



MACROHARMONY IN AUDIOVISUAL MUSIC: A THEORETICAL EXPANSION OF HARMONY BEYOND THE SONIC DOMAIN

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Abstract

The concept of macroharmony is proposed here as a theoretical formulation aimed at understanding audiovisual music from an expanded and more original conception of harmony. Starting from the observation that the musical experience in audiovisual works is not limited to the internal organization of sonic material, this study argues that its meaning emerges from the interaction between sonic and non-sonic elements, including image, dramatic action, gesture, scenic space and narrative context. Macroharmony designates the principle according to which these elements become inseparably articulated, producing an expressive unity that transcends the mere sum of its components. Rather than representing simply an extension of the notion of harmony consolidated within Western music theory, macroharmony approaches the broader understanding present in the tradition of mousiké and in the scenic-musical practices of ancient Greek culture, in which music, speech, movement and action constituted a single symbolic unity. The article discusses the implications of this concept for both the analysis and the creation of music in different audiovisual contexts, including cinema, theatre, dance, opera and videogames, understood in an expanded sense. Within this horizon, macroharmony offers a theoretical framework for understanding processes of musical meaning that characterize contemporary audiovisual culture.

Keywords: Macroharmony, Audiovisual music, Mousiké, Sound dramaturgy, Music theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the tradition of Western music theory, the concept of harmony has been widely associated with the organization of pitch structures within specific musical systems. Although this understanding has been central to the analysis of numerous musical repertoires, it proves insufficient when applied to artistic contexts in which music is constituted through direct interaction with images, actions, gestures, and narratives.

This theoretical limitation becomes particularly evident when we observe that, in many audiovisual contexts, musical meaning emerges precisely from the interaction between different expressive dimensions. A chord, for instance, may acquire radically different meanings depending on the image that accompanies it, the narrative context in which it is inserted, the dramatic action unfolding in the scene, or even the silence that precedes or follows it. In such cases, the musical phenomenon cannot be understood as restricted to the internal organization of sounds, but instead becomes constituted through a broader field of symbolic relations that simultaneously traverse multiple layers of aesthetic experience.

In light of this scenario, it becomes necessary to reconsider the very concept of harmony when applied to music in audiovisual contexts. If, within musical tradition, harmony describes the relations between sonic elements that combine to produce an expressive unity, could we imagine an expansion of this concept capable of encompassing the interactions between sounds and the non-acoustic elements present in audiovisual works?

It is from this question that the proposal developed in this article emerges. In synthetic terms, macroharmony may be understood as the relational principle according to which musical meaning in audiovisual works emerges from the inseparable articulation between sonic and non-sonic elements — such as image, gesture, scenic space, dramatic action, and narrative context — whose interaction produces an expressive unity that transcends the sum of its components. In this sense, macroharmony refers to the relational field in which music ceases to be understood exclusively as an acoustic phenomenon and comes to be conceived as part of a broader expressive system, within which different elements of the work intersect and transform one another during the process of meaning production.

The approach adopted in this study is theoretical and conceptual in nature and is grounded in reflections on compositional practices and creative processes observed in audiovisual arts. The analysis articulates contributions from music theory, audiovisual studies, and reflections on music in the performing arts, seeking to delineate a conceptual framework capable of describing and analyzing the interaction between different expressive dimensions present in such works.

Within these contexts, music often participates in a process of collective elaboration in which its expressive function is continuously redefined through dialogue with staging, imagery, dramaturgy, and performance. Thus, rather than functioning merely as an element added to the work at a later stage, music becomes a structural component in the narrative and symbolic construction of the artistic work.

Macroharmony therefore proposes a theoretical expansion of the traditional concept of harmony, displacing it from an exclusively sonic field toward a broader relational domain in which musical experience is constituted through the interaction between multiple elements of the audiovisual work. Such a perspective does not seek to replace existing analytical approaches but rather to offer a new conceptual framework capable of explaining expressive phenomena that remain partially invisible when observed solely through the traditional categories of music theory.

