

Rykowski, Mikołaj

Art or craft? – significance of the sociological background in the artistic development of the harmoniemusik

Musicologica Brunensia. 2012, vol. 47, iss. 1, pp. [179]-187

ISSN 1212-0391 (print); ISSN 2336-436X (online)

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/125877>

Access Date: 16. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

MIKOŁAJ RYKOWSKI

**ART OR CRAFT? – SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL
BACKGROUND IN THE ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT
OF THE *HARMONIEMUSIK***

Harmoniemusik phenomenon has emerged in the most important 18th and 19th century domains of the musical life. It were aristocratic court, church circle and military service where these ensembles containing usually 2 cl., 2 ob., 2 cr., 2 bs. were active. Geographically these musical practise was spread out among many countries, but their so called ‘homeland’ was Holy Roman Empire territory (although Moravian emigrants applied this music to Bethlehem parish in North America). Stylistically, existing repertoire embodies wide range of *Wind Harmony* pieces where often in one musical centre it possible to notice that at particular period of time performed simple, garden-like, background music and artistically significant examples of the concert music.

A matter of whether *Harmoniemusik* presents more art or craft is is concerned more to provoke a discussion about its multicontextual functioning rather than expecting white-or-black answers. It is a very important origin of the entire development that its musical condition depended almost fully on sociological background. Artistic judgment of these music should be provided regarding the fact that *Wind Harmony* came into appearance in various sociological contexts. Moreover, a certain role in sociological sphere required usage of adequate formal devices such as march-like opening movement for army band or dance music as characteristic for music played in aristocratic chambers. It is interesting to observe in which way all these environments influenced the complexity and content of *Harmoniemusik* repertoire.

The 18th century patronage of the army, court and church and its influence exerted over the artistic picture of wind ensembles appeared with different intensity. From that reason it would be profitable to define periods of development in accordance with leading role of the sociological sphere (a metaphor of a relay race may be useful). These periods meant:

- Emergence of the musicians named oboists in both military and court service (double function – the same poeple). The music was based on function in particular performance situation (ca. first half of the 18th century);

- Crystallization of the style; *Harmoniemusik* becoming more independent in aristocratic and cleric culture. In music synthesis of the functional and classical style is observed (Classical Era);
- Twilight of the classical *Harmoniemusik* as a result of the political changes. In those days wind ensembles were transformed into a military orchestras and had lost its original sound. There was also failed attempt to take over the repertoire by the bourgeoisie class (first half of the 19th century).

Taking into account contemporary research of the subject it is not surprising that *Harmoniemusik* evolution occurred with different intensity in various musical centers and quite often in uncommon periods of time. Despite all of this we can surely discuss a moment of establishing autonomic and somewhat independent classical *Harmoniemusik* which took place in pre- and classical era. Then the leading role in the process of creating the practice belonged to aristocratic class and clergy.¹ But before that happened the first standard ensembles – nowadays regarded as *Harmoniemusik* roots – played in military environment. Soon, this kind of music was heard as old fashioned and so called *Feldmusik* had to face new expectations. What was these new criteria? Answers shall be given doing some insights about aforementioned historical periods of *Harmoniemusik* development.

Double role of oboist in court and military environment

Indeed, it is quite tough to settle whether the beginnings of the *Harmoniemusik* took place in court or military area – nevertheless the same compositions were performed by court or army oboists (*Hof-* or *Regiments-Hautboistenbanden*).² What is certain that horns being included to ‘baroque oboe band’ initiated a very first *Harmoniemusik* ensemble. It may occurred during the first two decades of the 18th century (there is a solid testimony in German courts at Rudolstadt – 1729, and Sachsen Gotha Altenburg where horns were bought in 1714). This is just an origin of the cast but it allowed to form first *Harmonien* with horns so popular during huntings – aristocrats favorite entertainment. *Jagdmusik* was functioning parallel with *Tafelmusik* (even in 1780s on Oetingen-Wallerstein court Paul Weinberger held double position of the *Jagd-* and *Tafelmusik*). Apparently, in a process of establishing an essential instrumental constellation of *Harmoniemusik* (a process which is often situated on the border between court and army), a turning point belonged to *Jagdmusik* blossoming in court circles.

