

## TYOLOGY OF THE MUSICAL DOCUMENT: AN APPROACH TO ITS STUDY

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**Abstract:** *The article here in aims at approaching the reader to the concept of the typology of the musical document first and foremost from the point of view of the librarian or documentalst. A description of the different types of music documents is given, starting with the classification of the annotated ones and followed by the recorded or programmed ones. The definitions given in the manual Reglas de Catalogación have been considered to present and explain the typology of the annotated documents. From a broader, interdisciplinary perspective, of the musician as performer and pedagogue, a series of ideas are submitted, formulated on the basis of the participative observation and correlation with elements from other scientific spheres.*

**Keywords:** *Annotated music documents, Programmed/Recorded music documents, performer, score.*

The classification of the musical document according to its typology is somehow complex especially to those who are not related to the musical world. Even, sometimes, for those who have enough musical training, it's complicated to determine the type of document to cope with. Therefore we are going to establish two clearly different groups: the ones named annotated music (for manuscripts or printed music) and the others named programmed music (of mechanical playing, electromagnetic playing and digital playing).

To devise this incipient typology, and especially for the annotated documents, the

manual *Reglas de Catalogación* [8] has been considered in its last edition.

These rules establish nine different categories for the musical documents. Nevertheless, not always do these categories fit into the documental type that we have to catalogue and so the rules determine that, if necessary, the librarian has to establish a new documental type. Due to this we will proceed not only to explain the nine types described by the rules but also some other interesting types not contemplated in the official classification.

The types established by the rules are the following:

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**Score:** musical example in which all the vocal parts and/or instrumental parts appear on a same page, one on top of the other.

**Part:** each one of the individual pages of music destined for a voice or an instrument in a piece by a group. It's also called a *particella*.

**Part of piano-director, violin-director:** in a piece for a group, the part belonging to an instrument that permits the performer to conduct the group through the annotations of the entries belonging to other instruments.

**Abbreviated score:** score reduced to a minimum of staves.

**Chorus score:** musical paper of a vocal piece with instrumental accompaniment in which the vocal parts are the only ones that appear. It's the type of score used in choir rehearsals.

**Study score:** Full score prepared for study, not for performance. The same name is given to the pocket score or miniature score.

**Vocal score:** In pieces for voices and instruments, the type of score that gives the parts of the voices complete and the rest of the instruments reduced in a keyboard.

**Open score:** Musical paper of a piece for an orchestra or a band that only gives the main musical part in a minimum of staves, normally from two to four, distributed in different instrumental sections.

**Piano reduction:** a transcription for a piano in an orchestral or lyric piece of music.

In fact, from a musical point of view it's much better to talk about three different types of documents: the Full scores, the Parts or *particellas* and the Reductions. These last ones will embrace most of the

documents described above except the Study or Pocket score and the Chorus score.

But the first concept that must be clarified is the Score or Full score. For any musician this term means the visual and graphic representation of the music of one or more instruments. In musical terms we don't make a difference if this music is for one instrument or several; that's why many people prefer to name this kind of document "music papers" or "sheet music" with no need for a greater specification.

However, in librarianship terms, it's important to know that in saying Full score it is understood that the music of all the performers playing at once, that means, the music of more than one performer, is being referred to.

The music librarian copes with the dilemma that a paper of music for just one instrument is not – bibliographically speaking – a score, but just a simple page of music that later will have to be described as a music page in the correspondent place or area of the bibliographic record.

Once this concept has been clarified, it will be much easier to understand the rest of the categories.

The group of Parts or *Particellas* does not involve greater difficulty. In this case we can speak of all the music that a single instrument will play in a group piece. It's, for example, the typical document that each performer has on his or her music stand at the start of an orchestra concert.

The concept of Reduction is broader. In this case it's not only to reduce a determined melody to a minimum of staves and chords but also to compress on certain occasions the music of a whole orchestra so that it can serve as accompaniment to singers, for example, or

as well to give the concrete entrances to certain instruments for a conductor piano.

A last group, not considered in the Rules but that is quite common nowadays, especially referred to modern and pop music is the Arrangement, Adaptation and Transcription.

In fact these are normally arrangements that correspond to works initially conceived for one instrument and later played by another one, or also to antique polyphonic pieces transcribed for a single instrument or contemporary works of pop style or arrangements for electric bass.