Despite the extensive development of studies on music in audiovisual media and on the relationships between sound and image, the conceptual vocabulary available to describe more precisely the expressive articulation between music and other elements of audiovisual works remains relatively limited. In many cases, analytical tools inherited from music theory focus predominantly on the internal organization of sonic material,

giving less attention to the relational dynamics that emerge from the interaction between music, image, dramatic action, and narrative structure.

In this sense, the present article introduces macroharmony as an initial theoretical hypothesis intended to contribute to the debate on ways of understanding music in the context of audiovisual arts. To this end, the study adopts a theoretical and conceptual approach, articulating contributions from music theory, audiovisual studies, and aesthetic reflections on the relations between sound, image, and narrative.

By proposing an expansion of the concept of harmony beyond the sonic domain, the article seeks to open a field of reflection that allows for a broader investigation of the relationships between music, image, and narrative in contemporary artistic practices. This expansion, however, is not primarily oriented by the narrower understanding of harmony consolidated within Western music theory, but rather approaches a more original and expanded conception of the term, as it appeared in the horizon of the *mousiké* of ancient Greece, in which music, speech, gesture, and action constituted a unified performative practice.

In light of this scenario, the present article seeks to contribute to the debate on music in the audiovisual arts through the formulation of the concept of macroharmony, presented as a theoretical tool for understanding audiovisual music from a broader relational principle. By articulating reflections from music theory, audiovisual studies, and the tradition of *mousiké*, the study proposes a conceptual framework capable of describing how musical meaning emerges from the interaction between different expressive dimensions and how this articulation participates in the construction of meaning within audiovisual works.

2. THE LIMITATION OF HARMONY AS AN EXCLUSIVELY SONIC PHENOMENON

Since its earliest formulations within the Western musical tradition, the concept of harmony has been associated with the idea of combining sounds. The origin of the term itself can be traced back to ancient Greek thought, in which *harmonia* initially referred to the act of fitting together, joining, or articulating distinct elements in a coherent manner. With the development of music theory over the centuries, however, this notion gradually became specialized within the field of sonic organization, coming to designate the vertical relations between notes and chords within specific musical systems.

During the tonal period, particularly between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, harmony became consolidated as one of the central pillars of Western music theory. Within this context, it was systematized as a set of rules and practices regulating the formation and succession of chords, defining patterns of stability, tension, and resolution within a given tonality. Although various transformations occurred throughout the twentieth century—such as the development of atonality, serial music, and a wide range of other compositional languages—harmony remained fundamentally associated with the organization of pitch structures.

Even in contemporary approaches that have significantly expanded the scope of musical investigation, incorporating parameters such as timbre, texture, and spatialization, the concept of harmony has largely remained confined to the acoustic domain. Music theory has therefore developed extremely sophisticated analytical tools for understanding the

internal relations between sounds, yet it has rarely extended this line of reasoning to the interactions between music and other expressive elements present in audiovisual arts.

This limitation becomes particularly evident when we observe how music operates in contexts such as cinema, theatre, or videogames. In these media, the spectator's musical experience can rarely be reduced to what is perceived solely by the ear. The same sonic material may assume profoundly different meanings depending on the image that accompanies it, the dramatic situation in which it appears, or the relationship it establishes with the narrative events unfolding in the work—a phenomenon already observed by film theorists who emphasized the expressive role of the articulation between sound and image in the construction of audiovisual meaning (EISENSTEIN, 1947).

Consider, for example, the sustained performance of a major chord by an orchestra. In a purely musical context, this chord could be described and analyzed in terms of its internal harmonic properties—the pitches that compose it, its tonal function, or its relation to other chords within a progression. However, when inserted into an audiovisual work, the expressive meaning of this same chord becomes dependent on factors that extend beyond the sonic domain. The image accompanying the chord, the emotional state of the characters, the dynamics of the narrative, and even the silence that precedes or follows it actively participate in the construction of its meaning.

In such situations, it becomes evident that the spectator's musical experience emerges from a network of relations broader than that traditionally considered by harmonic theory. What is heard cannot be dissociated from what is seen or from the dramatic context within which the sound is embedded. The musical phenomenon thus becomes constituted by a system of interactions between different dimensions of the work.