¹ In some certain places in very direct way – like in Moravia where we observe cultivation of church *Harmoniemusik* much longer than in court which was caused by economical collapse of the Monarchy in 1811.

² Hofer, Achim. Geburtsmomente der Harmoniemusik, Beispiele – Perspektiven. In: Schmul Hans – Omonsky Ute, *Zur Geschichte und Aufführungspraxis der Harmoniemusik*, Michaelsteiner Konferenzberichte, Band 71, XXXII Wissenschaftliche Arbeitstagung Michaelstein, 20. bis 23. Mai 2004, p. 38.

So in this period (around the middle of the century) *Harmoniemusik* ensemble meant a connection of military band and hunting instruments with its characteristic musical features involved. In the early *Partitas* from 1750s and 1760s performed in court circles one can define functional elements of the music originated in army. It is corroborated by Jiří Sehnal's opinion, expressed in a context of Moravian *Harmoniemusik*: '(...) in an old Partita on the first place stands march which reminded a military roots of the Wind Harmony for a long time'.³ So called double function (court) of the oboists resulted that several musical elements were taken into the repertoire.

These are the origins of the musical language of the early *Partitas*:

- a. march and march-like movements (army circle)
- b. hunting music elements (*Jagdmusik* – Oettingen-Wallerstein, Lobkovitz);⁴
- c. French suite derived from entertainment music, which gave multi-movement structure which enabled to use national dances.

Elements of suite, march-like movements and horns included were put together in a quite simple manner (in terms of composers technique). But more significant is that in these pieces – using terminology from semiotics – special cultural texts were created.⁵ March-like movements, hunting sound (horns!) and purely entertaining elements (for instance dance), formed a wide perspective of these texts embodied musically by French suite-like formal construction. In this way, immediately, these cultural texts were pull out from their natural environment.⁶ Moreover, musical effect of these so called 'reminiscences of the roots' was surely increased by transferring it into a concert aristocratic chamber.

In the court such *Partitas* became universal compositions suiting different occasions, performance conditions and sociological contexts.⁷ Cultural texts or in other words – various references to the old functions of the wind music were taken as an essential part of the musical language – in *Harmoniemusik* later on becoming a profitable material for artistic variation. What was the first consequence of subordinate the *Wind Harmony* or *Feldmusik* practice by aristocratic

³ Sehnal, Jiří. Harmonie na Moravě 1750–1840, *Časopis Moravského Muzea* 68, 1983, p. 135.

⁴ In these centres musicians played both *Jagdmusik* and *Tafelmusik*.

⁵ According to this nomenclature in musical composition several texts coexist: musical (formal structure), sonoristic (performance), aural (impression) and cultural (reception in given culture). In a course of history every listener may be able to receive different text. Mieczysław Tomaszewski wrote that, so called *Unterhaltungsmusik* ('entertainment music') was conditioned by aural text, because the most important was to please one's ear. Tomaszewski, Mieczysław. Nad analizą i interpretacją dzieła muzycznego – Myśli i doświadczenia, *Res facta*, no. 9, 1982, pp. 192–193.

⁶ French suite is an exception because it was performed in different sociological environments and not only in court and thus much earlier it became a part of universal musical language.

⁷ The only terms referred to function like *Partita a la camera* or *Partita a la Parade* cannot be view as a hint of special musical content, but only sporadically had indicated a major reinforcement of the sound by using additional instruments (trumpets or flutes) which was caused by outdoor performance (*Freiluftmusik*) or more chamber scoring for indoor court private concerts.

musical culture? Aristocratic patronage was interested in new concepts of instrumental music so early *partitas* had to fulfill these new expectations. Composers of the wind band music gradually abandon simple suite multi-movement structure by developing pre-classical binary form into a sonata form and placing it as the opening movement in the cycle. So in this period of time when an upsurge of *Harmoniemusik* fashion in court was already visible two major stylistic tendencies appeared:⁸

- a. heterogenous – pieces with traditional reminiscences of the functional music (marches, dances, etc.);
- b. autonomous – using pre-classical form of instrumental music (binary and ternary form).

