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The exercise of power in music groups: a psychosocial approach

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Problematisation

- 1 In social psychology, there is an established notion by which “any group whose purpose involves the diversification and complementarity of tasks develops an organising principle that coordinates and controls its production”.¹ Music groups are no exception to this rule: as ethnomusicologist Simha Arom observed, “As soon as a musical event requires two or more individuals, even a simple chant executed in unison, it demands a mode of coordination.”² One such mode is particularly familiar to us: that in which a musician specially trained for this purpose is assigned the task of synchronising the musicians using conventional and personal gestures. While highly emblematic, the action of this “chief” (the orchestra or choir conductor) is certainly not necessary for the collective execution of music to take place, yet the definition of distinct and complementary roles is the very principle on which most instituted musical corps in the West are based. We are led to wonder, then, how this “organising principle” develops in all contexts of collective musical activity, including ensembles with no conductor. What is the decision-makers’ authority based on? Is there equal awareness of different questions of power, and are such questions equally expressible and negotiable in all types of ensembles, at every stage of their development? And when there is a conductor, is he the only person responsible for coordinating the group in every aspect of its activity?
- 2 In Europe, the need for specialised and centralised musical direction became increasingly important in the eighteenth century in order to execute the art music repertoire, due to the growing size of ensembles and complexity of the works. In the nineteenth century, the swelling of orchestras and symphonic repertoires led to a swelling of the role and power of the conductor, elevating him to the status of absolute master who held the fate

of the works and the musicians in his hands.⁴ But this absolutism did not last: at the start of the twentieth century more democratic modes of musical direction began to emerge,⁵ and today the role of conductor is still evolving as musical, social, institutional and technological changes occur.⁶ However, the authority figure the conductor has represented since the historic greats—conductors reputed to be obstinate geniuses or dictators (Toscanini, Karajan, etc.)—remains deeply engraved in our collective imagination, at the risk of ordaining the conductor an ideal type figure—or sole figure of musical authority—and eclipsing the complexity and diversity of forms of power that can exist in music groups.

- 3 Here, we will consider the function of the conductor from a broader perspective, examining the way roles are distributed in the “small groups”⁷ which all musical ensembles constitute by definition, in order to describe the variety of coordinating and directive strategies at play within them. We have explored this perspective through an interview-based study of musicians from a variety of backgrounds. The study sought to bring to light the interviewees’ concrete experience of the forms of leadership they have observed as members of different types of music groups. Our study was based on a broad cross-sectional approach, covering musical spheres and music groups that are usually studied separately. We indiscriminately interviewed musicians from the Baroque, classical, jazz, rock, etc., in order to identify the interpersonal dynamics that result from collective musical practice, without too narrow a focus. We wanted to avoid falsely attributing to one certain musical sphere, genre or type of practice, phenomena that are in fact tied to a higher level of rationale shared by all types of musical practice (bodily coordination), and perhaps even collective practice in general (the principle of collaboration). While this approach does not enable precise micro-sociological analysis and poses certain lexical problems in terms of formulating the findings,⁸ we think it can help provide a mesological perspective on the specific “sub-field” of collective music playing within the vast universe of Western musical practices today, which are primarily studied in the fields of sociology of music (in France) and popular music studies. Our goal is to analyse the interdependence between the individual/musician and the “micro-milieu” (around him and including him) made up of the group of musicians synchronised *hic et nunc* in the creation, execution or interpretation of a multipartite musical text.⁹ Defined this way, the point of this mesological framework is not to discuss the role of non-interpretive, or even non-human, intermediaries, as Howard Becker and Antoine Hennion have done. We will see, however, that it does bring to light the central role played by one of the “aims” of musical practice, i.e., execution of the musical text by the musicians.
- 4 This article presents the results of a thematic analysis of our interviews with the musicians mentioned above on the subject of leadership in music groups. We will first explain the relevance of using social psychology, particularly the notion of the “small group”, in our investigation of relational dynamics in music ensembles. We will then begin by examining how power is distributed between the various musicians present: outlining the range of strategies used to ensure musical cohesion in various ensembles, and the distribution of the musical and non-musical responsibilities perceived and described by the musicians interviewed, we will set forth a proposed typology of the directive configurations that came to light in the study. We will then show that the musical text—because it keeps a record of the patrimonialised socio-musical relationships

that are to be reproduced or subverted with each new interpretation—is a mediator with a certain amount of power in defining the relationships between musicians.

The music group: when a psychosocial structure meets the phenomenon of power

The gap

- 5 In our multidisciplinary survey of the literature on interpersonal dynamics in music groups, we identified a gap that needs to be bridged between two largely disconnected areas of research: 1) theories on group behaviour and 2) studies on real music groups. Probably because they have developed in separate scientific fields, there is very little dialogue between these two areas.¹⁰ Indeed, social psychologists and group behaviour theorists have mainly studied experimental groups, and sometimes real groups with various purposes,¹¹ but oddly enough, they seem to have largely overlooked music groups. Indeed, the field research conducted over the past fifteen years in French musical spheres¹² is based on a sociological rather than psychosociological approach: studies tend to define ideal type musician profiles¹³ or describe the cultural characteristics and boundaries between music “worlds”¹⁴, “scenes”, or “networks” as they exist in France at the local, regional and national levels. Intragroup relationships (those between musicians in the same musical ensemble) are addressed only in passing, as if by collateral effect, and are often presented as the result of the musicians’ social identities and the societal contexts in which their musical practice exists. However, in view of the theories on group dynamics that are now available, it is worth exploring whether the relationship behaviours that can be observed in a musical ensemble depend solely on “external” factors or if they are, to some degree, the result of specifically musical or group-based rationales, as research by Jean-Marie Seca and Damien Tassin suggests. Initiating a dialogue between the social psychology and sociology of musical practices, these two authors have written on the fundamental role of “the band” in the world of rock music, inasmuch as the band creates “simultaneous awareness of the I and the We articulated within a complex unit”¹⁵ while at the same time producing intense emotional experiences that can even become the goal of the musical practice.

The music group as a small group

- 6 Simone Landry defines the small group as “a psychosocial system made up of around three to twenty people who, co-presence, act and interact with a more or less well-defined common purpose underlying their action.”¹⁶ In her work, the term “psychosocial structure” applies to structures whose members develop immediate ties to each other by virtue of spending time in each other’s presence (co-presence), as opposed to the syntagma “social structure”, which is reserved for “structured ensembles whose members cannot all be in each other’s presence because their membership to this larger structure is mediated by membership to intermediary structures, i.e., psychosocial structures”.¹⁷
- 7 Twelve characteristics are required, and sufficient, for a real group to fit Landry’s theoretical model of a small group: a common purpose; a small number of members (three to twenty); a duration of several hours to several years; the existence of a

boundary between the group and its environment; co-presence and immediate interactions between the members; interdependence of the members; structure in term of power, the organisation and division of labour, and the network of interpersonal relationships; emergence of a group culture; differentiation between roles relating to the group's work, its emotional relationships and its power relationships; emergence of norms in terms of work, affection and power; emergence of beliefs, rites and a symbolic language specific to the group; sustained, concrete and symbolic interactions between the group and its environment.¹⁸

- 8 Incidentally, the picture of certain types of music groups that emerges from French sociological studies allows them to be qualified as typical small groups. As described in these studies, these ensembles with clear boundaries—early music groups, orchestras (string, woodwind, symphonic), choirs, chamber ensembles, jazz bands and pop/rock bands (in all of their aesthetic diversity: hard rock, metal, fusion, folk, etc.)—demonstrate almost all of the characteristics.¹⁹ However the same cannot be said of short-lived musical associations (jam sessions, flash mobs, karaoke evenings, audiences singing during pop/rock concerts, etc.), which therefore have not been considered for the writing of this article. The hip-hop, rap and techno scenes will not be addressed either: the specifically musical practices manifested in these arenas are much more individual, and sometimes even delegated to technical tools in order to allow the musicians to focus on the verbal text and the body. We feel that applying the notion of a "music group" to this type of musical expression would be overly simplistic.