Despite the practical evidence of this phenomenon in contemporary audiovisual arts, theoretical approaches that attempt to integrate these different layers of meaning in a systematic manner remain relatively rare. In many cases, studies of film scoring or stage music focus on describing compositional styles, the narrative functions of music, or strategies of synchronization between sound and image, without necessarily proposing a conceptual framework capable of explaining in a unified way the interaction between these elements.

Thus, an important theoretical gap remains open: if musical experience in audiovisual arts depends on the interaction between sonic and non-sonic elements, what conceptual tools would be capable of adequately describing this type of expressive organization?

The hypothesis developed in this article arises precisely from the need to address this question. By recognizing that musical meaning in audiovisual contexts is established through the interaction between multiple elements of the work, it becomes possible to conceive an expansion of the traditional concept of harmony. Rather than being restricted to relations between notes and chords, harmony may be understood as a broader principle of articulation between different expressive components.

It is at this point that the notion of macroharmony is introduced, understood as an expansion of the concept of harmony into a broader relational domain in which music is constituted through the inseparable interaction between sounds, images, actions, and narrative contexts. Such a perspective allows audiovisual music to be understood not merely as a sonic structure applied to images, but as an integral part of an expressive system in which all elements of the work simultaneously participate in the construction of meaning.

More than simply extending the modern understanding of harmony as the organization of pitch structures, this formulation seeks to reconnect the concept with its broader and more original dimension, prior to its technical specialization within Western music theory.

3. THE CONTEMPORARY EXPANSION OF MUSICAL EXPERIENCE IN AUDIOVISUAL ARTS

From the twentieth century onward, technological development and the consolidation of audiovisual media produced a profound transformation in the ways music is experienced by audiences. For much of the history of Western music, listening was predominantly associated with contexts in which the musical phenomenon appeared in a relatively autonomous form—such as concerts, recitals, or domestic musical practices. The emergence of cinema, television, and later digital media, however, introduced new modes of articulation between sound, image, and narrative.

In the context of this article, the term audiovisual music is employed in an expanded sense. It does not refer exclusively to music composed for cinema or television, but to any artistic practice in which musical experience is constituted through direct interaction with visual, performative, or narrative elements. In this sense, the field of audiovisual music also encompasses traditions such as theatre music, opera, and dance, as well as contemporary practices found in videogames and other forms of multimedia production.

Beyond the more traditional conception of music, the perspective of macroharmony also considers the various acoustic phenomena that participate in the expressive construction of audiovisual works. These include sound effects produced by musical instruments or other means, practices such as foley, sound design, stage sound effects, and environmental soundscapes. Likewise, vocal modulations performed by actors and performers—whether in singing, speech, or other forms of vocal expression—also belong to this field when they contribute to the aesthetic and dramatic organization of the work. In all these cases, musical meaning emerges from the articulation between sound, image, gesture, scenic space, and narrative development, configuring an integrated expressive system.

From its earliest decades, cinema began to play a fundamental role in shaping audiovisual experience. Even during the so-called silent film era, film screenings were frequently accompanied by pianists or small instrumental ensembles responsible for commenting on, intensifying, or guiding the emotional reception of the projected images. With the development of sound cinema, this relationship became even closer, establishing a constant interaction between musical score, cinematic editing, dramaturgy, and the actors' performances. Since the earliest systematic reflections on the subject, authors such as Adorno and Eisler have observed that music in cinema actively participates in the construction of the dramatic meaning of images, functioning as a structural element of audiovisual experience (ADORNO; EISLER, 1947).

Over time, similar practices were incorporated into other forms of audiovisual production. In television, for example, music became a structural element of narrative in series, soap operas, and entertainment programs. In videogames, soundtracks began to operate within dynamic systems in which music changes in real time according to the player's actions and the unfolding of the interactive narrative. More recently, digital platforms and social networks have further expanded this field, multiplying situations in which sound and image are experienced simultaneously and interdependently.

