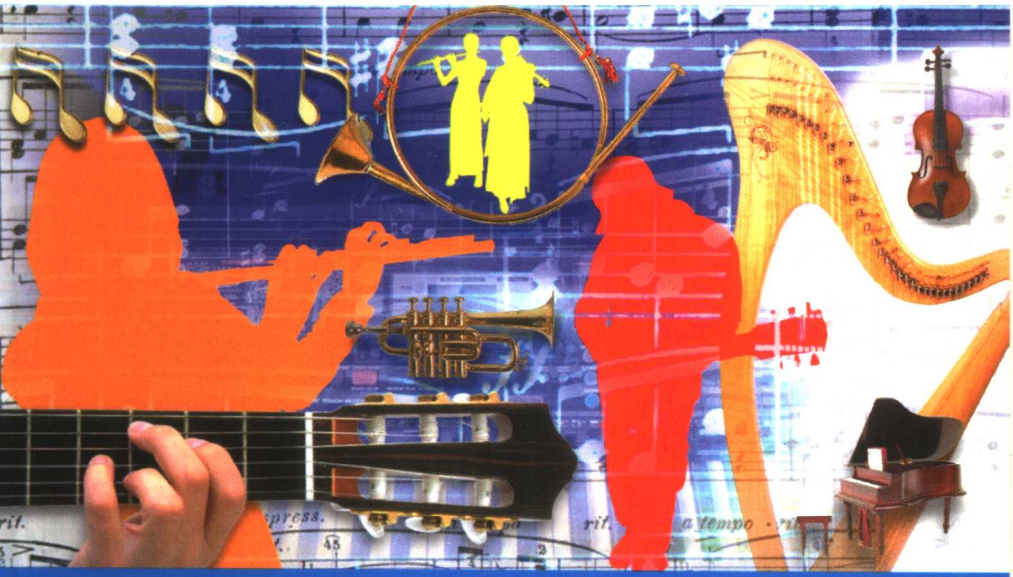

ROUTLEDGE KEY GUIDES

Musicology

The Key Concepts

David Beard and Kenneth Gloag

ROUTLEDGE KEY GUIDES
the keys to success

Musicology

The Key Concepts

Musicology: The Key Concepts provides a vital reference guide for students of contemporary musicology. Its clear and accessible entries cover a comprehensive range of terms, including:

- Aesthetics
- Canon
- Culture
- Deconstruction
- Ethnicity
- Identity
- Subjectivity
- Value
- Work

Fully cross-referenced and with suggestions for further reading, this is an essential resource for all students of music.

David Beard and **Kenneth Gloag** are Lecturers in Music at Cardiff University.

Music/Popular Reference

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LIST OF KEY CONCEPTS

absolute
aesthetics
alterity
analysis
authenticity
autonomy
avant-garde

biography (life and work)
body

canon
class
cover version
critical musicology
critical theory
criticism
cultural studies
cultural theory
culture
culture industry

deconstruction
diegetic/nondiegetic
discourse

Enlightenment
ethnicity
ethnomusicology
expressionism

feminism
form
formalism

gay musicology
gender
genius
genre
globalization

hermeneutics
historical musicology
historicism
historiography
history
hybridity

identity
ideology
influence
interpretation
intertextuality

jazz

landscape
language
literary theory

Marxism
meaning

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

The aim of this book is to make available a range of ideas for further consideration and discussion. We have therefore attempted as far as possible to use modern editions of texts that the reader is most likely to have access to. In some cases, this takes the form of anthologies and translations. For example, when we refer to Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, we base our references on the extracts translated and published by le Huray and Day in their superb collection titled *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (le Huray and Day 1981), which, although out of print at the time of writing, is more likely to be available in a music library than is Kant's complete text. We hope that this will form a first point of contact through which a path can be taken towards other complete texts and related concepts.

Bibliographical references are given throughout using the author date system. However, where we make passing reference to a year of publication without the author's name in parentheses, this is intended only to give a historical location and not to form part of the reference system. Dates of historical figures, such as composers and philosophers, are given in the name index, and all cross-references are indicated in bold.

