

# FURTHERING THE BASES OF A ‘NATURAL’ NARRATOLOGY FOR MUSIC

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## 1. Introduction – Is music...?

First of all I have to address my position regarding several common questions about music. *What* is music in itself? I like Jacopo Baboni’s point of view (private comm.), who considers music as no more than a *judgment*: thus, nothing is music unless it is considered as such. Now that this is cleared out, let us consider – in a more pragmatic view for the present study – music as any kind of human organization of sound (whatever the pregnant parameters). To avoid confusion, I will *not* talk about opera or any kind of vocal music which uses semantic (verbal) content.

We can then ask ourselves: is music a language, or merely a means of communication? Closer to the topic of this paper, is music a narrative?

### 1.1. ...a language?

According to Coker (1972), language finds its basis in the use of symbols – i.e. a sign-object that has been “regularly used as a sign by some group of people so that it acquire[d] a definite set of conventional significations” (*ibid.*: 6).

He defines six criteria for the existence of a language:

1. A language consists of a complex of symbols.
2. The set of significations for each symbol is shared in common, at least to some extent, by the members of the linguistic community.
3. The symbols can be interpreted and usually produced by the normal members of the community.
4. The set of significations for each symbol is conventionally fixed, i.e., it is relatively constant with respect to appropriate spatiotemporal contexts of use.
5. A language has, or in principle is capable of having, a dictionary listing each symbol and its synonyms or the set of its significations.
6. A language has a syntax: it has structural rules for the kinds, the ordering, and the connection of symbols into permissible combinations. (*ibid.*: 7)

The third rule is the most striking in the case of music: if most people are able to “interpret” (tonal) musical symbols, be it only because of implicit learning, Cook (1992: 73) underlines the fact that most of those listeners would be incapable of producing a musical work themselves.

Then again, Keane (1986: 105) asserts that sound music (as opposed to note music) cannot deal with the content of the discourse (“what”) but only with its producer (“who”) and its reason (“why”). This stands in the way of electroacoustic music as a language.

We may thus agree on music in general *not* being a language. It could still, however, be a means of communication.

## ***1.2. ...a means of communication?***

The concept of “communication” is treated differently according to the perspectives of the disciplines using it.

In sociology Durkheim considered communication as an interaction in a network where collective representations are shared (see Bernicot & Bert-Erboul 2009: 27). We can easily see how music listening consists of a network of relations between composers, performers and listeners with collective representations such as tonal grammar. But – apart from interactive sound installation and the influence of the presence of an audience on the performer – how could occidental “serious” music be considered an interaction?

In psychology communication is considered as the “transmission of data [...] from a source to a recipient” (*Grand dictionnaire de la psychologie*). According to this point of view, music would thus not necessarily be a means a communication, since it does not intrinsically *carry* data. However, music listening constitutes an experience, and in this experience the listener *may* find data which the composer *may or may not* have put there – according to the degree to which their subjective, phenomenological modes of experiencing are similar.

In fact, Imberty (2011/12) considers musicality in itself to be the ability for communication, since music, just like communication in the first years of a child’s life, relies first and foremost on the experiencing of time. Thus music would not constitute a language as such, but a more “primitive” means of communicating.

And yet one could also say that since music is the result of a mental operation – as opposed to an object – it may be considered as *not being* a means of communication. This view is a bit provocative, because common sense would have music as a means of communication since it is produced by a composer for an audience which *a priori* considers the author while listening to the work.

This could even be what opposes music to non-music: intentionality and will to express or transmit something. Then again, the listener may find a musical experience in the listening of everyday sound – particularly so when the listener is a composer him/herself...

Let us not be drawn into bottomless debates: in this paper (and in my work in general) I do tend to consider music from the last perspective, as not being *intrinsically* a means of communication, because I study the reception of sound phenomena, all of which *can be* perceived or not as music by the listener, regardless of the existence or consideration of a composer. Music is then the (organizing) listening mode which transforms a sound phenomenon into a musical phenomenon.

## ***1.3. ...a narrative?***

### **1.3.1. Music’s narrativity – the structuralist point of view**

Grabócz coins music’s narrativity as “the mode of organization of signified inside a musical work” (2009: 67) and distinguishes between three modes of narrativity in music: the “external narrative program” (which prevails on the musical form adapted to it); the “internal narrative program” (which adapts to a classical musical form); and the “deep structure’s narrative program” (based on Greimas’ semiotic square) (*ibid.*: 68-76).