In this context, music ceases to be perceived merely as an autonomous sonic object and begins to be understood as part of a broader expressive system. The spectator's musical experience emerges from the interaction between different elements of the audiovisual work, including images, movements, sound environments, dialogue, performative gestures, and narrative structures—a dynamic that resonates with Michel

Chion's reflections on the audiovisual construction of meaning through the relationship between sound and image (CHION, 1994). What is heard is therefore constantly shaped by what is seen and by the symbolic context in which both are embedded.

This transformation in the experience of listening also profoundly affects the creative processes involved in composing music for audiovisual contexts. In many situations, music is not conceived as an independent element that is later combined with images, but rather as part of a creative process in which different dimensions of the work develop simultaneously. Composers, directors, editors, actors, and other creators frequently collaborate in the construction of a shared expressive fabric, in which the boundaries between sound, image, and action become increasingly permeable.

From this perspective, audiovisual music may be understood as the result of a system of relations in which different elements of the work intersect and transform one another during both creation and reception. Musical meaning thus ceases to depend exclusively on the internal properties of sonic material and instead emerges from the interaction between multiple expressive layers.

This condition reveals an important shift in relation to traditional forms of musical listening. While harmonic theory historically developed to explain the internal organization of sonic structures, music in audiovisual contexts often operates on a broader relational level in which sounds, images, and narratives jointly participate in the construction of meaning.

In light of this scenario, it becomes possible to recognize the need for a conceptual expansion capable of adequately describing this type of expressive organization. If harmony, in its traditional sense, designates the combination of sonic elements that produce a meaningful unity, it becomes plausible to imagine an analogous principle operating on a broader scale, in which different elements of the audiovisual work articulate themselves in an inseparable manner.

It is precisely within this horizon that the proposal of macroharmony emerges. By displacing the concept of harmony beyond the strictly acoustic domain, macroharmony seeks to describe the relational field within which audiovisual music is constituted through the interaction between sounds, images, actions, and narrative contexts. In this way, musical experience comes to be understood as part of an integrated expressive system in which each element of the work intersects with and transforms the others.

4. THE MACROHARMONY HYPOTHESIS

Based on the considerations presented in the previous sections, it becomes possible to formulate the central hypothesis of this article. If, within the tradition of music theory, the concept of harmony describes the combination of sonic elements that produce an expressive unity, then musical experience in audiovisual contexts suggests the existence of an analogous phenomenon operating on a broader scale.

In audiovisual works, music rarely functions as an isolated element. On the contrary, its meaning emerges from constant interaction with images, dramatic actions, narrative contexts, and other components of the work. In such situations, what is heard becomes inseparably connected to what is seen and to the manner in which events unfold within the narrative.

This condition allows us to propose the following hypothesis: music in audiovisual contexts may be understood as part of an expressive system in which different elements

of the work articulate themselves in a manner analogous to the way notes combine in the formation of a chord. Just as a musical chord cannot be reduced to a single note, the musical meaning of an audiovisual work cannot be explained solely through the internal organization of the sounds that constitute its soundtrack.

From this perspective, this article proposes the concept of macroharmony. The concept of macroharmony designates the principle according to which the meaningful structure of audiovisual music emerges from the inseparable interaction between sonic and non-sonic elements—such as image, action, narrative, space, and dramatic context—whose articulation produces an expressive unity that transcends the sum of its components.

Macroharmony therefore does not refer to a specific element of the work, but rather to the relational field in which different expressive dimensions simultaneously participate in the construction of musical meaning. Within this field of relations, the elements of the work cease to exist as isolated components and begin to intersect with one another, transforming each other during both the processes of creation and reception.

This dynamic can be understood through the idea of permeability between the elements of the audiovisual work. When inserted within a shared expressive context, sounds, images, gestures, environments, and narratives begin to influence one another, modifying the way each element is perceived. The result of this process is not simply the sum of its parts, but the emergence of a new expressive unity distinct from the individual elements that compose it. Musical experience thus arises from the interweaving of these different dimensions of the work, configuring a field of meaning that cannot be attributed exclusively to any one of them in isolation. In certain respects, this dynamic resonates with what some contemporary approaches in aesthetics describe as emergent properties, in which particular qualities of artistic experience arise from the interaction between different elements within a system and cannot be reduced to the isolated characteristics of each component (LEVINSON, 1997).