INTRODUCTION

Music/musicology

Music and musicology are both separate and related constructs. Music, as a practical activity, has its own history, but musicology, as a process of study, inquiry and reflection, while it forms its own context and employs distinct concepts, is clearly dependent upon and reflective of music as its subject.

Music has a long history, while musicology has, by comparison, enjoyed a relatively short lifespan. Yet musicology, which can broadly be defined as the thinking about and study of music, could be argued to have been already present within the acts of composing and performing music. Music is an art form and context that has always invited theoretical speculation and critical reflection, and we can presume that composers, for example, have always thought about their own creative processes and that these processes are somehow informed by the study and experience of other, already existing, music. However, such reflection and interaction may be seen to stop short of a properly conceived musicology that could be understood to stand outside the creative process in order to provide a clearer perspective upon that process, its end product in the form of a musical **work** and, just as significant, the social and cultural contexts within which the process and product could be situated and interpreted. This broad conception of musicology is in contrast to the narrower focus of specific aspects of musicological activity. Although earlier figures such as Forkel and Fétis outlined programmes of what could be conceived of as an early musicology, it was Austrian musicologist Guido Adler who provided the first description of, effectively a prescription for, musicology. In an article titled 'Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft' (The scope, method and aim of musicology), published in 1885 in the first issue of *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* (Adler 1885; see also Bujić 1988, 348–55), Adler outlined a separation between the historical and systematic dimensions of music, with the rigour of the

exercise reflected in the term *Musikwissenschaft* (science of music). He repeated this model in his *Methode der Musikgesichte*, published in 1919. For Adler, the historical field consisted of the organization of music history into epochs, periods and nations. In contrast, the systematic field was to consist of the internal properties and characteristics of music such as harmony and tonality. Clearly, a great deal of musicological activity after Adler could be seen to reflect this division, with the study of music history often reflecting large-scale categorization (see **historiography**) and the construction of a **canon** of the Western tradition of classical music. However, the systematic field could be seen to anticipate the development of music **analysis** and the emergence of specific theories of harmony, tonality and form (see **theory**). However, what is most revealing about Adler's project in general is its quasi-scientific nature, with the claim of the systematic reflecting the rationalizing and positivistic (see **positivism**) impulses and search for objectivity common to a number of musicological contexts. However one responds to Adler's division, the study of music remains a set of distinct areas, many of which might be significantly different from any other while also potentially informing each other. This difference is further extended in this book through the inclusion of areas such as ethnomusicology (see **ethnicity**), **jazz** and **popular music** studies, with musicology now understood as an all-embracing term for the study of music that embraces difference and respects the 'whole musical field' (Middleton 1990, 7), a project that is different from more traditional models of musicology, which had previously sought to exclude such music and ideas from its domain. We are not the first to make this claim of difference, and we see our enterprise as reflecting the current condition of the discipline (or disciplines?) of musicology.

A possible historical narrative for musicology could suggest that a point of origin could be situated within the reflections upon the nature, content and function of music that existed in the distant past of ancient Greece and the theories of Plato and the poetics of Aristotle (see Barker 1989). Later, but still distant, writings upon music took the form of medieval and **Renaissance** treatises and polemics. The **Enlightenment** of the eighteenth century witnessed the rationalization of knowledge and consequently further enhanced the position and status of music within an intellectual **discourse**. The Enlightenment also gave birth to the emergence of a new historical consciousness that would further develop during the nineteenth century. The eighteenth century also brought into focus the philosophical inquiry into the nature of music in the shape of an aesthetics of music. **Historicism** and aestheticism (see **aesthetics**) became central

characteristics of the nineteenth century and the defining **Romanticism** of that time. Romanticism reflected the literary, linguistic dimensions of musical experience, which were simultaneously heightened and subverted by the impact of **modernism** in the early twentieth century, with the rationalization of modernity providing a context for the systematic study of music in the form of musicology.

The above synopsis of a historical development is persuasive and accurate in terms of a chronology and main developments, yet it also has its problems. It suggests a linear **narrative**, an onward progression and development through time, with one phase connecting to the next with a remarkable degree of continuity and inevitability, leading towards Adler's musicology and then the contexts and concept of modernism, suggesting a historical narrative that is ripe for **deconstruction**. In other words, it tells a certain history that is informative but that also simplifies, effectively ignoring the detours and disruptions, misinterpreting the ruptures and ripples and replacing difference with similarity. Paradoxically, it now demands a more complex perspective. In dealing with the contemporary condition of musicology through its key concepts, we hope that we can provide the reader with the starting points from which the critical understandings of such paradoxes can begin to emerge.