The question of power

- 9 There is a psychosociological law (inherent to small groups) according to which groups sooner or later necessarily find that they need some form of organisation, and are therefore confronted with the question of power. Various models of the power structure established within groups have been proposed: Pierre Clastres, for example, suggested that power is inherent to the group, i.e., that the power is in fact held by the group, and it is the group that temporarily delegates authority to certain individuals.²⁰ Most models of small groups make a distinction between two dimensions requiring decision-making authority within the scope of the group's activity: 1) the instrumental dimension (executing the task) and 2) the socio-emotive dimension (managing the relationships). In another example, Simone Landry's tripartite theoretical model in which the decision-making sphere is afforded some degree of autonomy, she postulates that there are three dynamic areas in small groups: the work, affection and power areas. Each of these areas has its own stakes and dynamics. These sub-structures can be isolated and are more directly accessible for study than the structure as a whole, but are also interdependent: the position and role that a member holds in one area depends on his positions in the other two areas.²¹
- 10 On first consideration, Clastres's concept does not seem very relevant to most orchestras and choirs, in which the function of the conductor and the musical corps itself precede the individuals who physically make up the ensembles. The conductor can seem like a separate member of the group, or even like a figure invited to take part in the group's history, but not organically linked to it. But when the figure of the orchestra conductor is considered diachronically, it becomes clear that this figure emerged over time as the gradual externalisation of a role specifically dedicated to synchronising the ensemble—a

task that was originally delegated to one or more instrumentalists in the group. From the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, various techniques for conducting "from the instrument" could be found throughout Europe, such as the concertmaster conductor in Italy, the keyboard conductor in Germany, and double conducting with the continuo in England. Marking the beat with a long baton—a technique employed in France in the seventeenth century, mainly for opera—is another intermediary mode of conducting, more separate from actual playing in the ensemble than previous methods.²² The orchestra conductor as such did not appear until the nineteenth century when, for the first time, a musician relieved of any instrumental function was designated to coordinate the orchestra musicians. This role quickly evolved to include making interpretative choices for the ensemble, which was perceived as a single entity.²³ As described above, the power of the conductor proceeded to expand, permeating into every aspect of the orchestra's existence, becoming almost tyrannical in the first half of the nineteenth century, and then declining in the post-war period when it was redistributed between multiple figures (e.g., an general manager, a principal conductor and several guest conductors). This is where we see Clastres's model of the delegation of power as having some relevance, if it is transposed to a macroscopic scale: in examining the history of the symphonic corps, we can see how this phenomenon of delegation was deployed and its variability over centuries of evolution in musical practices.

- 11 However, while some mode of decision-making is something groups must have, in order to understand the subtleties of various forms of "musical leadership", we must examine not only the ideal type figure of the professional orchestra conductor, but also conductorless music groups. What modes of decision-making prevail in the most instituted conductorless ensembles in Western music, such as string quartets, amateur rock bands, and jazz trios? Who decides what in a Baroque ensemble, an amateur choir or a rock band? And what is there legitimacy based on?
- 12 To answer these questions, we have combined two research methods: first, a qualitative meta-analysis of the socio-ethnographic literature²⁴ on contemporary musical practices in different musical spheres (early music, classical music, jazz and pop/rock), and second, a series of semi-structured interviews conducted according to the principles of pragmatic sociology on the theme of musical leadership, with amateur musicians who are active in multiple music groups or musical spheres.
- 13 According to currently available sociographic data on French musicians, an individual's musical practice can rarely be reduced to the genre of music he tends to play, the music group he belongs to, or the instrument he is playing at a given point in his career, any more than it can adequately described by the diplomas he holds or his status as an amateur or professional musician. A musician's identity is based on the accumulation and diversification of musical experiences, groups and activities he is or has been a part of.²⁵ There are classical violin students who work at Paganini in the morning and play in jam sessions at a jazz club in the evening; it is common for rock musicians to play in multiple bands at the same time; belonging to both an orchestra and a chamber ensemble is a well-established habit among professional orchestra musicians; one might play bass in a group at age seventeen and keyboards in another at age twenty-five; and so on. When we begin to study the field of musical practices, we are confronted not so much with types of musicians as types of *musician careers*, including so-called amateur practice. Here, we will also report the findings of our analysis of seventeen semi-structured interviews with active musicians between the ages of twenty-five and fifty (nine men and eight women).

To qualify for the study, their career had to meet the following criteria: 1) span at least ten years and 2) include experience in at least three groups (whether attended in succession or at the same time). The profile defined in this way gave us access to a wide variety of experiences for our research: the seventeen musicians we interviewed had collectively taken part in some fifty amateur, semi-professional and professional groups, including eight orchestral ensembles, seven classical chamber ensembles, and around ten choirs and twenty pop/rock and jazz bands.

- 14 It should be noted that we did not *a priori* take the amateur or professional status of the musicians selected into consideration, as this is not always easy to determine. For example, several of the members of classical ensembles whom we interviewed hold higher education degrees in music and have played in at least one group made up primarily of professional musicians, but were not earning their living as a musician at the time of the interview. Similarly, among the musicians active in non-classical spheres, several had already played at least one paid concert, but only two had several years of full-time paid employment as a musician under their belt.
- 15 In order to avoid heavily connotative words such as "power", "direction", "control", "domination", "authority" and "influence", we asked the musicians to describe "who decided what" in the groups they had been a part of. This question had the advantage of encouraging a focus on the range of decision-making components (types of decisions, how they were distributed, etc.) rather than the personality of the decision-makers. Hence, we chose to take a structural-functionalist and situationist approach in our study of musical leadership, which has the "advantage of placing more emphasis on, first, the group functions around which the leader's acts of influence are articulated, and second, the context specific to each group in which leadership is required, rather than focusing on the person who is the leader and their personal qualities".²⁶

Forms of leadership in a musical context

- 16 Based on his research in ethnomusicology, Simha Arom has asserted that any execution of music involving two or more musicians requires a mode of coordination to be established, and that "all the more so in music with multiple parts, ordered and simultaneous interaction exists between the participants, with a distribution of roles."²⁷ As we will demonstrate, the specific problems of attack (starting together) and coordination (playing together) actually concern all groups, even conductorless groups, regardless of their size and stylistic identity.