Even if this model allows for a better understanding of tonal music's form, structure and syntax, narrativity would be better considered here as a metaphor of said form, rather than as a characteristic of narrative. Nattiez discusses this question quite well:

I have in the past, shown some distance towards the works of what can be called narratological musicology, but I never went into details of my opinions. [...] The attitude of this orientation of contemporary musicology has the inconvenient of confounding the semiological functioning of musical configurations with the content of the esthetic behaviors which narrativise them [...]. To yield to the temptation of talking about a "musical story" is going from a metaphor to the ontological illusion that because music suggests a story, it would itself be a "narrative art", as Tarasti qualifies it (2007). [...] For now, I will simply underline that the great virtue of the concept of *topos* is to assert that there are classes of symbolic configurations [...] at the composers' disposal for a quite long period of time [...]. The notion of *topos* thus seems to be a remarkable add-on to the poietic dimension of musical semantics, completing the works of experimental psychologists (Francès, Imberty) who are indubitably situated on the esthetic side (and are unfortunately, completely ignored by the narratological musicologists...). (Nattiez 2011: 10-1)

He then emphasizes the ambiguity that can be found in the works of Tarasti and Grabócz, who would on one side describe narrativity as a syntax of *topoi* which allows for the understanding of the origin of the creation of narratives by listeners, and on the other side would qualify a work of "pure" music as discursive (*ibid.*: 11).

Moreover, there is the question of the arbitrariness of the analyses. In the following statement, while defending the justification of his choices for an analysis, Tarasti gives no indication as to *objective* criteria:

In the Polonaise Fantasy by Chopin, [...] the terms given first were the opening chords representing "plunging" and the opening arpeggio, which portrayed the principle of rising. These two terms are situated at S2 and non-S1 [on Greimas' semiotic square], respectively. Many have asked why they are not taken as S1 and non-S2. The opening cannot be anything like a "positive" statement – and hence S1 – since what is involved is in many senses a "distanciated" polonaise, both rhythmically and harmonically. The arpeggio cannot be seen as something positive either; it is, rather, a negation of something not yet heard as a particularly firm statement. (Tarasti 2004: 294)

Later in the same paper, he affirms that the "apparent arbitrariness" of divisions between "basic modalities of music" (*will, know, can, must*, etc.) is due to the fact that "it takes a competent music listener to notice their distribution all over the piece" (*ibid.*: 296-7). But what is a "competent" music listener? If one needs to *explicitly* learn the poietic code to decipher the "narrativity" of a piece, how is this code not arbitrary?

### 1.3.2. Musical narrativity

For those reasons – and because the model was not suitable for sound music – I chose to develop my own approach of musical narrativity, from an *esthetic* point of view. Ryan's model was a first step, with her distinction between "being a narrative" and "having narrativity" (2004a: 9) – which is not without link to the narratological musicology.

But in Ryan, even if music's narrativity is characterized by its inscription in time, we find ourselves with a view that music could be *lent* literature's narrativity because it can only evoke it (2004b: 268). *Musical narrativity* – as opposed to music's (literary) narrativity – would thus represent a broader view of narrativity which would encompass

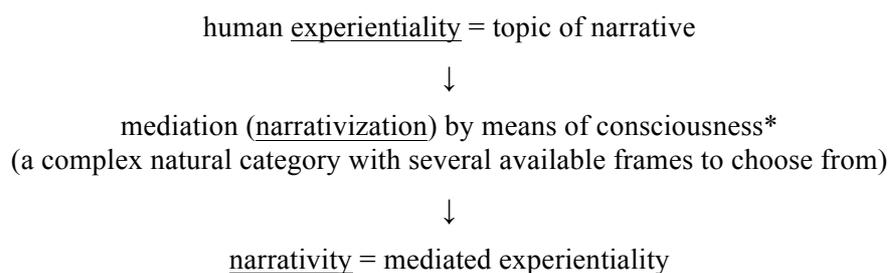
more than plots, characters and stories. Furthermore, in my opinion, narrativity needs to be considered solely from the receptor's point of view, because – at least in the case of music – the continuum between producer and receiver does not work in the same way it does with language, particularly when we deal with contemporary (art) music where the audience often has to challenge their pre-conceptions of listening.