Such an understanding also echoes the earlier meaning of the term harmony in the Greek tradition. Before becoming a technical concept within Western music theory, the word *harmonia* referred more broadly to the act of fitting, joining, or articulating distinct elements in a coherent manner. The term was used in different contexts to designate the proper joining of parts within a whole—an idea that applies equally to artisanal practices, such as the precise fitting of pieces in carpentry or construction, and to symbolic processes of organization in artistic practices.

In the field of the performing arts of ancient Greece, this notion was directly associated with the universe of *mousiké*, a term that designated an integrated set of practices involving poetry, music, movement, and performance. In the theatrical performances of ancient Greece, these elements were not conceived as independent domains but as inseparable dimensions of a single artistic realization. The actors' voices followed melodic lines closely related to the instrumental accompaniment, bodily movements were integrated with the rhythm of declamation and music, and poetic text was presented as part of a performative flow in which sound, gesture, and action formed an indivisible symbolic unity.

Over time, transformations in musical and theatrical practices contributed to a gradual differentiation between these dimensions. The introduction and development of wind instruments in performative contexts, for example, expanded the role of instrumental performance and gradually favored the autonomy of musical practices that had previously been deeply integrated with scenic action. In certain periods of Greek culture, historical records even indicate the existence of specific competitions devoted to instrumental

performance, in which musicians presented themselves relatively independently from dramatic performances. This process of specialization contributed, over the centuries, to a progressive separation between music and scenic performance, a phenomenon that would later influence the formation of modern categories in music theory.

In this sense, macroharmony may be understood as an expanded recovery of this earlier meaning of the term harmony. By recognizing that musical meaning in audiovisual contexts emerges from the interaction between multiple expressive elements, macroharmony reintroduces the idea that the aesthetic unity of a work can result from the inseparable articulation of different dimensions of artistic experience. The fundamental difference lies in the fact that, whereas the Greek tradition operated within the horizon of the performative practices of *mousiké*, macroharmony proposes the expansion of this principle into the field of contemporary audiovisual arts.

Paradoxically, what appears here as a contemporary expansion of the concept of harmony may also be understood as a return to a broader dimension of the term in its historical origin.

The idea of a deep articulation between different expressive dimensions of an artistic work also appears in later reflections on the integration of the arts. In the nineteenth century, Richard Wagner systematically developed the notion of *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total work of art), advocating the convergence of music, poetry, staging, and movement in the realization of a unified dramatic expression (WAGNER, 1849/1993). In Wagner's conception, however, these different arts remain relatively autonomous domains seeking balance within the dramatic synthesis of the work. The aesthetic unity results from the cooperation of distinct artistic languages, each contributing its specific properties to the realization of the whole.

The perspective proposed in this article approaches this integrative horizon but differs from it in a fundamental aspect. Within macroharmony, the elements of the audiovisual work are not understood merely as autonomous components in equilibrium, but as expressive dimensions that intersect and transform one another, merging into the constitution of a symbolic unity that cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts.

5. THE MACROHARMONIC STRUCTURE OF AUDIOVISUAL MUSIC

Macroharmony is not limited to any specific system of sound organization developed within the Western musical tradition. Rather, it constitutes a relational principle that may be applied to different forms of structuring sonic material, including tonal, modal, atonal, or other forms of musical organization. In this sense, macroharmony does not depend on a particular harmonic vocabulary to operate, since its foundation lies not in the internal organization of pitch structures but in the interaction between sounds and non-sonic elements within the expressive structure of the work.

This perspective finds its deeper foundation in the previously mentioned Greek tradition of *mousiké*—within which music, speech, gesture, and movement constituted inseparable dimensions of a single artistic practice—rather than in the conception later adopted by Western music theory, which focused primarily on the vertical organization of pitches. Macroharmony thus reactivates this expanded dimension of articulation between expressive elements, updating it within the context of contemporary audiovisual arts.