In this book, we have taken the broad perspective, reflecting the diversity of our own musical experiences and interests, which we think also reflects the contemporary situation of both music and musicology. Therefore, references to **jazz**, or different aspects of **popular music**, for example, for us sit easily alongside our interests in aspects of the Western art music **tradition**. We see no contradiction, or tension, between interest in, and an ability to write about, the music of Beethoven, Birtwistle, Coltrane, Bill Frissell and Cornershop, and to engage with the writings of Barthes, Derrida, Dahlhaus and Kerman, among others. If this book then looks to a diversity of musical and intellectual interests, there is also, we hope, an underlying consistency as defined by the actual concepts identified as suitable for inclusion. Many concepts, such as **post-structuralism** and **postmodernism**, for example, both of which have come late to musicology, have a relevance and explanatory force for all musical contexts.

Clearly, there are problems in distinguishing between concept and context. We can conceptualize **style**, for example, as a set of issues that surround the use of this term in musical discourse and discuss the use of style as a subject and parameter of musicological inquiry. But this may ultimately be a different exercise from the writing of a detailed history of a specific style or stylistic period (see **periodization**), such

as the Classical or Baroque style, an exercise that would involve a specific context. However, the process of inquiry may require the application of various different concepts. From this perspective, our selection of concepts is a reflection of a certain practice, in effect a keywords of musicology. These concepts can now be conceived of as forming part of the contemporary musicologist's toolbox.

Musicology has undergone dramatic changes since the 1980s. In writing this book we became highly aware of a before and after effect, in which a certain shift in musicological discourse became a recurrent feature. We try to avoid this as a recurrent model and perhaps also to avoid the temptation to over-interpret or over-dramatize this situation. Nevertheless, the essential fact is that what constitutes musicology now is very different from how it might have looked in the 1960s or 1970s. It is also important to reflect upon the fact that these shifts occur in parallel with the broadening of musical repertories that are seen as being available for musicology. But what came before and what came after? What is the dividing line, and is it real or imaginary?

In 1980, American musicologist Joseph Kerman published an article titled 'How We Got into Analysis, and How to Get Out' (Kerman 1994). Without doing a systematic musicological search, we guess that this is probably one of the most commonly cited texts in this book: it appears in relation to concepts such as analysis, **new musicology** and post-structuralism, among others, and it is clearly a polemical statement that has enjoyed a wide range of responses and reactions. In 1985, Kerman published a book titled *Contemplating Music* in America and *Musicology* in Britain (Kerman 1985) in which he outlines the divisions of musicology and presents a critique of what he perceives as the **formalism** and positivism that had come to define musicology. In the article, Kerman outlined the problems of analysis, its ideological nature (see **ideology**) and consequently the relationship between analysis and **organicism** as a 'ruling ideology' (Kerman 1994, 15). Kerman's critique is a persuasive one, highlighting the *a priori* assumptions that musical analysis can easily make about the unity of a musical work. However, for some, it may just as easily raise other problems. Kerman's plea for a more 'humane' form of criticism may be rather vague, and his discussion of Schumann's 'Aus meinen Thänen spriessen' from the song cycle *Dichterliebe* (1840) might just be the type of programmatic description that many musicologists will remain suspicious of. However, this article and the book that followed did make an impact, and much of the writing that comes after Kerman, some of which has been described as forming a new musicology, often acknowledges the power of Kerman's arguments. So, do

Kerman's polemics provide the dividing line between an old and a new musicology? With reference to Kerman's *Musicology*, Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist, in the preface to a collection of essays titled *Rethinking Music*, suggest that a 'before Kerman/after Kerman paradigm' may be a myth, yet, 'as myths go, this is quite a helpful one' (Cook and Everist 1999, viii). We would agree with this view. For some, musicology after Kerman may be marked by a sense of loss, a nostalgia for musicology past, while, for others, the current state of the discipline is better for the critical reflection inspired by Kerman. It also provides a reference point, a moment against which departures can be measured.