Official and unofficial forms of leadership

- 17 The most emblematic mode of musical coordination in the common sense is that in which a musician specially trained for this purpose is assigned the task of unifying an ensemble using conventional gestures. From this perspective, the profile of the orchestra or choir director appears as a role to be played in a musical interaction, in which the need for leadership increases the larger the number of musicians involved. Cross-sectional consideration of music groups shows a direct correlation between group size and the establishment of centralised/specialised musical leadership: almost all orchestras and choirs have conductors, whereas smaller groups such as chamber ensembles, jazz groups and pop/rock bands—generally made up of three to seven musicians—usually do not.

There is a simple reason for this: with a group of more than ten musicians, it becomes difficult to attain a satisfactory degree of coordination without "externalising" certain signals. The choir singers and classical instrumentalists we interviewed emphasised the basic coordinating role of the conductor and the importance of anticipating potential weaknesses in the conductor's technique. "In theory, it's [the conductor] who gives the cue to begin, coordinates any slowing down at the end of phrases, and keeps everyone at the right tempo. This is the 'basic service' we expect him to deliver. But in practice, this is not always the way it works....," explained a violinist active in several student orchestras and "telephone" ensembles.²⁸ Indeed, our interviews brought to light a number of nuanced situations in which the reality does not match the theory.

- 18 For example, there are circumstances in which a conductor may be leading an orchestra in form but not in fact; in other words, he employs the expected gestures, but the musicians are not actually following them. In the case of "telephone" orchestras composed of highly skilled amateurs and (future) professionals placed under the direction of amateur conductors with mediocre skills (or in any case, skills perceived as such), rather than following unconventional, fragile or unstable conducting gestures, the musicians tend to set up *strategies for working around the conductor*,²⁹ aligning themselves instead with the concertmaster, a section leader, a solo part or the basses.

This is sometimes decided explicitly, explained one violist. We make signs to each other or discuss it in our section or during breaks. But sometimes there is no dialogue. Each person does what he wants, or simply the best he can, and it all gets a bit haphazard... There may be a slight delay between the first violin's attack and the basses' reaction, so if one musician is following the first violin and his neighbour is following the bassoon or the trombones, even musicians in the same section can be out of sync, and everyone gets frustrated.

- 19 In amateur orchestras (typically student orchestras), there are often a handful of professional musicians or advanced conservatory students who hold the section leader positions and play an instructional role with the other instrumentalists. One of their responsibilities is to very visibly relay the conductor's signs, as well as to stay "tuned-in" to one another in order to create a reliable "network" within the orchestra. Hence, there is an attentive internal "oligarchy" that supports or compensates for the conductor's work; each of these individuals strives to keep the less experienced musicians in his section under control.

When the orchestra gets carried away, which tends to happen with young people, it is often thanks to the pros and experienced amateurs in the orchestra that order is restored. They keep the tempo, or even slow down, and you can match their playing instead of getting swept up in the flurry. At orchestra O., I was playing next to a real pro. It was fantastic. When he attacked, you followed suit without even thinking about it, almost as if your arm were attached to his! (a cellist)

- 20 The same phenomenon exists in amateur choirs, where more experienced singers act as a reference point for beginners in terms of both keeping the tempo and accurate tone. A singer who is now part of a semi-professional female vocal ensemble said:

I was in a girls' choir when I was a teenager. The conductor's daughter was sort of like the soprano section leader. If something was off, she sang louder, or else she marked the first beat with her head. She showed us where we were in the sheet music... And we followed her lead; we trusted her. We knew she was better at getting it right than we were, and that it was to our benefit to align ourselves with her.

- 21 In professional orchestras, the leadership provided by section leaders is institutionalised and comes with salary benefits.³⁰ Although more spontaneous and implicit in amateur orchestras, this leadership is just as effective, but the benefits for those who assume this role come in the form of esteem, recognition or admiration rather than financial compensation.
- 22 These accounts from our interviewees suggest that even when delegated to a conductor, musical coordination is not achieved by a single individual; rather, it is the product of a subtle combination of the taking/relaying of power by some and assumed obedience or corporal mimicry by others, within a pyramid-type structure that places each musician under the control of a “superior”. This confirms that a phenomenon observed by Landry in other types of groups also exists in large groups of musicians: “Depending on how big they are, small groups are structured into two or three hierarchical status classes, with the leader situated at the top of the first.”³¹ From the conductor to the intermediary “musician conductors” to the musicians in the lowest tier, the way the musical work is organised in large ensembles is based on an internal hierarchy, which is formal in professional orchestras and informal in amateur ensembles.

The role of convention in musical spheres

- 23 Small vocal and instrumental ensembles generally operate without a specialised conductor, but they still need to coordinate their action in order to ensure, at the very least, synchronised starts and a common tempo. Our study reveals remarkable diversity in the strategies developed by music groups and the history of music to ensure accurate musical coordination.
- 24 In classical ensembles, it is common practice for one musician to give the preparatory beat and, when necessary, to coordinate any tricky ends of phrases and transitions. To do this, he uses movements of the hands, head and arms with the instrument and even the entire body; in other words, he uses visual signals, and often his gaze for emphasis. “You first need to establish eye contact with each person, to make sure that everyone is ready and that everyone is with you. Just one person looking away when you begin can mess up the whole start. When you’re sure that everyone is ready to go, you raise your arm, and... *viva la musica!*” said an amateur choir singer and violinist who is active in vocal and instrumental groups that perform at private events. Convention has it that this role goes to the first violin in string quartets. In other groups, it is assumed by the melodist or soloist instrument, or otherwise by the instrument providing the base rhythm. In still other cases, it goes to the most competent musician or simply “the one who feels up to the task and does it well enough not to mess everyone up” (*idem*). In the female vocal ensemble mentioned above, the cue to begin is sometimes given by one singer and sometimes by another, but never by the group’s founder. She explains the reason for this: “I already take care of all the rest, so once the concert begins, I want to be able to sing freely without worrying about the start of each piece because it’s up to me to give the start cue. And this gives L., who wants to learn conducting, the opportunity to practice within our group.”
- 25 Providing a “good” start cue is no easy task, and developing this skill is the subject of very explicit instruction in chamber music and conducting classes: “At the conservatory, I had to take part in a project involving mini-orchestras created to help conducting students train. This experience really opened my eyes to the problem of the start cue. It’s a lot

more difficult than we imagine; it's not just a question of marking the beat" (a clarinetist); "At the academy, it's often the instructor who gives the cue to start playing, but at the conservatory, my chamber music professor was an excellent violinist, and *konzertmeister*³² in a professional orchestra. He taught me to give a 'precise energy' and not just a gesture" (a violinist).

- 26 The coordinating strategies common in jazz and pop/rock groups are of a very different nature. Because rock bands, almost without exception, have a drummer or rhythm section that provides an extremely clear and audible beat, the musicians are in a sense "spared" the type of collective tempo management strategies that small classical groups have to work out due to traditions in classical composition that distribute the rhythm line between different sections. Moreover, in jazz, pop and rock, the signals used to ensure synchronisation and entrances at the right tempo involve audible events: either a measure is counted out loud ("one... two... one-two-three-four!") or beat by the drummer, or an intro played by a single musician sets the tempo and mood, which it is up to the other musicians to match by coming in harmoniously. These two strategies can even coexist within the same group or concert. One of the pop/rock bands we met during the interviews saves counting-in for its most energetic songs, opting for solo intros in the rest of its repertoire in order to spare the drummer (who is still fairly inexperienced) the repeated stress of having to set the tempo for his partners. In another band, the bassist systematically does the counting-in, because: "His sense of rhythm is unbeatable. None of us can set the tempo as well as him. We've all tried and there's no comparison..."