As we have previously shown, from the musician's standpoint, musical documents are grouped under the generic name of scores: musical texts which comprise, on the graphical plane, the instructions required for every instrument or instrumental group, as well as for every voice or vocal group within a music ensemble, to the purpose of configuring the characteristic sonorous image that the composer wanted [1, 232]. They came up and were refined over time, in close connection with the evolution and the improvement of the instruments, under constructive aspect – which brought along new standards in performance – with the “concoction” of new instruments, of new modalities for “exploiting” them and the sung or spoken voice, with the diversification of the types of instrumental and vocal ensembles, with the necessity felt by composers to substantiate their works as accurately as possible, so that they might be preserved and conveyed most faithfully to the audience.

The score/musical document is the fundamental element in knowing and performing music. In training the musician, whether theorist or performer, almost all types of musical

documents/scores are resorted to, which were devised during the most variegated moments of music history. We posit this as, along the process of musical education, a significant number of musical works are researched and studied (analytically and synthetically), substantiated through the scores themselves. Likewise, in the instrumental or vocal educational process, in studying the impressive repertoire of every instrument, type of voice, chamber, vocal group etc we start from the score, from the written setting which, once deciphered and acquired by the disciple, turns into the basis of the performance, that it configured and molded under technical and expressive aspect. However, the score is also the objective, stable, perennial element (under the reserve of its adequate conservation) likely to validate the precision, correctness, accuracy, authenticity of the sonorous “translation” of a musical text, although we may accept that, because of the subjectivity (of the performer, professor, audience), any performance will be one of the acceptable options at a given moment and context.

As the score is configured in writing, it has a storage function and it constitutes the basis for some future, possible reconfiguring in the performer's subjective diapason. We may say that the score ontologically evokes the performance, addressing it a continuous call during and because of its replacement; and in that moment of evocation, it functionally turns into the concept of musical performance [4, 70].

The pianist and pedagogue M. D. Răducanu, although noticing that, traditionally, the elements of performing mastery are deemed unlikely to theorize on, distinguishes three actions within the performing act. As we deem they are

indissolubly connected to the performer's relation with the score, objective milestone, we enunciate them in order to emphasize its complexity and intimacy. 1. Decoding the text of the musical work and storing the resulting information; 2. Creative contribution in selecting and processing the information. This action consists in relating the spontaneous semiotic decoding to the neuronally stored structures of the repertoire through the individual's previous experience: a) repertoire of abstract auditory information and models; b) repertoire of logical information and standards of architectonic, structural construction of the musical language; c) repertoire of kinetic configurations, of subtle differentiation, connected to certain logical and exological coordinates; 3. Expression, including the process of transforming the elaborated message into sonorous reality, resorting to the piano, through the optimally selected kinetic solution.[7, 76-77]

We might add that the musical, literary-musical, respectively dramatic-musical material within a score stands for a content which is impossible to be read, in its written, virtual, state, by profanes; they can only be acquainted with it in its sonorously and/or scenically substantiated form, through the performer/s. Basically, the very content of the score is opaque and completely inaccessible for a possible "reader", deprived of the field-related education and experience. The contemporary performer, for whom the score is concealed and revealing at the same time, faces a dual mission: on one hand, to investigate the access paths to the essence of the musical work, so as to correctly relate to its content, on the other hand, to set the optimal performing formula towards that work. [4, 19]

The score means, for the musical work, for the artistic masterpiece, a first material support, configured by the composer, as we have mentioned. There is about, from the perspective of cybernetics, some piece of information undergoing a series of coding transformations. It has been initially borne by a sonorous support in the composer's auditory representations, who re-codified it in the graphical signs of the text. It re-emerges on sonorous support, processed, in the performer's auditory representations, who, in order to convey it to the audience, non-deformed, in instrumental or vocal sonority, must find a correspondent on the physical-mechanical plane of the forces and energies which will trigger, will act upon the "vehicle" represented by the instrument, the voice, the vocal or instrumental ensemble.[6, 25] We notice that, from this perspective, a certain independence of the information stands out, as against the various supports bearing/containing it, the accuracy of storing (inscribing) and conveying it depending on the knowledge and "relation-establishing skills. The score is, for the composer, a possible ending of his/her endeavors; and we state this as not all musical works end up being shared with the audience; if the work is offered to the audience, the score represents for a composer, only a first, fixed, finite, logical, original, support, full of details, but also "open", with multiple significations. For the performer, the score is a constant, wherefrom he will always start, wherefrom the formulation as performance will always play out in line with the text.