Fludernik's 'natural' narratology (2002) seemed a good starting point for the development of my model. First and foremost, it included the idea that narrativity is not *intrinsic* to a text, but is rather *imposed* on it by readers, through "narrativization", in order to make sense of the text (*ibid.*: 34). She redefines "narrativity", anthropomorphic experientiality being the sole condition for it to exist (*ibid.*: 13). Then she furthers her research into narrative instances of texts which call for recuperation through narrativization, founding her analysis on the consideration of 'natural' narrative – i.e. oral, person-to-person narrative – as the basis for the construction of narrativization modes. We must thus split apart from the model to be able to study music as *more* than the recuperation of narrativity schemas from the use of verbal language.

This paper will explore four key-concepts towards the clarification of my 'natural' narratology for music. First, I will get into the details of the 'natural', experiential model offered by Fludernik at its most abstract level, and see to what extent it can be applied to music, and to what extent it must be adapted to it. Then, I will explain the reasons for my use of the literary concept of "focalization" as the "centration of experientiality" (Marty 2012) by comparing it with the more 'traditional' definitions. I will explore the segmentation of music and the making of ontological entities by the listener, and will conclude with the (most easy) adaptation of the diachronicity of Fludernik's model into my own.

## 2. A 'Natural' Narratology...

The proposed paradigm for 'natural' narratology can now be represented in diagram as follows:



\*Different forms of constituting consciousness:

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| (a) protagonist's consciousness | (EXPERIENCING) reflector-mode narrative                                   |
| (b) teller's consciousness      | (TELLING) teller-mode narrative   |
|                                 | (REFLECTING) self-reflexive function                                      |
| (c) viewer's consciousness      | (VIEWING) neutral narrative; Banfield's empty centre;<br>reflectorization |

(Fludernik 2002: 50 – my emphasis)

Primarily, what does 'natural' means? Fludernik is fully aware of the misleading aspect of this concept, which can be seen – and is often used – as correlated to innatism or

universalism. She does not mean to use it that way, and nor do I. But her definition of it, according to which “the natural [...is...] both a construction (in terms of being a reading effect) and a pre-given frame of human cognition”, still seems cryptic.

Its opposition to the “non-natural” – i.e. “strategies or aspects of discourse that do not have a natural grounding in familiar cognitive parameters or in familiar real-life situations” (*ibid.*: 10-1) – allows for a better understanding of what Fludernik means, although it seems to be only part of the problem, since the opposition is only viable, according to her, “in so far as the natural relies on, or reflects, basic cognitive processes which relate to human ‘immundation’ [...]” (*ibid.*).

## 2.1. *Experientiality*

Roughly, the ‘natural’ would rely on human situated and embodied cognition, and a ‘natural’ narratology would study narrativity drawing from the point of view of the receiver, the one who *conceives* it through the lens of his/her experience. Fludernik thus redefines narrativity as

a function of narrative texts [which] centres on experientiality of an anthropomorphic nature. [...] Actants in my model are not defined, primarily, by their involvement in a plot but, simply, by their fictional existence (their status as existents). Since they are prototypically human, existents can perform acts of physical movement, speech acts, and thought acts and their acting necessarily revolves around their consciousness, their mental centre of self-awareness, intellection, perception and emotionality. (*ibid.*: 26-7)

This would allow for the study of “plot-less” events like simple sentences or consciousness novels. But even so, the model seems to be attached to *narrative texts*. Fludernik’s work, in fact, takes its foundation upon oral narrative as the most ‘natural’ narrative – i.e. the one that will allow for the definition and study of narrativity in other contexts.

Thus, narrativity is enlarged, events and actantial or motivational parameters forming “only a zero degree of narrativity, a minimal frame for the production of experientiality” (*ibid.*: 311), but it seems Fludernik did not account for a use of her model to study musical works – i.e. works that do not use or need to use language to induce narrativity via experientiality. We would have to – and I will – stray from that point of view or at least put it into perspective, in the case of an adaptation to music.