This does not prevent traditional systems of musical organization from being employed as compositional tools within a macroharmonic conception. A composer may, for example, make use of harmonic functions within the tonal system—dominants associated with tension, subdominants with processes of preparation or displacement, and tonics with moments of repose or resolution—as part of the expressive organization of particular passages of a work. When considered from this expanded perspective, such functions cease to operate exclusively on the sonic level and instead become integrated into macroharmonic configurations in which tension or resolution may emerge from the interaction between music, image, dramatic action, gestures, sound environments, or narrative development.

Similarly, it becomes possible to conceive processes of expressive resolution that extend beyond the strictly musical domain, configuring what may be described as macroharmonic cadences, in which the sense of conclusion or transformation results from the convergence of multiple dimensions of the audiovisual work. It is important to emphasize, however, that this application represents only one among several compositional possibilities within the field of macroharmony, since the macroharmonic principle itself is not reducible to any specific system of sonic organization.

If macroharmony describes the relational field within which musical meaning in audiovisual contexts emerges from the interaction between multiple expressive elements, it becomes necessary to investigate how these relations are organized within the aesthetic experience of the work. To explore this issue, it may be useful to draw an analogy with one of the most fundamental concepts of music theory: the chord.

In Western musical tradition, a chord may be understood as the result of the simultaneous combination of different pitches which, when perceived together, produce a harmonic unity. Although each note possesses its own characteristics, the musical meaning of the chord cannot be reduced to any of them individually. The expressive effect results from the relationship established between all the notes that form the structure.

In audiovisual contexts, something analogous may occur on a broader scale. The spectator's musical experience frequently emerges from the simultaneous combination of different elements of the work—sounds, images, movements, environments, dramatic actions, and narrative contexts—whose interaction generates an expressive unity that surpasses the sum of its parts.

In this sense, each significant moment within an audiovisual work may be conceived as a macroharmonic configuration in which different dimensions of aesthetic experience become simultaneously articulated. Just as the perception of harmonic unity in a chord depends on the interaction between multiple notes, in macroharmony musical meaning emerges from the relationship between different elements of the work acting together within a shared expressive context.

This analogy does not imply that visual or narrative elements function literally as musical notes. Macroharmony does not seek to establish a direct correspondence between sonic parameters and elements belonging to other artistic languages. Rather, the proposal is to recognize that, as in musical harmony, meaning emerges from the relationships established between components that operate simultaneously within the same expressive field.

Interactions of this kind may be observed in numerous audiovisual works in which music plays an active role in shaping the expressive construction of narrative. At

different moments in the history of cinema, composers and directors have explored with particular intensity the articulation between music, image, and montage—as in the collaborations between Sergei Eisenstein and Sergei Prokofiev, or in the dramaturgical construction of musical scores in films by Alfred Hitchcock and Bernard Herrmann. In such cases, musical meaning emerges not only from the sonic structure of the music itself, but also from the way it integrates into the broader expressive structure of the work.

Consider, for example, a hypothetical situation in an audiovisual work in which a sustained chord in the musical score accompanies the image of a character facing a decisive event in the narrative. The expressive meaning of this moment derives neither solely from the sonic structure of the chord nor exclusively from the image presented, but from the interaction between both elements within the narrative context of the work. The music may intensify the dramatic impact of the scene, while the image and narrative simultaneously reshape the spectator's perception of the sonic material. The result of this process is an expressive unity that belongs simultaneously to all these dimensions. The music participates in the construction of the meaning of the image, just as the image transforms the perception of the music. This interaction constitutes a specific macroharmonic configuration within the flow of the aesthetic experience of the work.

From this perspective, the macroharmonic structure of an audiovisual work may be understood as the set of relations established between different expressive layers over time. Sounds, images, gestures, sound environments, dialogue, and dramatic actions become interdependent elements within an integrated expressive system. Each component influences the perception of the others, producing configurations of meaning that continuously transform throughout the development of the work.

This dynamic reinforces the idea of permeability between the elements of the audiovisual work. By operating within a shared expressive field, each element ceases to be perceived solely in its own material specificity and instead acquires meanings that depend on the relations it establishes with the others. In this way, music may alter the interpretation of an image while the image simultaneously transforms the way sound is understood.