The relation between performer and score displays various complexity degrees, depending on the background of previous theoretical knowledge and instrumental skills, on what we might call

competencies. This way, the competence of knowing (previous knowledge and high cultural level) influences the “confrontation” with the work, especially if we consider the contemporary performer’s position of co-author, of individual whom the author/composer offers an oeuvre to finish, as Umberto Eco stated; the competence of sensitivity, namely the skill to correctly intuit and to resonate with the composer’s intentions and, implicitly, to live the life of one’s counterpart and to enter within a relation of full sensitive tune with him/her, into a complex interconnection of communicational nature on the oeuvre-performer-audience axis [5, 185]; the competence of the habits – the skill to analyze and adequately/authentically convey the work/role may be discussed and, along with the virtuosity (inborn quality, also formed and practiced, based on certain automatisms, habits, facilities etc, part of the performer’s “arsenal” of means, conferring him/her a style, a manner of dealing with the score [5, 184]) and the talent, unique and unmistakable measure of the native or acquired endowment; the competence of the values, respectively the exigency and the assumption of the performing approach.

The performer discovers in the score an entire world. Being an artistic construction in written form, which contains the virtuality of a certain sound, characterized by unity (reciprocal dependencies among the components of the artistic ensemble, dependencies that enliven and affect the receiver), totality (feature of the artistic discourse, which designates the world whereof nothing misses and nothing is superfluous) and objectivity (capacity of the oeuvre to ensure the subject’s access to what is the most significant, the most

intimate, vital for every being), the score may be deemed a “world”. [2, 50]

Beyond the world of the sounds, beyond the possible references to places, facts, characters (programmatic works, works of musical theater, works with autobiographical themes), our intention is to mention the semiotic perspective upon the creator of art, elaborated by Jan Mukařovský. His theses are capable of revealing aspects of the composer’s relation with his creation, set in writing, within scores: the relation between oeuvre and creator is semiotic, the former being a sign which signifies the creator’s life in multiple modalities; the objective factors – standards determining the theme, genre, style – are present in the activity through whom the creator addresses a community; the creator contests the authority of the norm through deviations, the constructive semantic gesture is liable for the uniqueness of the oeuvre, for its personal character [2, 38].

A particularly interesting aspect as regards a performer’s relation with the score is related to what musicians call reading at first sight. This first contact, innocent as far as possible (in the sense of not having previously known the work), is, as M. D. Răducanu notes, an elementary and perennial activity, a basic procedure for knowing music’s masterpieces, both informatively and instructively. The same author remarks that this process is generally envisaged in a schematic manner (wherein the musical text is regarded only as a totality of signs, ranked in a certain way) emphasizing the mechanic habits that may be acquired if certain rules are observed. [7, 104-105] As the invoked author, we appreciate that a broader vision is required upon this type of relation with the score, both from didactic perspective –

in which practicing may be observed and, implicitly, an automation of all its components, their inclusion in a harmonious and complex whole – and mostly from performing one.

From the performer's standpoint, we believe that, under phenomenological aspect, the first stage in elaborating a performing variant is reading the score, the first contact with the work.

As the score comprises in fact a type of artistic language, the musical one, set in writing, and as comparisons were formulated between the musical and linguistic language, between the musical and literary discourse [for details, see 4, 46-101], we consider appropriate to liken the reading of a score at first sight with Matei Călinescu's lecture, and the subsequent repetitions of the same musical text, its various resumptions during varied stages of technical achievement (instrumental, vocal, scenic) and of experience, re-discovery, with the re-lecture. The invoked author deems a first reading – virgin, linear, non-interrupted, fresh, curious, sensitive to sudden twists and to unpredictable developments of the text, as well as to inter-textual associations – is only a theoretical, hypothetical construction [3, 23].

Due to the above-mentioned competences necessary to the performer, we believe that the reading of a score at first sight approaches the construction of lecture; but, because of the permanently required control/feed-back, which reactivates resources and entails returning upon the text, a genuinely first reading of a score is likewise a theoretic construction. The musician's relation with the score is closer to the construction of re-lecture: to go again (and again) through the musical text, to rediscover it in a "metaphoric-

circular" manner, its circularity being in natural expansion, [3, 24], to approach from different perspectives with activating the resources of knowing and conveying the written material.

Re-reading and performing a musical score seem to be undifferentiated, synonymous activities. By extension, re-reading seems to signify re-performing, in the sense of new or revised performance [3, 31] which may offer, through the compared study of the musical documents (written or recorded), new data and settings for discovering, generating and conveying the significance of a musical work.