## 2.2. *Narrativization*

### 2.2.1. *Defining narrativization*

Since the existence of narrativity rests on experientiality as it is conceived by the reader, Fludernik describes the process of “narrativization” (*ibid.*: 34) as derived from Culler’s “naturalization”, with an emphasis on experientiality and consciousness. Her use of this concept is different from that of Nattiez (2011) and White (1965) who describe narrativization as the construction of plot by the reader / listener – what Fludernik calls “storification” (Fludernik 2002: 34). I will begin with her definition of “narrativization”, as follows:

Narrativization applies one specific macro-frame, namely that of *narrativity*, to a text. When readers are confronted with potentially unreadable narratives, texts that are radically inconsistent, they cast about for ways and means of recuperating these texts as narratives –

motivated by the generic markers that go with the book. They therefore attempt to recognize what they find in the text in terms of the natural telling or experiencing or viewing parameters, or they try to recuperate the inconsistencies in terms of actions and event structures at the most minimal level. (*ibid.*)

Again, we find ourselves here dealing with a *semantic* and *procedural* framework based on (more or less) clearly defined ontological entities. In music – particularly so in new music – those entities are often less delineated, as their perception is much more labile from one listener / listening to another – this will be one of the points of 3.3.

### 2.2.2. Narrativization levels

Fludernik defines four “levels” of narrativization according to their contents and results:

1. The first level contains ‘natural’ relations anchored in human experience (e.g. agent / patient modes), causalities, motivations and consequences (*ibid.*: 43). This leads to the making of experientiality per se.
2. The second level contains the four “forms of constituting consciousness” shown in the diagram above. Fludernik links those forms with three narrative (narrator) “modes”. For instance a protagonist’s consciousness is (re)presented, through the EXPERIENCING frame, in a reflector-mode narrative (*ibid.*: 43-4). This allows, among other things, for the constitution of diegetic setting(s) and levels. Again we will have to take our distances from the narrator-oriented approach to get to our point.
3. The third level contains the current (narratological) codes and concepts for the understanding of defined narrative forms (narratives, movies, comics and so on – it doesn’t seem to me that music has entered this level yet) (*ibid.*: 44-5). This gives a heuristic frame which permits an easier interpretation of what is read.
4. The fourth level is the process of (active) narrativization which draws narrativity out of the contents of the three subsidiary levels (*ibid.*: 45-6). (Cognitive) processes and concepts that are frequently used in this level may become automatic and infiltrate the third level over time (*ibid.*: 329). The diversity of listening experiences might in this way be lost in favor of a heuristically-driven conceptual interpretation.

## 3. ...for Music

Let us now focus on the applicability of Fludernik’s model and concepts to the narratological study of music.

### 3.1. Music as “mediated experientiality”?

We saw that Fludernik defined narrativity as “mediated experientiality” (see the diagram above). Can music fulfill this condition? Since we concluded that it was neither a language nor a means of communication (or maybe a very basic, “primitive” one), the only way music could serve the mediation of experientiality is if it was, indeed, a means of mediation.

One would quickly fall into this trap: music is most evidently a medium. But I would like, again, to consider music not from a detached point of view, looking at the continuum between producer, work and receptor, but from a phenomenological point of view. For this supposed “continuum” has no reality if it is not *made up*. It is a commodity for the

musicologist aiming for an “objective” analysis, and a helping hand for the listener to attach what s/he *hears* to a human producer.

This seems to be a (psycho)sociological question – but I am no sociologist – that people would consider listening to a work not from their own point of view, but from that of the composer: I am hearing *someone's* work which is *lent* or *sold* to me for the time being; the work is complete and I am exterior to it; *something* is being *told* that *I* have no control over. This fits into the passive listening (hearing) adopted by most music consumers. But this is getting far ahead on a question I have no scientific control over.

For now, let us stop there: music does not exist by itself, nor does it have any objective reason to be automatically related to its composer, producer or performer. From the point of view of the listener, music exists as soon (or as late) as one experiences it. Furthermore the experience cannot then be “wrong”, because it *is*. It saddens me that some music teachers would tell a pupil that s/he is wrong saying Debussy's *Rêverie* is stressful.

Where does this leave us in terms of music and narrativity? *Musical narrativity is not constituted by “mediated experientiality”, but by experientiality in itself.*

### 3.2. Whose experientiality?

Narrativity can emerge from the experiential portrayal of dynamic event sequences which are already configured emotively and evaluatively, but it can also consist in the experiential depiction of human consciousness *tout court*. Any extended piece of narrative relies on both of these building stones. (Fludernik 2002: 29-30)

It is pretty clear that Fludernik is studying *narratives* and the “making” of them by readers. If we want to define a narratological model that studies *musical* (esthetic) narrativity instead of *music's* narrativity – “music as a narrative art” (Tarasti 2004: 283-304) or music as “mediated experientiality” – the need for a consciousness exterior to that of the receptor must be forgotten\*.