Countless *Partitas* of this kind allow to suspect that they may have been played once and immediately there was a need for new one thus they could fulfill a role of ‘one evening star’. This music was written as if due to one formal scheme with craft predominating and it was pleasure more than profound artistic experience which they had offered to the listener. It can be heard in traditional parallel instrumentation with oboes or clarinets as leaders in phrasing, where all the music is based on a very simple harmonic plan.

Crystallization of the *Harmoniemusik* in culture of the aristocracy

The heritage of the functional music was broadly used by classical composers. Especially in the territory of *Harmoniemusik* where different functional reminiscences could fill the music with light entertaining character ‘(...) *Harmoniemusik* contains functional and entertaining style which wasn’t excluded both by performance art of the classicism and artistic output’.⁹

During the stylistic evolution of the *Harmoniemusik* there was an obvious tendency to compose music in sonata cycle (also rondo or variations) with classical forms and techniques serving as a method of artistic elaboration of the aforementioned cultural texts (ex. *La Chasse* as a ground for material transformation or presenting a competitive groups of instruments). It is worth pointing out that this evolution took place in non-chronological periods of time. Masterpieces from the end of the century originated in the same time with occasional music (or even commercial like transcriptions) proceeding concrete expectations (one of the most common: representation). While highly artistic *Harmoniemusik* began to took over concert halls in Vienna – in Augustinian Monastery at Brno wind musicians started to play from 5:30 a.m. performing *Tafelmusik* many times during the

⁸ These tendencies are apparent in early *partita* from 1750’s and 1760’s gathered in bishop Hamilton’s collection from Kroměříž and pieces from count Pachta collection (held in Prague).

⁹ Hofer, Achim. *Harmoniemusik*, MGG, op. cit., s. 164.

day. How close art and craft were bend together we can observe in one of the passage from one of the Mozart's first biographer Georg Nicolaus von Nissen who suggested that *Gran Partita* was written for his own wedding with Constanze.¹⁰

Nevertheless, musically functional elements were still cultivated in *Partitas* and they served as perfect material for development technique, stepping all together into a very colorful musical language in the realm of mature classical composers. Musical forms about functional provenience (like march or hunting music) were blended together with sonata form (also variations) what created a synthesis – like in works by Georg Druschetzky (huge collection gathered in Hungarian Keszthely), where concerto style and national suita-like stylizations met in a *Harmoniemusik* piece.¹¹ In Franz Krommer *Partitas* sonata form and variation technique were put together in movements like *La Chasse* with sound of the horns. Such a synthesis was established also in Mozarts *Serenades* (KV 361, 388, 375).

An artistic synthesis was enabled by several significant factors in the field of *Harmoniemusik*:

- a. influence of the aristocratic musical culture and 'new social expectations' (style *galant*, 'new focusing' – *neue Aufmerksamkeit*);¹²
- b. role of patrons in the evolution of the genre where we can observe two major characters: receptive and creative (a crucial is also social promotion of the musician's and composer's status resulting a specialization and professional activity);
- c. individuality of the composer and musician;

New expectations – new attention (*neue Aufmerksamkeit*)

Formal evolution in *Partitas* toward more complex and elaborated entity can prove that new 'attention to the music' was about to be paid among aristocratic audiences. How far it has changed we can realize when taking under consideration simple *Partitas* performed at the court of the bishop of Olomouc¹³ (origi-

¹⁰ Nissen, Georg Nicolaus. *Biographie W. A. Mozarts*, Leipzig 1828, p. 466.