- 27 On the subject of synchronising the start of a piece, an ideal that frequently came up in our interviews was a level of sensorial complicity that eliminates the need for any start signal at all:

I once saw a quartet perform in a small concert hall... In my memory, none of the four musicians made the slightest gesture; they weren't even looking at each other, yet their attack was perfect. And it was like that throughout the entire concert: they were so in-tune with each other that it was as if they were no longer four separate people, but a single body that breathed without even thinking about it... I think they had been playing together since they were teenagers, so I guess that explains it (a violist).

- 28 Several of the musicians we interviewed said this level of complicity can be attained with enough work, but will always be somewhat fragile and uncertain. Shared sensoriality can be affected by stage fright or distraction, and depends on the group's uniformity in terms of using the same vocal placement and instrument attack techniques. "In a concert, it's better to take the easy option of using an explicit signal than to risk making a fool of yourself by flubbing the start of a piece just because you were trying to impress the audience by starting in perfect unison as if by magic" (a professional singer).
- 29 Synchronising individual musicians is the *sine qua non* of all collective musical practice, and the previous section illustrates that there is no synchronisation without conventions—in the "Beckerian" sense of the word³³ laid out by Pierre François. At the end of his study on the construction of sound in early music orchestras, François offers this dynamic view of the term *conventions*:

H. Becker (Becker 1988) insists on the fact that conventions provide a repertory of proven solutions that everyone is familiar with and to which everyone spontaneously refers. [...] However, the activation of shared principles alone does not explain how the actions of different individuals can be perfectly coordinated:

the sharing of conventional principles needs to be perpetually supplemented by in situ coordination efforts.³⁴

- 30 Explicit or explainable, varying from one musical sphere to another, and always renegotiable in the "behind the scenes" context of rehearsals, conventions are always there to help support this delicate moment, when in the blink of an eye, each person needs to step outside his inner time in order to enter a shared temporality. Alfred Schütz (1951) theorised that this "mutual tuning-in relationship" is "established by the reciprocal sharing of the Other's flux of experiences in inner time, by living through a vivid present together, by experiencing this togetherness as a 'We'".³⁵

Non-musical leadership

- 31 Thus, as we have just seen, managing bodily and sensorial coordination is a key component of leadership in a musical context. In the case of large groups, the emergence of a power distribution structure (a hierarchy) serves, among other things, to offset any potential individual weaknesses that could jeopardize the musical cohesion. Nevertheless, the question of power in musician collectives involves more than the musical aspect of the work: when we examine this question from the opposite angle, asking instead which responsibilities are assumed by the different musicians in a group, other power structure mechanisms that exist in different musical spheres come to light.
- 32 Most of the musicians we asked about decision-making in the music groups they belong to spontaneously made a clear distinction between two areas of decision-making. The first pertains to the artistic dimension of the musical activity, involving decisions on selecting, creating, executing and interpreting the repertoire (choosing or composing (parts of) works, giving the start cue, adjusting the timing (agogics), tone, intensity and harmony, establishing the programme for a concert, etc.). The second type of decision concerns the organisational aspects of the activity, such as finding a rehearsal space, accepting and finding concert dates, communicating with the members of the group and external partners, bookkeeping, and managing the technical equipment.
- 33 It should be noted that for our informants, this distinction between artistic and organisational dimensions is a descriptive categorisation, and does not reflect the dividing of people between mutually exclusive functions: in most of the groups mentioned over the course of the interviews, several musicians assume both organisational tasks and artistic tasks. The data collected suggest that only certain types of ensembles have completely separate artistic and administrative teams: educational ensembles (school choirs and orchestras, at every level of the educational system) and professional ensembles managed by an institution or company (subsidised symphonic orchestras, jazz and pop/rock bands under contract with big production companies). However, this finding only applies to the roughly fifty groups discussed within the scope of this study: only a quantitative study on a much broader population of music groups would be able to verify this phenomenon.
- 34 Furthermore, only one of the musicians we interviewed explicitly mentioned decisions pertaining to the socio-emotive dimension which has been theorised by social psychology. By no means should this be interpreted as indicating that there is no relational leadership in music groups, as our informants are not necessarily aware of everything that goes on in the actual groups they are a part of. What this does suggest to us is that, on a more basic level, in the first interviews we conducted for our study, the

musicians did not see the socio-emotive dimension as a decision-making area. Analysis of the interviews shows that the arrival of a new musician or a musician's departure from the group, are generally associated with the other types of decision-making (designated above). Indeed, the informants sometimes present these decisions as the result of organisational imperatives ("We needed a new rehearsal space and our current keyboard player N. had one, so we incorporated him into the group, which meant we had two keyboard players for a while, until the first one left because he didn't have enough time to rehearse.") or much more frequently, as being tied to specific artistic needs and preferences that require changing the composition of the group—thereby blurring the lines between the group's "human" makeup and its instrumental makeup. This fusion of identities by which a person seems to count as an instrument provides a way of introducing or eliminating a "problematic" musician without open conflict. Take for example the case of an amateur string quintet with a violinist who didn't have the expected level of technical skill: at the end of an annual project, the other musicians told him they wanted to play quartets the following year, which allowed them to "gently" eject the inadequate violinist. "When it's really not working with a certain musician, you split up the band saying you want to go in a different musical direction, and then re-form the band under a different name," a jazz-rock musician told us laughingly. Inversely, programming a work featuring a soloist is a very common strategy among amateur conductors who want to offer someone in their inner circle an opportunity in the spotlight.

- 35 Our interviews did not reveal that any particular decision-making mode systematically pre-existed others in the history of the groups. Some of our informants' pop/rock bands were born of the typically teenage desire to "start a band" even if none of the members knew how to play an instrument at the outset. In this case, organisational decisions precede the musical activity: the aspiring musicians first work out how to acquire instruments and sound equipment, find a rehearsal space and set up rehearsal times before moving on to the next stage, when they choose songs to cover by bands they like, and so on. But a number of the groups that came later in our informants' careers existed first as an artistic entity before establishing a stable organisational framework: they were the fruit of chance meetings where two or three musicians (rarely more) find themselves to be musically compatible during a one-time project (jam session, commercial production, etc.). In this case, it is a musical *feeling* that motivates the organisational steps required to set up a lasting artistic relationship, one that came along more or less by chance.

Typology of leadership configurations

- 36 In the previous points, we examined two aspects of leadership in a musical context: 1) who directs the music and how, and 2) what else needs to be managed. To take our examination of music groups and the exercise of power within them a step further, we must determine how these two questions are interrelated. The orchestra conductor and choir conductor may be prime examples of "institutional leadership",³⁶ but this does not tell us anything about the actual scope of their power. At the same time, the absence of a formal conductor at the head of a group does not necessarily mean there is no power structure supporting its activity.