Macroharmony should therefore not be conceived as a fixed object, but as a relational process in constant transformation. Just as chords in musical harmony succeed and transform one another within a progression, macroharmonic configurations also reorganize themselves continuously throughout the course of an audiovisual narrative. Each moment of the work may thus be understood as a particular articulation between different expressive elements, producing a specific macroharmonic configuration within the flow of aesthetic experience.

This perspective allows audiovisual music to be conceived not merely as a sonic accompaniment to images, but as an integral part of a broader expressive structure. Macroharmony thus offers a conceptual framework capable of describing how different artistic languages interact in order to produce meanings that belong simultaneously to all of them.

By recognizing that musical meaning emerges from these relations, it becomes possible to investigate more systematically the creative processes involved in composing music for audiovisual contexts, as well as to develop new analytical tools capable of describing the interactions between sound, image, and narrative within contemporary artistic practices.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF MACROHARMONY FOR THE ANALYSIS AND CREATION OF AUDIOVISUAL MUSIC

The formulation of the concept of macroharmony opens new perspectives for understanding the creative and analytical processes associated with audiovisual music. By recognizing that musical meaning emerges from the interaction between multiple expressive elements, it becomes possible to broaden the scope of observation in both analytical inquiry and compositional practice within this context.

Traditionally, musical analysis has focused on the investigation of the internal properties of sonic material. Parameters such as pitch, rhythm, timbre, texture, and form constitute the primary focus of most analytical approaches developed within the field of music theory. Although these tools remain fundamental for understanding the sonic organization of a musical score, they are not always sufficient to fully explain the expressive functioning of music when it is embedded within audiovisual works.

In this respect, the proposal of macroharmony enters into dialogue with investigations developed in the field of audiovisual music studies, particularly with works that explore the interaction between sound, image, and narrative, such as those of Michel Chion and Sergei Eisenstein. In the field of film sound studies, for instance, Michel Chion described phenomena such as *synchresis*—the spontaneous perceptual fusion of sound and image when they occur simultaneously—demonstrating how audiovisual experience emerges from the interaction between different sensory dimensions of the work (CHION, 1994).

The perspective of macroharmony resonates with these observations by proposing a broader conceptual framework for understanding the expressive unity that arises from such interactions. By considering that musical meaning in audiovisual contexts results from the articulation between different elements of the work, it becomes possible to expand the field of analysis beyond the internal organization of sonic material.

From the perspective of macroharmony, the analysis of audiovisual music investigates how different elements of the work articulate themselves in order to produce specific expressive configurations. Rather than restricting itself to the internal description of sonic material, analysis may examine how images, gestures, editing rhythms, dramatic action, silence, and sound environments contribute to the constitution of expressive functions throughout the work. In this sense, music may also assume a directly dramaturgical role, participating in the symbolic organization of actions and atmospheres within the scene—a phenomenon discussed in studies of sonic dramaturgy in contemporary performing arts (MOTA, 2018).

This expansion of the analytical field makes it possible to observe, for example, how particular visual configurations may intensify or transform the perception of specific musical materials. A single musical motif may assume distinct meanings when associated with different narrative contexts, just as the same sequence of images may produce different expressive effects depending on the music that accompanies it. Macroharmonic analysis seeks precisely to understand how these relations are established and how they contribute to the construction of the aesthetic experience of the work.

From the perspective of artistic creation, the concept of macroharmony also offers a relevant conceptual tool for composers working in audiovisual contexts. In many cases, composing music for cinema, theatre, television, or videogames occurs within collaborative processes in which different areas of artistic creation develop simultaneously. Directors, screenwriters, editors, actors, sound designers, and composers participate

together in the construction of a shared expressive fabric in which each aesthetic decision may influence the perception of the others.

In such contexts, thinking about music through the principle of macroharmony may contribute to a more integrated compositional approach, in which the composer works not only with sonic materials but also with expressive relationships between sound, gesture, image, spatiality, vocal modulation, and dramatic development.