¹¹ *Partita in Es* (0/134) written by Georg Druschetzky is a fine example of a synthesis with concerting style in first clarinet and French suite influence in its fourth movement with several national dances included: *alla francese*, *tedesco*, etc. As another example may serve a unique *Concerto* (FHS 11, 0/139) for *clavicembalo principale* and 6-part *Harmonie* (2 cl., 2 cr., 2 fg.)

¹² His expression is borrowed from an article written by prof. Otto Biba. Biba, Otto. *Beobachtungen zur österreichischen Musikszene des 18. Jahrhunderts*. In: *Österreichische Musik – Musik in Österreich: Beiträge zur Musikgeschichte Mitteleuropas. Theophil Antonicek zum 60. Geburtstag*. Ed. Elisabeth Theresia Hilscher. („Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikwissenschaft“, no. 34) Tutzing 1998, pp. 213–230.

¹³ Pieces gathered in Original chateau collection in Kroměříž written by: J.(?) Discher, Joseph Haydn Franz Meyer, Jean Willy, (?) Navratil, Josef Puschmann, (?) Reluzzi, (?) Schuster, Georg Siegel, (?) Sonnleitner.

nated in the 1760s), on the one hand and symphony-like Krommer *Octet-Partitas* performed two decades later by Emperor's Viennese Wind Harmony – on the other.

The style of early *Partitas* and unfortunately puzzled information about how they were performed above all has indicated that – generally speaking – they were attending to some special events more than establishing them. But examples of the concerts with *Harmoniemusik* seen in the programme of the Music Academy in Pressburg or *Wien Tonkünstler Societät* are pointing out that together with stylistic development – performance conditions changed. In other words *Harmoniemusik* went through a path, as Thomas Schipperges brilliantly said, from music for entertainment (attending to some occasions) toward music as entertainment itself (germ. *Musik zur Unterhaltung – Musik als Unterhaltung*).¹⁴

It is commonly known that around the middle of the 18th century, most French philosophers stated that instrumental music should be placed at the very end of list of arts capable of imitating the nature (d'Alambert *Preface to Encyclopedia*).¹⁵ This aesthetic verdict was conditioned¹⁶ by lack of the any meaning in purely instrumental music – naturally this postulate was to achieve only by vocal-instrumental compositions. Despite this in early *Partitas* meanings could be conveyed by aforementioned cultural texts which evoke old functions or even recall concrete sociological situations. March, minuet, polonaise, *siciliana*, *gigue*, *la Chasse* – movements of this sort contained cultural message which was commonly known in entire classical period and luckily could help avoid a threat of leaving the listeners confused because of the *pure, absolute art of sounds*.¹⁷ It is possible that such a musical content and its elaboration could convince auditorium to a new stage of focusing.

Opinions which neglected music's imitative ability (*mimesis* theory) were naturally somehow retracted thanks to Johann Georg Sulzer (*Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*) and Johann Joachim Quantz (*Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen*). These authors – generally speaking – recognize music as a medium able to express feelings. And although in early *Partitas* we can hardly find so profound sensivity or richness of feelings (especially like *Empfindsam-*

¹⁴ Schipperges, Thomas. *Harmoniemusik als instrumentale Unterhaltungsmusik*. In: *Zur Geschichte und Aufführungspraxis der Harmoniemusik*, Michaelsteiner Konferenzberichte, Band 71, XXXII Wissenschaftliche Arbeitstagung Michaelstein, 20. bis 23. Mai 2004. ed. By Hans Schmul – Ute Omonsky, p. 169.

¹⁵ d'Alembert, Jean Le Rond. *Preface to Eyclopedia*, 1751, p. 39. See also Fubini, Enrico. *Historia estetyki muzycznej*, translated by Zbigniew Skowron, Kraków 1997, p. 232.

¹⁶ It was lack of meaning which troubled Bernard le Boviera de Fontenelle and made him rise a question: *Sonate, que me veux tu?* (What do you want from me, sonata?). In: Morrow, Mary Sue. *German Music Criticism in the Late Eighteenth Century*, New Orleans 1997, p. 4.