- 37 As stated at the beginning of this article, one of the dominant models in the study of small group leadership is the structural-functionalist model which "postulates that there are two complementary leaders, one of whom focuses on the task while the other focuses on the relationships"³⁷. This interpretation of groups emerged in the work of various thinkers in the second half of the twentieth century: Wilfred Bion contrasted the rational dimension of the group's work and the unconscious, emotional processes at play within the group,³⁸ Robert Bales differentiated between *task-oriented* and *relationship-oriented* roles³⁹ and Jean Maisonneuve between *socio-operational* and *socio-emotional* factors of group cohesion.⁴⁰ Yet, as we have seen, the perceptions of people in musical spheres lead them to create a different schema of decision-making mechanisms based on a different duality: there is a clear distinction between the artistic and organisational aspects of the activity, but the relational aspects are not considered an independent area. Adopting this schema, which comes from the musicians themselves, meant using it as the basis for our examination of how responsibilities are distributed within music groups. In doing so, we were able to identify the following configurations of ideal types:

The "absolute" leader

- 38 This type of leader is the sole master aboard: he composes or chooses the repertoire, engages and dismisses the musicians, makes the artistic decisions, directs the musicians, handles contact with external partners, finds the concert dates, manages the finances, and so on. He is happy to have "helpers" around him to whom he doles out minor tasks (distributing posters, moving and acquiring equipment, organising catering services, etc.). He is usually the founder of the group, and several of our informants who have worked with this type of leader spontaneously used the word "tyrant" to describe them, without necessarily signifying that these individuals were not well-liked. This type of leader seems to inspire mixed feelings of admiration, respect and irritation among their "subjects". "He's someone who taught me a lot," one former amateur choir singer said about his first choir director, "but I don't think I would be able to put up with his behaviour today, his way of deciding everything on his own without really listening to our requests or critiques. For example, he imposed an extremely ugly uniform on us. We could surely have found something better if he'd asked our opinion." This type of leader is not limited to the classical sphere: two pop/rock-oriented musicians cited several bands in their region that operate with an absolute leader. "In some bands, it's really one guy who decides everything; the others are kind of stuck because they aren't the ones composing... When it's like that, you either just go along with it or you look for another band..."

The "institutional" leader

- 39 The institutional orchestra or choir conductor is hired to lead a group of which he is not the founder, and therefore needs to integrate a musical project initiated by people other than himself. This type of institutional leader also exists in the pop/rock universe, as the musical director engaged by a producer to oversee the musicians accompanying a "star" and serve as the liaison between this musical team, the technical team, and production. Directors of musical ensembles within educational institution also fall under this category. The institutional leader is found in most large institutionalised ensembles, as

their legal framework (as non-profit organisations: ASBL in Belgium, Law of 1901 in France) automatically requires them to set up an administrative structure to manage the musical activity and which defines the powers of the group's members.

- 40 In an institutional configuration, the musical leader is placed under the authority of the rank above him (producer, school president, board of directors, etc.): in this case, two leadership functions (each supported by its own staff) coexist. Each of these functions has its own specific duties and prerogatives, which are explicit in the case of the organisational leader (generally set out in the bylaws) and more implicit in the case of the artistic leader, whose latitude in his position depends on the conventions in the musical milieu in question. The distribution of responsibilities between artistic leaders and organisational leaders can also depend on the personal profiles of the people in key positions. "Our previous conductor left the choice of repertoire up to the organising committee: he sent us a list of works, sometimes without even making sure the level of difficulty was suitable for the orchestra, and it was up to us to study the scores and make the best possible choice. The conductor before him was more professional. He considered all the different aspects and then proposed a coherent programme, which he submitted for our approval," explained a violist, the secretary of the organising committee of an amateur orchestra, who later added that the first conductor readily used the word "tyrannical" in reference to the committee. She also told us that in another student orchestra, a temporary conductor hired for a summer session provided only musical direction, leaving all other decisions up to the musicians, including the working hours: "But when the more experienced musicians said, 'OK, we've got it; we can end the rehearsal,' the younger ones didn't dare speak up to say they would have liked to go over a passage or movement again... I found it strange for a conductor to give the musicians that much power." Misunderstandings relating to this distribution of responsibilities can even lead to conflicts. While discussing a children's choir, a young singer told us: "The parents and the president of the committee have complained about the choir's repertoire; they find it 'outmoded'. But they're out of line. I am the qualified musician and the choir instructor. I put a great deal of thought into my choices, and fun is not my only objective."
- 41 While the same musicians are often found in the musical and administrative structures of amateur ensembles (unlike in subsidised professional orchestras), the power structures in these two areas do not overlap. In the student orchestras we encountered, the administrators in key positions tend to be the musicians with the most seniority in the group, who are not necessarily the most competent musicians, those who stabilise the ensemble from within and make up the second rank of the musical hierarchy described above.
- 42 In terms of how roles are distributed in group structures, Landry notes that "while certain roles are already defined [...]—vice president, treasurer, secretary, etc.—the structural hierarchy will probably depend on the relative status that comes with each of these instituted roles, although the perceived competence of certain members for these roles may lead to the emergence of a parallel structure somewhat different from the official one."⁴¹ The situation can be even more complex in institutionalised music groups where there can be two parallel formal structures—one musical (a corps based on a score that defines the various musical roles), and the other organisational (an administration based on a legal framework that defines the different statuses). Each of these structures is subject to a system of implicit checks and balances that can give rise to unofficial

structures based on the real competence and skills of the members present (e.g., the aforementioned case of the orchestra that follows the first violin or the basses instead of the conductor who is considered inadequate).

Shared leadership

- 43 As we have seen, small groups without conductors (typically chamber music groups, jazz groups, pop/rock groups in all their various styles, small professional vocal ensembles) use a variety of strategies to coordinate the musicians. But beyond the musical direction, the many other artistic and organisational responsibilities mentioned above also need to be handled for the musical activity to continue and thrive. With the exception of groups that have "absolute leaders" or "institutional leaders" as defined above (which are rare but not altogether inexistent in small jazz groups and amateur pop/rock bands), groups tend to distribute tasks and make decisions according to fairly implicit rationales, which our informants saw as "taken for granted". For many, the interviews actually brought these mechanisms to light and gave them a chance to question them. All of the following examples were told to us over the course of our interviews.
- 44 According to the *competence* rationale, each musician assumes the instrumental and organisational roles in the group that he had already mastered before joining the group, or in which he is more competent than any other member of the group: a bassist plays the bass, a musician who also works as a graphic designer creates the promotional documents, and it is the best violinist or guitarist who does a solo.
- 45 According to the *intention* rationale, the founder of a group carries more weight than the other musicians in decisions relating to the group's continuation and development, even if he is not the best musician among them. Similarly, a writer, composer or arranger maintains decision-making authority over his own compositions.
- 46 The *desire* rationale allows each member of the group to assume whichever role(s) he wants, including those that are not yet part of his skill-set and which will need to be learned, often thanks to the *learning by doing* method within the group's activity. For example: with the group's general consent, a singer in a vocal ensemble tries her hand at conducting, even though she is not the founder or the organisational leader; a guitarist interested in sound engineering uses rehearsals as an opportunity to familiarise himself with basic recording and mixing equipment; looking to improve her professional résumé, a violinist assumes the role of treasurer for her orchestra to learn how to do bookkeeping for a non-profit organisation, and so on.
- 47 According to the *need* rationale, someone agrees to assume a task essential to the group's development, even if it involves not-yet-acquired skills that he will need to learn "on the job". For example: in a band that cannot find a drummer to replace the one who recently left the group, a bassist gets a drum kit and pre-records the rhythm section to fill the gap at the band's rehearsals; a rock musician's friend acts as his band's spokesperson to make it seem more professional, and soon after joins the band as the pianist...even though he has never played piano; a choir singer is persuaded to serve as the secretary of his choir's board of directors, even though he has no experience drawing up meeting minutes, and so on.
- 48 Other sources of power were mentioned more reluctantly, and even with distaste: according to the *strongest wins* rationale, power goes to the least conciliatory person, the