Regarding the musical documents of programmed/recorded music, we must point out the following classification, from the standpoint of a librarian or documentalist: **Mechanical documents, Electromagnetic documents, Digital documents.**

The mechanical documents include all those antique devices moved by the human action, that's the case of the old cylinders, the phonoautograph, the phonograph, the gramophone, the mechanical piano, the perforated records, the "*polyphon*" and the "*orchestion*", etc.

All these were invented between the middle up to the end of the XIXth century (although the cylinders were known in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries. These worked as mechanisms used in bell tower clocks to indicate the hour ) and the rest of the inventions were used to make many social events more enjoyable (gramophone, mechanical pianos, "*orchestion*") although some of them didn't appear with the intention of containing music but with the proposal of being capable of recording words, as was the case with Edison's phonograph.

This invention was thought of as a speaking book for the blind or as a stenograph, as help for offices. In fact he presented the invention as the “speaking machine”.

All the mechanical playing systems turned out to be quite simple. They all had a handle that, when activated, enabled the cylinder, roll or disc to rotate at a constant speed for its reproduction.

The necessary instrument to perceive the sound and to reproduce it was the horn. This was a fundamental element in all these antique devices (phonoautograph, phonograph, gramophone).

Both methods for recording and reproducing sounds were very similar. In the first case a hard burin received the sound wavelengths that came through the diaphragm. When this moved, the burin connected to the diaphragm produced incisions in the cylinder. To reproduce the sound, the process was done the other way round. The hard burin was substituted by a fine needle, capable of reading the incisions in the cylinder, or in the roll or in the gramophonic record and this was transmitted through the diaphragm to the horn again. The horn was doing both jobs: that of microphone and loudspeaker.

The rest of the mechanical inventions could emit sound because their own boxes in which their mechanisms were contained worked as sound boxes.

Regarding the electromagnetic documents these were represented by the magnetized wires, the magnetophonic and magnetoscopic tapes and later the films.

Waldemar Poulsen (1900) was the inventor of the system and his theory was very simple: if a steel wire is moved with a uniform speed and the correct power in front of a magnet, this will become magnetized in all its points with the same

intensity. If instead of a magnet an electromagnet is placed (the electric energy circulating coming from a microphone), when changing the electric energy according to the sounds captured, the electromagnet will magnetize the wire making small magnetic fields of variable intensity. These variations will respond to the variations of the sound energy.

To reproduce the sound the recording process had to be reversed. The magnetized wire passes in front of the electromagnet where variable intensity current will be generated. These will produce similar sound waves to the ones that originally produced the magnetic fields.

The invention was ahead of its time and years later Plfeumer improved it by adding magnetic tape. Some years had to pass until the magnetophonic system came to be accepted and appeared on the market in 1935.

Movie tapes were the next step. They had to invent a system in which sound could be recorded “photographically”. This system, as happened with the optical band, reproduced sound through a combination of photoelectric cells, amplifier and loudspeaker. It supposed an enormous step for cinema as it was no longer necessary to have a pianist accompanying the screening of films. They also stopped using records which tended to wear out very fast.

Besides other considerations, this system also permitted not only the recording of the music that would go with the film but also the texts or voices of the characters. The step from the silent movie to the sound film was a great event.

Finally comes the digital era. As of the 80's of the XXth century we have digital recording that, different to analog, was not a continuous recording but a recording

made in jumps. The digital system reduces all its language to a binary code (0-1). One means information, zero means no information. Within this category we can find magnetic discs (classical diskettes for the computer) and optical discs (CD, and CD Rom).

Over time other formats have appeared such as the Minidisc, the DAT (Digital Audio Tape), the DCC (Digital Compact Cassette), the DVD (Digital Variable Disc) and the Firmware (prodigious chip). Each one of these stands was conceived for a different type of recording.

Above all commercial reasons have finally imposed a type of format. Music CD's, CD Rom and DVD's have survived. The rest of the formats have been slowly disappearing despite their great interest as stands capable of recording sound information. They also present another great advantage that is their enormous capacity to contain information. A last extra quality is the possibility of recording sound, texts and images or the combination of all of them, what has come to be known as the multimedia document.

For musicians, the relation with the recorded musical documents rose in complexity and importance once with the rise of their accessibility. Although some noteworthy personalities criticize this manner of relating the score, the musical work to the audience; however, the records, whatsoever their support, constitute an immense knowledge basis, sometimes more accessible than the

written documents, which contribute – many a time in association with the written documents – to substantiating some performing and/or show variants.

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