Whereas in literature the use of *semantic* content (language) allows for experientiality and consciousness to exist – or to be applied – first and foremost *in / through the text*, in the case of music, the experience is *always* that of the listener, even if s/he can exteriorize it in some instances. I would agree that experientiality is really *always* founded on empathy and projection of self-experientiality, but whereas (narrative) literature presents the reader with clear-cut containers made to receive experientiality (the characters and narrators), music does not – be it only because of convention and current cultural understanding.

How does one exteriorize experientiality in music then? The concept of focalization comes in handy at this point. Meelberg (2009) already used this concept in music, though it was subsumed under literary (classical) focalization, with the limit that it is impossible for a “musical narrative” to be internally focalized, since the performing / focalizing agent is never part of the fabula (*ibid.*: 258). But this is, again, a confusion between the music phenomenon and a narrative.

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\* Fludernik does not say this need is primordial, but she does not consider the possibility of the reader's experience being sufficient to narrativity either (although his/her *consciousness* is said to be sufficient for *narrativization*): “narrativity (in my definition of ‘experientiality’) seems to be at a bare minimum in neutral narrative [...]. This [...] fails to take account of the reader's active participation in the reading process. Although unimpassioned observation seems to characterize the non-experiential structure of neutral narrative, the majority of texts within the neutral mode trigger readings in which the protagonist's suppressed motivations, emotions or inclinations are adduced as implicitly signified by the narrative.” (Fludernik 2002: 173 – my underline)

Fludernik allows for both external (objective *vision sur*) and internal (experiential *vision avec*) focalizations – i.e. “viewpoints on non-human objects” (Fludernik 2002: 346) – and contends that “within Natural Narratology this is handled by the TELLING vs. EXPERIENCING and VIEWING frames”. It is interesting to note that given music is not compatible with the TELLING frame, as we discussed, focalization can only be *internal* in this perspective.

This fits the study of ‘natural’ musical narrativity. At first glance, the EXPERIENCING frame would allow the listener to narrativize music the way s/he experiences it, whereas the VIEWING frame would lead to the narrativization of an exteriorized experience (this will be further in the next section). I used the concept of focalization to describe this centration of experientiality upon oneself (egocentered focalization) or another – real or imagined – anthropomorphic being (heterocentered focalization) or system (exteroentered focalization) (Marty 2012).

### **3.3. Entities and spaces in musics**

#### **3.3.1. Music segmentation**

If one is to exteriorize his/her musical experience on an existent which belongs to the musical phenomenon, we must ask ourselves: can music be segmented beforehand? Can existents be defined so that music may be studied as a narrative? This question is to be treated with caution.

In the case of tonal music, is a “sheet music” listening perceptually relevant concerning the definition of ontological entities (themes, sentences, etc.)? Francès’ experiments X and XI (1972: 204-13) showed that, in fact, bithematic pieces (e.g. sonata forms) are often perceived to present more than two themes if the number of themes is not given before listening – and even when it is, “errors” do occur. The themes (and number thereof) perceived are variable among listeners, which allows us to doubt – again – the possibility to consider specific, unchanging ontological entities as actants or even existents, in tonal music. Thus, Tarasti’s theory is on a frail ground as he tries to define what in music may lead listeners to construct narratives using poietic/musicological thematic segmentation.

The case of contemporary instrumental musics is simpler, because it seems fairly evident that segmentation is not the same from one listening to another. But in their relation to acousmatic musics, we may find that the composer often works on entities. Then again, as we have seen with tonal music, it is fairly certain that those entities are not always segmented as such by listeners.

We could also think about using Gestalt theory in order to segment a piece, as this would probably be closer to a “basic” segmentation by listeners. But this would be forgetting that listening modes/strategies have an influence on cognitive segmentation. Thus, Gestalt segmentation would only be another artificial, limiting process. We thus have to accept that entities common to all listeners cannot be clearly defined in any music. Even if this seems to be an existential problem for music narratology, it is not necessarily: we can study *what the listener makes of entities one s/he has defined them*.