one whose reactions and behaviour everyone fears; *the richest wins* rationale allows the person who provides the most essential resources for the group (a rehearsal space, sound equipment, valuable contacts, etc.) to pressure his partners in order to secure a decision according to his terms.

- 49 Considered according to the different forms of power identified by John French and Bertram Raven in 1968, these different rationales seem to be based on the most personal forms of power—those that depend on competence that a given person has acquired and cannot transfer to someone else.⁴² However, in this context, a broader notion of competence needs to be applied: the rationales behind the division of labour in amateur music groups depend not only on skills that members already possess, but also on each individual's capacity for learning. In other words, the greater a musician's capacity to learn skills in order to meet the needs of the group, the more likely he is to have access to positions of power. However, this raises questions as to the "external status" of the group's members: Landry demonstrates that the members' status outside the group affects the leadership dynamics within the group. The previously-acquired skills and abilities that individuals bring to the group affect the life of the group and its development. These "skill-sets" are generally related to individual profiles that depend on a range of factors, including social background. Bernard Lehmann's research on symphonic orchestra musicians has shown the predictive value of social background in terms of choice of instrument and, consequently, the positions individuals hold within the orchestra hierarchy. Thus, it is worth considering whether a similar principle applies in amateur groups, by which socially-determined abilities affect individual paths in terms of the micro- and macro-leadership of music groups. This is where we see the limits of a purely psychosociological study of music groups, and thus the importance of and need for the type of interdisciplinary dialogue discussed at the beginning of this article.

"Cliques": the fulcrum of music groups?

- 50 More than fifteen of the music groups mentioned by our informants seem to be structured around a duo or trio of people bound by strong emotional ties: the individuals in these "cliques"⁴³ are siblings, uncle and nephew, old friends, or romantic partners. Longitudinal consideration of their musical careers shows that their collaboration endures through different groups (and even non-musical collaborations) in which they hold the key artistic and/or administrative positions: composing, musical direction, internal communication and bookkeeping. The other musicians in these groups seem to graft onto these cliques more temporarily and to fill less central functions. It should be noted, however, that almost all of the musicians we interviewed for our study were engaged in at least one such musical-emotional clique forming the fulcrum of a music group. Thus, if a musician can be part of a clique at the head of an ensemble in one context and a secondary member "grafted onto" another such clique in another context, defining the profile of the leader or director of a group only applies within the confines of that concrete group.
- 51 We have identified this sort of clique in every type of ensemble mentioned during our interviews—classical and non-classical, small and large, vocal and instrumental. And there are indications suggesting that cliques may be at the core of all music groups (with the exception, perhaps, of large highly institutionalised groups), including those that appear to be led by an absolute leader, a salaried leader or no leader at all. Only a more

in-depth study incorporating tools such as sociometry would allow this question to be explored further.

The power of the musical text

- 52 The points laid out above clearly show that music groups are subject to the same rationales as those already described for other types of groups. However, our study did bring to light one phenomenon that may be more specific to music: contrary to Landry's conceptions according to which "the structure of group functions is confined to the people who assume these functions" and which deny that there is "a pre-existing or hidden structure that has to be revealed, as suggested by Levi-Straussian structuralism",⁴⁴ music groups are partly based on pre-existing structures, i.e., those directly inscribed in the musical language. Indeed, one of the more discreet players in the internal dynamics of music groups is the musical text itself: whether inscribed in a score or in a non-physical repertoire of works or set of composition rules known to the musicians, the musical text defines (to some extent, and this varies considerably from one genre to another) a number of interdependent roles. Moreover, the actual execution of the musical text (which depends on conventions that also vary from one musical genre to another, and from one music group to another) opens a space and time in which individuals have the opportunity to try their hand at a variety of functions, including the artistic and organisational leadership functions.
- 53 Both components of the study this article is based on—our survey of the literature and our interviews—show that the more detailed the musical text, stipulating interdependent roles and thereby transporting a potentially ancient "psychosocial heritage",⁴⁵ the more it imposes its law on the individual, who becomes an executor who must simply follow orders from the past and from the group's leader. Inversely, the more minimalist the text—maybe even limited to a few conventions (a few rock chords, a figured bass-line for early music scores, a melody or a series of jazz chords), the freer the musicians are in terms of the size of the group, musical arrangements, and even composing musical content. Any musical text (whether written or being created in real time according to specific conventions) sets out somewhat pre-defined roles which increase or restrict the musician's freedom depending on how they are appropriated in the group context. Hence, if the architecture of a musical text can affect the interpersonal relationships in a group, it must be acknowledged as having psychosociological impact: for example, executing a work written for a large corps automatically requires a group to have centralised musical direction and thus a hierarchical framework, just as the existence of unequal musical roles (i.e., solo vs. accompaniment) can lead to social inequalities (individualisation, depersonalisation) with harmful effects, and so on.
- 54 However, this psychosociological impact is not deterministic: one of the founding principles of musical activity is *interpreting* a musical text, as the text does not so much impose as suggest, and only partly pre-exists the form it takes in the present moment of each new execution. Thus, to understand the role of the musical text in defining intragroup relationships, we need to examine the *mediation* process it is a part of, in the sense of *mediation* defined by Hennion: "[The term mediation] is a theoretical step up from intermediary: it removes the 'inter' that puts it in secondary position with respect to the realities it is between, and then adds the action suffix 'tion', emphasising the primary nature of what makes something appear over that which appears. The

intermediary is between two worlds, serving as the link between them: thus it comes after the things it connects. [...] Mediation refers to a different sort of relationship. Worlds don't come with their laws. There are only strategic relationships, defining at the same time the terms and the mode of the relationship. At the end of a mediation, there is not an autonomous world, but another mediation [...]. The process follows a general movement of reversal of causes: pay less attention to established realities and more to the establishment of realities."⁴⁶

Collective musical practice—a collaborative laboratory?