It is possible, therefore, that musicology becomes more critical and less positivistic, more concerned with interpretations and less with facts (see **interpretation**). It has also become more interdisciplinary as the boundaries between different types of music are partially erased and the search for new critical models pushes way beyond the limits of a traditional musicology. For some, this is something to be resisted (see Williams 2004) but, from our own vantage point, this is a good time to try to be a musicologist, with a seemingly endless range of music to study and the challenge of developing and extending our vision and vocabulary providing endless stimulus and motivation for current and future research. We hope this book will help.

Further reading: Bowman 1998; Korsyn 2003; Shuker 1998; Stevens 1980; Williams 2001

ABSOLUTE

The concept absolute music emerged during the **Romanticism** of the nineteenth century and was first articulated in the writings of philosophers such as Herder and critics such as E.T.A. Hoffmann (see **criticism**). Paradoxically, however, it was given musical and philosophical representation in the writings of Richard Wagner, who coined the term (Dahlhaus 1989a, 18). It refers to purely instrumental music that appears to exist without reference to anything beyond itself and was often seen as the opposite of programme music, or music with a descriptive content. It therefore featured in the polemics of the Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick (see **aesthetics**, **criticism**, **meaning**), who attacked the extra-musical dimensions of Wagner's work and, through the understanding of a pure, absolute music, led to the claim of an aesthetic **autonomy** and a formalist account of music (see **formalism**).

E.T.A. Hoffmann's writings on Beethoven had raised the importance of instrumental music and located it within the context of Romanticism. In his famous review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony (1807–8), Hoffmann declares:

> When music is spoken of as an independent art the term can properly apply only to instrumental music, which scorns all aid, all admixture of other arts, and gives pure expression to its own particular nature. It is the most romantic of all arts – one might say the only one that is *purely* romantic.
>
> (Charlton 1989, 236)

This suggestion of an 'independent art', by implication an absolute music, elevates instrumental music and ascribes a high aesthetic **value** through the formation of a **canon** of great works, processes that were most clearly defined through the context of the symphony (see **genre**).

For Wagner, absolute music was an object of criticism from his own perspective of the music-drama, which sought to embrace the widest possible musical and extra-musical world. However, through reference to the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven (1822–4), Wagner proposes a sense of transition, or emergence. Referring to the instrumental recitative of the fourth movement, Wagner states: 'Already almost breaking the bounds of absolute music, it stems the tumult of the other instruments with its virile eloquence, pressing toward decision, and passes at last into a song like-theme' (Dahlhaus 1989a, 18). Clearly,

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, with its incorporation of text and voice, was an important work for Wagner, which he interpreted as a model for his own synthesis of music and **language**. The music that Wagner describes as absolute is music that becomes absolute through its lack, or absence, of certain features, but, for supporters of an absolute music, these absences were its strength. German musicologist Carl Dahlhaus, in his definitive study of absolute music, states:

> The idea of 'absolute music' – as we may henceforth call independent instrumental music . . . consists of the conviction that instrumental music purely and clearly expresses the true nature of music by the very lack of concept, object, and purpose.
>
> (*ibid.*, 7)

In other words, music was seen to achieve a certain purity around its lack of a fixed concept or function, claims that echo the 'art for art's sake' ethos of the period. For Dahlhaus, this absolute music now became paradigmatic: 'the idea of absolute music – gradually and against resistance – became the [a]esthetic paradigm of German musical culture in the nineteenth century' (*ibid.*). The establishment of this paradigm posed problems for the **reception** of other genres, such as the lied, which depended upon a text for its nature and identity. The debates generated around the claim towards an absolute music also cast a shadow over **modernism** during the twentieth century through its own utopian aspirations towards an aesthetic purity and autonomy.

Further reading: Chua 1999; Dahlhaus 1983a, 1989b; Grey 1995; Hoeckner 2002

AESTHETICS

'Aesthetics' is a general term that was coined to describe philosophical reflection on the arts, including music. An aesthetics of music, therefore, asks some fundamental questions about the subject, such as what is its nature? What does music mean? Individual positions and beliefs can be described as aesthetic. It is also associated with **ideology** in that specific sets of beliefs situate specific aesthetic responses and interpretations (see, for example, **Marxism**) and can also dictate the nature of the questions asked of music.