¹⁷ Expression by H. H. Eggebrecht. Eggebrecht, Hans Heinrich. *Musikalisches Denken. Aufsätze zur Theorie und Ästhetik der Musik*, Wilhelmshaven 1977, p. 42. See also. Mađry, Alina. *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Estetyka – stylistyka – dzieło*, Poznań 2003, p. 20, footnote 22.

keit), we can surely find there bright moods and emotions named by Otakar Kamper as grace, wit, bizarness, and idylla (however – no sentimentalism).

To sum up, emancipation of the *Feldmusik* from army circle into aristocratic chamber resulted an adaptation of the galant style in early wind *Partitas* (with adequate musical forms included). And the notion ‘of imitation of the nature’, in terms of fulfilling the postulate of meaning, was made possible to implement thanks to musical reminiscences referred to past *Harmoniemusik* functions. Hence these facts future *Harmoniemusik* could be enriched by more profound expressiveness and synthesis based on functionality and artistry.

Patron’s role in the *Harmoniemusik* repertoire and composer’s individuality

In Central Europe there are many cultural places of the Wind Harmony activity. Sometimes even in far-distanced places with no social or historic relations between them we can observe similar practice and repertoire (which circulated). But in some cases the art was very original and depended fully on patron’s will. This rises a question: is it possible in so complex and inner-differentiated area to establish stable social mechanisms which could make artistic development possible?

Research provided in the field of *Harmoniemusik* enabled us to define two major types of patron considering the method of providing ensemble, choice of repertoire and the way musicians were treated. First type is a creative one, which allowed to establish highly individual ensemble, where musicians and composers were hired for a long time. The most crucial for such bands was to perform their own pieces originated in this environment, although a commonly circulated repertoire is also visible. These are examples: Oetingen-Wallerstein, Rudolstadt, Liechtenstein, Sonderhausen, Pachta, Schwarzenberg, *Harmonie* of prince Antal II Grassalkowitz and archbishop Batthyány in Pressburg (now Bratislava).

Second type of patron represented an aesthetic concept which may be named as receptive in terms of gathering mostly common, popular music without creating his own. It was result of immense growth of the *Harmoniemusik* fashion during last decade of the 18th and first two decades of the 19th century. Princes wanted to have the best wind players in their own service performing spectacular *partitas*. And nothing could be more desirable than transcriptions and *pot-pourri* which soon overwhelmed the *Harmoniemusik* practice. To name examples from the Czech lands: Náměšt nad Oslavou, Augustinian Monastery in Brno,¹⁸ bands of counts Clam-Gallas, Chotek and Lobkowitz or *Harmonie* of counts Eszterhazy’s from Tata in Hungary.

¹⁸ I mean 19th century activity of that band because about undoubtedly rich repertoire of the 18th century we can only assume by taking information from inventories (only 16 *partitas* preserved).

Naturally, we can find also ensembles representing two aforementioned tendencies in practice. It means that there was a strong reception of widely known music but also original output created by local composers like highly individual *Harmoniemusik* attending to vocal and concerto music written in the court of count György Festetics in Hungarian Keszthely. But when trying to answer a major question of this article it is worth focusing on those places where creative role of the patron was overpowering and allowed to organise a vivid musical life.

Centres of original *Harmoniemusik*

In these centres took place crucial evolution of the musicians social status and their recognition as an artists. In the beginning, composers of *Partitas* recruited mainly from the army bands, weren't recognizable. Early inventories like one preserved in Original chateau collection in Kroměříž from bishop Leopold Egk's time gave just total amount of compositions with keywords like *Clarinet Parthien*, or *Horn Parthien (Le Teille)*. From court records it may be assumed that it took some time to recognize an artist – sometimes it was related with social upward from a servant to a musician. Than musicians could specialized themselves in the field of composition or playing some certain instrument (instead of playing several!). These are examples: musical circle of archbishop Batthyány in Hungary and prince Schwarzenberg in Český Krumlov. Original *Harmoniemusik* we find in the court of Kraft Ernst in Oettingen-Wallerstein, prince Alois Liechtenstein, Antal Grassalkowitz and in the Emperor's *Harmonie* repertoire (in the later bulk of the material was unoriginal). Here aristocrats were keen to know everything about the bands including knowledge about artistic capability of musicians. For instance prince Schwarzenberg send his musician Jiří Triebensee to study in famous class of Besozzi in Dresden. This kind of involvement allowed to achieve high artistic quality in the sense of exploiting talented musicians and local composers (Oettingen-Wallerstein, Rudolstadt).