- 55 By the end of our study, the "orchestra conductor" seemed to be a distraction from the bigger picture. Behind the obvious leadership of the conductor, there are actually a multitude of different leaders: official leaders that aren't actually followed, sub-leaders who compensate for a conductor's weaknesses, undeclared leaders who lead in the shadows, musician conductors, musician administrators, and so on. For all of these established or practicing leaders (of music, people and projects), amateur musical practice provides a space where they can exercise and test their own leadership abilities. This is because musical groups, especially the emotionally-bonded cliques that seem to be at their core, can be seen as a multitude of nodes in a relational network whose main activity allows and even encourages role playing, self-exploration and exploration of the self-with-others, the taking of power, and submission to the power of others. If, in Hennion's view, musical passion is a "theory of mediation in acts", then we propose that collective musical action is a "theory of groupality in acts"—for the group mechanisms seen here show musical collectives to be extremely rich learning experiences in terms of understanding relationships with others. Indeed, the picture painted of music groups shows them to be true collaboration "laboratories", where each participant is free to assume a role by adjusting to his partners in every second, failing which the group's cohesion can immediately be broken.
- 56 That alone is enough to stress the importance of careful reflection before imposing collective musical practice on any group of people—for example, as part of a "re-socialisation" initiative. Indeed, the "socialisation" these projects are expected to achieve could insidiously be a dive into the murky waters of inherited or spontaneous hierarchies, which groups do not always have the skills to effectively express. Only by giving due consideration to the inherited social constructs inscribed in the very elements used for musical practice—such as musical inequalities characteristic of a certain era remaining inscribed in a musical score that has survived to the present-day—will it be possible to determine whether the musical collectives remain bound by this heritage or manage to subvert it, and in the latter case, by what means. In our opinion, well-understood *structuralist constructivism*⁴⁷ is a promising approach for an in-depth examination of the issues at stake within collective musical practice.

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NOTES

1. AEBISCHER, Véréna and OBERLÉ, Dominique, *Le Groupe en psychologie sociale* [1990], Paris, Dunod, 2012, p.13.
2. AROM, Simha, "Prolegomena to a Biomusicology", in WALLIN, Nils, MERKER, Björn, and BROWN, Steven (ed.), *The Origins of Music*, Cambridge (Mass.), The MIT Press, 2000, p.28.
3. [Translator's note] With a much broader meaning than "chief" in English, the French word *chef* is used not only for the chief of a village (*chef du village*), but also for an orchestra conductor or choir conductor (*chef d'orchestre*, *chef de chœur*), and can also mean "boss" or simply "leader".
4. FRANÇOIS, Pierre, "Production, convention et pouvoir : la construction du son dans les orchestres de musique ancienne", *Sociologie du travail*, No. 44, 2002, p.3-19; BUCH, Esteban, "Le chef d'orchestre : pratiques de l'autorité et métaphores politiques", *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, No. 4, 2002, 57th year, p.1001-1028.
5. Conductoreless orchestras were, for example, created in the USSR after the October Revolution, see *ibid.*, p.1020.
6. The modern conductor, explains Buch, "directs highly institutionalised and/or syndicated orchestras, which often take decisions independently, in some cases even the choice of their conductor; his services are subject to commercial rationale, but also depend on institutional rationales which sometimes have little latitude the State and the political class; he is the interpreter of a repertoire that the musicians and audience are already familiar with, which means the interpretative orthodoxy does not depend on him alone" (*ibid.*, p.1003). His duties may

also include managing the orchestra's image in the media: see WILLENER, Alfred, *Les Instrumentistes d'orchestres symphoniques*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997.

7. ANZIEU, Didier and MARTIN, Jean-Yves, *La Dynamique des groupes restreints* [1968], Paris, Puf, 2013, p.36-40.

8. In order to report findings collected in a variety of musical spheres, certain vocabulary choices have to be made. Each of these spheres has its own lexicon, and while musicians are familiar with the terms used in their own sphere, they may not be familiar with terms used in another. For the purposes of this article, to ensure the best possible comprehension, we chose to use the most generic French terms (*répétition* [rehearsal], *chef* [conductor], *groupe* [group], *musiciens* [musicians], etc.) even though we are aware that, although this was not our intention, these terms tend to be oriented towards art music.

9. In this article, the notion of the "musical text" signifies both musical works inscribed on a medium (paper, vinyl record, cassette, CD, mp3, etc.) and those produced in real time during a collective interpretation, including works that are "improvised" using musical conventions shared by the musicians.

10. Initiated as part of doctoral research on musical communication, this survey draws on the communication sciences, musicology, musical semiology, sociology, psychology and the anthropology of music in French and English. In the interest of brevity and anthropological rigour, we have limited the findings set forth herein to the musical realities of the French-speaking area of continental Europe (France and Belgium), with regard to both scientific resources and field observations. For example, music education—and by extension access to vocal and instrumental practice—in the Franco-Belgian context is not approached in the same way as in English-speaking countries. This needs to be taken into account, as the stakes involved in choosing to "play in a group" are not the same when musical practice is considered, as here (in the Franco-Belgian context), a skill to be developed primarily by those who show "spontaneous" musical talent, or, as there (in the English-speaking world), one of various necessary skills to be acquired, and therefore a legitimate component of the general school curriculum.

11. Simone Landry cites these examples of small groups: "a group of factory workers, a university programming committee, the board of directors of a bank or quasi-public organisation, a hockey team, a bridge club, a group of students working together on a project, a mutual aid, support or therapy group" (LANDRY, Simone, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, Québec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2007, p.117).

12. See for example, on professional orchestras: WILLENER, Alfred, *Les Instrumentistes d'orchestres symphoniques*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997; LEHMANN, Bernard, *L'Orchestre dans tous ses éclats. Ethnographie des formations symphoniques*, Paris, La Découverte, 2005; ADENOT, Pauline, *Les Musiciens d'orchestre symphonique. De la vocation au désenchantement*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2008; RAVET, Hyacinthe, *Musiciennes*, Paris, Éditions Autrement, 2011. On early music ensembles: FRANÇOIS, Pierre, "Production, convention et pouvoir : la construction du son dans les orchestres de musique ancienne", art. cit. On harmony orchestras: DUBOIS, Vincent, MÉON, Jean-Mathieu and PIERRU, Emmanuel, *Les Mondes de l'harmonie. Enquête sur une pratique musicale amateur*, Paris, La Dispute, 2009. On rock bands: HEIN, Fabien, "Ethnographie d'un groupe de rock en tournée aux États-Unis", *ethnographiques.org*, No. 5, 2004; HEIN, Fabien, *Le Monde du rock. Ethnographie du réel*, Paris, Irma/Séteun, 2006; SECA, Jean-Marie, *Les Musiciens underground*, Paris, Puf, 2001; TASSIN, Damien, *Rock et production de soi. Une sociologie de l'ordinaire des groupes et des musiciens*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2004. On jazz musicians: BUSCATTO, Marie, "Chanteuse de jazz n'est point métier d'homme. L'accord imparfait entre voix et instrument", *Orphrys-Revue Française de sociologie*, No. 44, 2003, p.35-62; COULANGEON, Philippe, *Les Musiciens de jazz en France*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1999; PERRENOUD, Marc, *Les Musicos. Enquête sur des musiciens ordinaires*, Paris, La Découverte, 2007; ROUEFF, Olivier, "L'invention d'une scène musicale, ou le travail du réseau", *Sociologie de l'Art* (OPuS 8), No. 1, 2006, p.43-76. On choirs: LURTON, Guillaume, *Le Chœur partagé : le*

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13. COULANGEON, *Les Musiciens de jazz en France*, op. cit.; BUSCATTO, “Chanteuse de jazz n’est point métier d’homme. L’accord imparfait entre voix et instrument”, art. cit.; PERRENOUD, *Les Musicos. Enquête sur des musiciens ordinaires*, op. cit.; LEHMANN, *L’Orchestre dans tous ses éclats. Ethnographie des formations symphoniques*, op. cit.