While the philosophical scrutiny of music has a long history, beginning with Plato and Aristotle (see Barker 1989), the origin of the term is generally associated with Baumgarten, who used it in his *Meditationes philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus* of 1735 (le Huray and Day 1981, 214; Baumgarten 1954). Baumgarten was concerned with the distinction between knowledge and perception and their respective faculties, superior and lower: '*Things known*, then, are those known by the superior faculty; they come within the ambit of logic. *Things perceived* come within the ambit of the science of perception and are the object of the lower faculty. These may be termed *aesthetic*' (le Huray and Day 1981, 214). On this account, aesthetics is concerned with perception, how we see art, read literature and listen to music. All these acts require us to interpret what we see, read and hear, therefore it is possible to understand aesthetics in relation to **interpretation** (see **hermeneutics**). Baumgarten's distinction between things known and things perceived also relates to the opposition between rationalism and empiricism (between what we know and what we experience) that was a recurring feature of the period (see **Enlightenment**).

One of the foundational texts of aesthetics is Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790; see Kant 1987), who was one of the leading German philosophers of the period. It is therefore logical that his ideas have been given a certain prominence. Much of Kant's thought emerges through the tension between empiricism and rationalism, with his distinctive contribution being the forging of a synthesis between these two large-scale poles. In the critique, Kant is concerned with how an aesthetic quality such as beauty may be both perceived and rationalized. Musicologist Wayne Bowman, in his book *Philosophical Perspectives on Music* (Bowman 1998), provides a neat summary:

> Kant explores the distinctive characteristics and grounds for judgements of beauty from four perspectives, or four 'moments': their quality, their quantity, their relation, and their modality. The quality of aesthetic judgements is, he says, *disinterested*. Their quantity is, though *conceptless*, *universal*. Their relation is *purposive* (while strictly speaking, *purposeless*). And their modality is *exemplary*.
>
> (Bowman 1998, 77)

What does it mean to describe a judgement as disinterested? For Kant, we need a certain sense of detachment, an aesthetic purity, which leads

us to avoid the temptation of seeking to prove or establish a predetermined outcome. If, for example, we approach a painting with the expectation that it is beautiful, then it is likely that the expectation will be fulfilled. For Kant, this is not an aesthetic judgement. Rather, if we are disinterested then we are more likely to allow ourselves to achieve a truer perception of whether the art work is beautiful or not. However, in order for it to be a judgement, it has to be grounded in something more than mere personal preference. For some, this disinterestedness, by implication a detachment, leads not only to a certain aesthetic purity but also to a disengagement with the real world and the reality of art works. It could also ignore the contexts, circumstances and beliefs that may conspire to influence our perception.

Kant's reference to the universal provides a step from individual perception to a more general, collective understanding. In other words, if we perceive the art work to be beautiful, others should be able to experience the same qualities. This universality shifts the act of judgement away from a pure **subjectivity**, and this distinguishes Kant's view from Baumgarten's 'lower faculty'. Kant also raises the question of the purpose of the art work, the third of the four perspectives summarized by Bowman, and it is this perspective that looks towards **formalism**. For Kant, aesthetic judgements are grounded in the work itself, its patterns, structures and what he defines as its 'formal finality'. In other words, how the work is recognized as a complete entity, a unified object, reflects a process of judgement. Finally, Bowman refers to a modality that is exemplary. The aesthetic judgement defines a condition that is set as an example, it becomes a model for others, a view that looks towards the establishment of a condition of **value** (see **canon**). This summary of Kant's thought outlines a series of issues that recur throughout the history of aesthetics.

Kant was also concerned with the comparison of different art forms, including music, and considered their relative aesthetic merits:

> As far as charm and stimulation go, I should place after poetry that art which comes closer to it than any of the other arts of eloquence and which can thus very naturally be combined with it: music. For although it communicates by means of mere sensations without concepts, and therefore does not, like poetry, leave anything to reflect on, it nevertheless moves us in more ways and with greater intensity than poetry does, even if its effect is more transient.
>
> (le Huray and Day 1981, 221)