This perspective does not imply the dissolution of musical specificity within the broader audiovisual work. On the contrary, macroharmony fully recognizes the singularity of musical language and its expressive resources. What it proposes is an expansion of the field of observation capable of understanding how these resources interact with other dimensions of artistic creation.

Moreover, the macroharmonic approach also allows for the recognition of the creative role of silence within audiovisual works. Just as silence may perform structural functions within music, its presence in audiovisual contexts may also participate in specific macroharmonic configurations, transforming the perception of images, gestures, and dramatic actions unfolding within the scene.

In this way, macroharmony may be understood as a principle that contributes to bringing together the fields of music theory, audiovisual analysis, and compositional practice. By shifting the focus of analysis toward the relational field between different elements of the work, it becomes possible to develop new forms of investigation capable of engaging with the complexity of contemporary artistic practices.

In this sense, macroharmony does not present itself as a closed interpretative model, but rather as a point of departure for the development of new analytical and creative approaches aimed at understanding music in audiovisual arts. By recognizing that musical experience emerges from an integrated expressive system, this perspective broadens the horizon for reflecting on the role of music in an artistic landscape in which sound, image, gesture, and narrative are increasingly interconnected.

7. CONCLUSION

The reflection developed in this article began with the observation that musical experience in audiovisual arts frequently exceeds the traditional boundaries of music theory. Although the concept of harmony has played a central role in understanding sonic organization throughout the history of Western music, its application to contexts in which music articulates directly with images, gestures, dramatic actions, and narrative structures reveals the need for a broader conceptual formulation capable of encompassing the interactions between the different expressive dimensions present in such works.

By observing that musical meaning in audiovisual contexts emerges from the relationship between sounds, images, dramatic actions, and narrative structures, it becomes clear that the musical phenomenon cannot be understood solely in terms of the internal organization of sonic material. Rather, the spectator's musical experience results from a system of relations in which different elements of the work intersect and transform one another throughout the processes of creation and reception.

It is within this context that the concept of macroharmony has been proposed. The concept designates the principle according to which the meaningful structure of audio-

visual music emerges from the inseparable interaction between sonic and non-sonic elements, whose articulation produces an expressive unity that surpasses the sum of its components. By shifting the focus from strictly acoustic harmonic organization toward the broader relational field of the audiovisual work, macroharmony seeks to provide a theoretical basis capable of describing more comprehensively the processes through which musical meaning is constructed in contemporary artistic practices.

It is important to emphasize, however, that macroharmony should not be understood primarily as a simple extension of the notion of harmony consolidated by Western music theory. Its foundations lie closer to the original and expanded meaning of the term found in Greek tradition, particularly within the horizon of *mousiké*, in which music, speech, gesture, movement, and action constituted inseparable dimensions of a single aesthetic realization. In this sense, macroharmony recovers and updates this broader understanding of the symbolic articulation between expressive elements, recontextualizing it within the framework of contemporary audiovisual arts.

Paradoxically, what is presented here as a contemporary formulation may also be understood as the recovery of an earlier dimension of the concept of harmony itself, prior to its specialization within the field of music theory. By returning to the idea of harmony as the coherent articulation between different elements of a whole, macroharmony approaches a broader understanding of artistic practices in which music, movement, speech, and scenic representation form inseparable dimensions of a single expressive unity.

In this sense, macroharmony may be understood not only as a descriptive concept, but also as a theoretical tool potentially applicable to the analysis of different forms of artistic production in which musical meaning emerges from the interaction between multiple expressive dimensions, while also contributing to guide future investigations into the ways this articulation manifests itself across different artistic languages.

By proposing macroharmony as a theoretical tool for understanding the relational emergence of musical meaning in audiovisual works, this article seeks to contribute to dialogue between different fields of inquiry, including music theory, film music studies, and audiovisual sound studies. Future research may further develop this perspective through the analysis of specific works, the development of more detailed analytical tools, and the observation of creative processes involved in composing music for diverse audiovisual contexts. By expanding the conceptual horizon of harmony from its more original and relational meaning, macroharmony offers a starting point for rethinking the role of music in an artistic landscape in which sound, image, gesture, and narrative are increasingly integrated.

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