#### **3.3.2. Parameter spaces**

A question now comes to mind: even in the case of a segmentation of entities, in which space do these evolve? In tonal music, if the main theme becomes a “character”, it can

absolutely not evolve in physical space, given that no tonal music used physical space as a pregnant parameter of composition. In contemporary instrumental musics, if a particular timbre, color or density is ontologically defined, the problem stays the same in most cases (the exceptions being pieces like Stockhausen's *Carré* where physical space is actually composed).

In acousmatic musics, however, physical space (or rather the illusion thereof) is most often composed as a pregnant parameter. Thus, acousmatic pieces may allow delineated entities to evolve in physical space and keep their identity/unicity all along. I talked about "abstract" or "independent" acousmatic diegeses to designate this phenomenon (Marty 2012). I will only *mention* what I called "referential" or "contextual" acousmatic diegeses (*ibid.*), as they are related to the construction of imaginary worlds and are maybe the easiest to apprehend in a general fashion.

Furthermore, since listening modes may be quite different from one listener to another, it is not absurd to imagine that one could listen to an instrumental work as if s/he was listening to acousmatic spatial music, and could construct an independent diegesis. At this point, however, the risk for an overuse of metaphorization is quite high: the fact that it is easy to hear accompanied melody as the experience of a character in a setting (constituted by the rhythmic-harmonic fields) *does not mean* that the piece is a narrative.

Those uses of physical space may be related to the VIEWING frame, since they involve few (or no) abstraction to be interpreted as experiential. Contrarily to my conclusion to the previous section, the VIEWING frame does not only correlate with heterocentered experientiality, but can be related to egocentered experientiality too, as the listener may be in the position of apprehending phenomena *around him/her* – without having to exteriorize experientiality to those phenomena.

But this is not sufficient: what spaces allow for the experiential evolution of ontological entities? What allows the listener to imagine an entity as experiencing something? Here we enter the realms of parameter spaces. In tonal music, the main parameters are often pitch, beat, event density and intensity. In contemporary music, diverse timbre parameters such as brightness, roughness or spectral density have taken a much more important place.

The formal ordering of those parameters may allow the listener to consider the entities previously defined as EXPERIENCING something that does not (necessarily) involve physical space – although in the case of pitch, a larger discussion may emerge. The EXPERIENCING frame may thus be useful in the case of heterocentered experientiality as well as with egocentered experientiality.

Furthermore, even with extero-centered focalization (e.g. musicological, analytical listening), the *whole system's* experience – i.e. the ontological construction of the work – is the matter of listening. But there again, even if the temptation is great to reduce this to narrativization, we must be careful and accept that this listening, even if it *can* (and probably does) involve narrativization (mimesis) processes cannot be limited to them.

A last distinction may be made, that between entities constructed "on the spot" – i.e. at the moment they are first perceived, as their perceived *presence* takes effect – and entities constructed in – and depending on – the time of their existence. This distinction correlates with the one between "diegeses" in physical space and experiential "mimesis" in parameter spaces.

Motivational and/or actantial parameters can most easily be applied to the first kind of entities (that I called *anthropomorphization* (*ibid.*) and Khosravi (2012) described as ‘the birth of autonomous spectromorphological entities’), would be rather difficult to implement on the second kind, because of its non-extension in time.

### **3.4. Diachronicity/Synchronicity**

Unlike the traditional narratological typologies of Genette, Bal, Bonheim, Lanser, Chatman, Prince or Greimas and Todorov, this model, like Stanzel’s, is conceived as explicitly historical, as a synchronic descriptive frame that can be applied to the diachrony of narrative forms. This historical parameter allows for an additional level of generic development, of the move from new narrativizations (the third-person omniscient mode, the consciousness novel) to the constitution of current generic types. Once new generic types get installed, they are no longer perceived as non-natural and in need of narrativization. That is to say there is no longer a need to reinterpret such textual constellations against the grain. Narrativization has become automatized. (Fludernik 2002: 329)

This relation between diachrony of a given art form and the synchrony of the model may be used in my approach as well. In fact, it seems to me that (almost) any kind of listening may be applied by (almost) any listener to (almost) any sonorous phenomena. Even if some of those relations may seem unclear and hard to get at first, they may become automatized too, through the use of ‘natural’ parameters. This may be the case, for instance, of an independent (i.e. non-representational) diegetic listening to tonal (non-spatial) music – which would incidentally be related to the acoustics of the listening room, and which is often, to me at least, a wonderful musical experience.