14. HEIN, *Le Monde du rock. Ethnographie du réel*, op. cit.

15. TASSIN, *Rock et production de soi. Une sociologie de l’ordinaire des groupes et des musiciens*, op. cit.

16. LANDRY, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.63.

17. *Ibid.*, p.40.

18. *Ibid.*, p.43.

19. The only difference in the case of orchestras and choirs is their scale in terms of number, as they sometimes have dozens of members: yet they still share co-presence and are engaged in immediate and interdependent interactions within a group with its own distinct culture and a common purpose justifying creating a work structure, etc.

20. CLASTRES, Pierre, *La Société contre l’État*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1974, cited in ANZIEU and MARTIN, *La Dynamique des groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.165.

21. LANDRY, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit.

22. BUCH, “Le chef d’orchestre : pratiques de l’autorité et métaphores politiques”, art. cit., p.1003.

23. *Ibid.*, p.1004.

24. As explained above, the literature rarely addresses the internal dynamics at play within music groups, but many studies indirectly provide information that was relevant to our research. We therefore treated these studies as secondary sources. We analysed them first in terms of their content (taking stock of and categorising the themes addressed by the author—such as the introduction to musical practice, the socioeconomic profiles, the locations, the objects and instruments used in the practice, the musical work, access to professions, the community aspect, etc.—collecting information on each of these themes, and then making an in-depth analysis of any aspects relating to the relationships between musicians). We then also did an epistemological analysis of the studies, since the authors’ theoretical frameworks, subjects and research methods were not identical, in order to ensure that we did not produce false comparability of the information collected.

25. BUREAU, Marie-Christine, PERRENOUD, Marc and SHAPIRO, Roberta (ed.), *La Pluriactivité dans le champ artistique*, Villeneuve d’Ascq, Septentrion, 2009.

26. LANDRY, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.338.

27. AROM, Simha, “Prolegomena to a Biomusicology”, in WALLIN, Nils, MERKER, Björn, and BROWN, Steven (ed.), *The Origins of Music*, Cambridge (Mass.), The MIT Press, 2000, p.28.

28. A telephone ensemble is a group that a musician brings together by phoning musicians for a one-off project.

29. From the French term *stratégies de contournement du chef* in FRANÇOIS, Pierre, “Production, convention et pouvoir : la construction du son dans les orchestres de musique ancienne”, art. cit., p.3-19.

30. LEHMANN, Bernard, *L’Orchestre dans tous ses éclats. Ethnographie des formations symphoniques*, op. cit., p.35-37.

31. LANDRY, Simone, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.90.

32. The German term for the principal violinist, and the origin of the English term “concertmaster”. While the principal violinist is known as *premier violon* or *violon solo* in France, French-speaking classical musicians in Belgium commonly use the term *konzertmeister*.

33. BECKER, Howard, *Art Worlds* [1982] Berkeley, University of California Press, 2008.

34. FRANÇOIS, "Production, convention et pouvoir : la construction du son dans les orchestres de musique ancienne", art. cit., p.11.
 35. SCHÜTZ, Alfred, "Making Music Together. A Study in Social Relationship" (1951), in *Collected Papers II. Studies in Social Theory*, ed. A. Brodersen The Hague, Martinus Hijhoff, 1976, p.177.
 36. LANDRY, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.90.
 37. LANDRY, Simone, "Les femmes et la dynamique du pouvoir dans les groupes restreints", in TESSIER, Roger, TELLIER, Yvan, *Pouvoirs et culture organisationnels*, Quebec, Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1991, p.91.
 38. BION, Wilfred R., *Experiences in Group*, London, Tavistock, 1961.
 39. BALES, Robert "Task roles and social roles in problem-solving groups", in MACCOBY, Eleanor, NEWCOMB, Theodore M. and HARTLEY, Eugene L. (ed.), *Readings in Social Psychology* [3 ed.], New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958.
 40. MAISONNEUVE, Jean, *La Dynamique des groupes*, Paris, Puf, 1968, p.23.
 41. LANDRY, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.368.
 42. FRENCH, John and RAVEN, Bertram, "The bases of social power", in CARTWRIGHT, D. (ed.), *Studies in Social Power*, Ann Arbor (Mich.), Institute for Social Research, 1959, p.150-167.
 43. NORTHWAY, Mary, *A Primer of Sociometry*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1967.
 44. LANDRY, *Travail, affection et pouvoir dans les groupes restreints*, op. cit., p.130.
 45. Take for example the reversal of social hierarchies that Berlioz brought about in the symphonic orchestra when he wrote solos for brass instruments—traditionally considered working-class instruments—which propelled certain players into the spotlight while violinists from the "bourgeoisie" remained in obscurity. Even today, the reversal of the social order through music still perpetuates a "class struggle" within professional orchestras, as described in detail by Bernard Lehmann in 2001.
 46. HENNION, Antoine, *La Passion musicale*, Paris, Métailié, 1993, p.31-32; HENNION, Antoine, MAISONNEUVE, Sophie, GOMART, Émilie, *Figures de l'amateur. Formes, objets, pratiques de l'amour de la musique aujourd'hui*, Paris, La Documentation Française, 2000.
 47. BOURDIEU, Pierre, "Espace social et pouvoir symbolique", in *Choses dites*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1987.
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ABSTRACTS

Since the eighteenth century, the role of the orchestra conductor has continuously evolved in step with changes in the social world. But the authority figure the conductor has represented since the historic greats remains deeply engraved in our collective imagination, at the risk of ordaining the conductor an ideal type figure—or sole figure of musical authority—and eclipsing the complexity and diversity of forms of power that exist in music groups today.

Here, we will attempt to counter this tendency by examining the matter of musical direction from a psychosocial perspective, that of the "small groups" that all musical ensembles constitute by definition—dynamic entities whose fate cannot be reduced to the sum of its members' individualities. We will set forth the results of an interview-based study of musicians, mostly "serious amateurs" or "semi-professionals", which brings to light the variety of strategies and rationales used to ensure both musical cohesion within musical ensembles, and the handling of other tasks associated with the musical activity.

Of these various rationales, that based on the musical text itself is particularly powerful: when the musical text attributes musical roles that are to some degree predefined, practicing music as a group involves adhering to a psychosocial structure that is independent of the individualities present, but not deterministic. Thus, the musical text can be viewed as a non-neutral mediator inherent to socio-musical interactions.

INDEX

Keywords: conductor, leadership, power, group, band, classical music, rock, jazz, orchestra, choir, mediation

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After a higher degree in Music at the Conservatoire Royal de Liège (Belgium), Céline Lambeau studied Anthropology of Communication at the Université de Liège. She then began a PhD on Theory and Practice of Musical Communication. Her work aims at using concepts and methodology related to Information and Communication Sciences, as well as psychosociological theories, in order to gain a better understanding of what it is to be "practicing music together".