Patrons with such a character, including clergy, undoubtedly inspired artists to compose pieces artistically significant¹⁹ but we can hardly define this as a rule. Nevertheless, some of the collections and musical practices call for further investigation like *Harmony band* of count Pachta (Bohemia), which played through 50 years (1760–1811). The Count has got the best musicians available at this time in Prague and also good composers, but despite this a style has never improved – repertoire stuck on the very early stage (the collection is dominated by simple 5 or 6 part *Partitas* – this sort of piece was named by Marie Brandeis as *typical Bohemian Partita*). The part of the collection is lost so it is hard to explain why the style never significantly changed.

Highly evaluated compositions were written by those artists who was allowed to overcome the borders of their own court, land or even a country (or in some

¹⁹ In such cases we could speak about reciprocal recognition.

cases they fled away). They simply served on many courts, providing for themselves kind of individual study of composition (it was in fact Paris where Antonio Rosetti met with current musical styles). This conclusion may help to bring a new light to the subject of this lecture.

It is not surprising that a provocative question whether *Harmoniemusik* should be regarded as craft or artistry shall remain unanswered. But behind this unsettled matter stands another question and it is more likely to answer this one: why only few masterpieces of the genre appeared and craft music predominates. Mainly, because *Harmoniemusik* composers were active in local structures of music where they were staying for years (until retirement). That's why collections of many court archives contain pieces modeled according to one formal scheme. It is a basis for the opinion that this genre is a great document of the musical era being also a heritage of everyday musical activity (than we can say it was craft). On the other hand so called synthesis of the functioning elements and mature classical style could originate in the hand of authors who took care of their multi-sided education and get inspiration from important musical centers. To mention creative output of the Georg Druschetzky, Anton Rosetti, Franz Krommer and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, which define canon of the genre.

UMĚNÍ NEBO ŘEMESLO? SOCIOLOGICKÉ POZADÍ V UMĚLECKÉM VÝVOJI *HARMONIEMUSIK*

Příspěvek vznikl na základě disertační práce autora s názvem *Harmoniemusik – společenský a umělecký fenomén hudební kultury západní Evropy v 18. a první polovině 19. století*. Skladby pro soubory dechových nástrojů – dřevěných i žest'ových (s obvyklým složením 2 cl., 2 ob., 2 cr., 2 fg.) – byly rozšířené v mnoha evropských regionech. S dějinami tohoto fenoménu je spjat předpoklad o podmíněnosti repertoáru *Harmoniemusik* kombinací sociálních a politických faktorů, souvisejících s pěstováním tohoto repertoáru v různých typech prostředí – chrámovém, aristokratickém a vojenském. V tomto kontextu si pozornost zaslouží především vliv zmíněných prostředí na hudební strukturu repertoáru *Harmoniemusik*. Je samozřejmě obtížné jednoznačně odpovědět na onu provokativní otázku v titulu příspěvku. Avšak sociologizující přístup zabývající se vznikem a šířením repertoáru může přece jen některé otázky alespoň zčásti objasnit. Například proč vzniklo tak málo skutečných mistrovských děl v repertoáru *Harmoniemusik*, nebo – nazíráno z jiné perspektivy – jaké společenské okolnosti umožnily vznik oněch nemnohých mistrovských děl či rozvinutí skladatelských osobností v tomto okruhu instrumentální tvorby.