### **3.5. Reduction of meaning**

The main difference with Fludernik’s report is that *listening* strategies do not (all) aim for narrative recuperation, although most of them seem to at least *include* narrativizing (i.e. experience-related) recuperation. There again, it is the possibility for the experience to be that of the listener (rather than that of a clear-cut character/entity) that allows it to possess narrativity without the need to *make it into* a narrative – but it is by definition *possible* to transform (although rarely without some loss due to language limitations) any and all narrativized phenomena that way.

Fludernik underlines a limit to the narrativization process: imposing narrativity on the text and concretizing the existence of a fictive world and consciousness reduces the metaphoric and philosophic potentials of the text (*ibid.*: 373). In the case of my ‘natural’ narratology for music, since the existence of the fictive world is not mandatory, this limit is weakened. Furthermore, the *concretization* of a consciousness too may not be mandatory for experience to exist – even though a consciousness would be supposedly existent. The processes at work at this point (towards metaphoric and philosophic perception) constitute what I call “semiotic abstraction/narrativization processes”, and are the topic of another presentation (Marty 2013).

## **Summary**

Throughout this paper, I tried to show that music was neither a language, nor a means or communication, and even less a narrative. However, considering narrativity not as an

attribute of narratives, but as one of experientiation, music *listening* can be viewed as presenting narrativity.

A review of Monika Fludernik's 'Natural' Narratology allowed me to analyze which components were suitable for an adaptation to music. I took the idea of "narrativization" to signify the recuperation via 'natural' experiential parameters and processes. The concept of "experientiality" was detached from its "mediateness" because of the solely esthetic nature of the listening experience and the absence of a pre-determined segmentation of experiential entities – although I coined "focalization" as the centration of experientiality, whether on the listener him/herself or on any other (constructed) entity.

Among the four "forms of constituting consciousnesses" offered by Fludernik, only two were found suitable for the analysis of music reception: VIEWING and EXPERIENCING. The first one was linked to the apprehension of physical space, while the second one was considered to rely on parameter spaces. I distinguished between "diegeses" in physical space and experiential "mimesis" in parameter spaces.

### ***Potential uses of the model***

Now that all that is said, what can this model be used for? A musicological analysis of a piece of music cannot be done with this model in its current state, be it only because of the lack of completion it presents (particularly in the semiotic and proprioceptive domains). *But* the extension of it, and the collection of reactions to some kinds of music may help us understand the basic rules of segmentation proper to each listening mode, and widen the way towards a phenomenological, multi-dimensional (narratology / psychology / musicology), esthetic analysis. It may also help in apprehending diverse narrativization processes among multisensory experiences.

Furthermore, if listening modes are indeed categorized and confirmed, they could be taught to listeners. This is one of the key points of my future research: how can we teach acousmatic listening to people so that they find a satisfactory and rich experience in the listening of such works or even in the listening of their everyday environment? Furthermore, how can we teach them that *without* having them *make* such music?

All forms of musical experience could (and probably should) be the subject matter of psychophysiology, phenomenology and musicology, all of which are integral parts of a 'Natural' Narratology for Music.

### ***Addendum – Food for thought***

Feedback about the presentation of this paper allowed me to reconsider the field of study. I would thus like to put some things into perspectives and to draft some general ideas about my field of study: the model presented here is concerned with the cognitive processes which allow for the construction of diverse narratives by the listeners. It does not study the narratives *per se*. In this regard, it is closer to Imberty's view about the proto-narrative experience of time than to the current narratological musicology.

But both of those models still rely on the poietic point of view: Imberty with the definition of a composer's style as his/her organization of time, Tarasti with his proposal that a piece of music *is in itself* a narrative.

I would thus like to encourage the study of the proto-narrativity of the *listening experience*, which is fairly varied amongst listeners since it relies on the diverse listening

modes / listening strategies. I believe these are correlated – and this is the topic of my current research – with modes of experiencing time.

A ‘Natural’ Narratology for Music may then study the (more or less) narrative texts produced by listeners after a listening experience, in order to obtain indices as to both the experience and the listener.

One could then be interested with how oral accounts of a musical experience influence further listening / cognizing – which would be closer to Fludernik’s model and to narratology in general.

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