muzičkih teoretičara u publikacijama novijeg datuma. Cilj rada je da se uporednom analizom i isticanjem različitih pristupa ukaže na pojedina mišljenja koja mogu biti dobar oslonac za pedagošku praksu u nastavnim predmetima koji se zasnivaju na upoznavanju muzičke forme. Različiti pristupi i metodološki koraci u analizi muzičke sintakse nedvosmisleno ukazuju na kompleksnost pojave kakva je muzička rečenica. To znači da je u procesu izučavanja muzičke forme važno ponuditi upravo različita teorijska stanovišta, kao i brojne primere iz literature. Takav pristup definitivno otvara šire perspektive, ne samo za razumevanje definicija muzičke rečenice, već i za njenu pojavnost u raznovrsnoj stilsko-žanrovskoj pripadnosti.*

Ključne reči: *muzički tok, sintaksa, muzička rečenica, fragmentarna struktura, period*

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