The Sorcerer's Apprentice's apprentices

A critical analysis of teaching and learning of musical interpretation in a piano master class

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Introduction

Master classes in music are possible to view as both emblematic of the institutional heritage from the master–apprentice tradition as well as characteristic of the particularity of the educational meeting between student and teacher of Western classical music often found in higher music education. Such particularity in the meeting and metaphorical educational handshake between one student and one master class teacher at a specific time and place could arguably raise questions regarding both the potentials and risks that such a setting affords. Previously it has been stated that master classes, in general, are perceived as very positive by students (Long, et al., 2011a), that they for better or for worse 'can be life-changing events' (Lalli, 2004, p. 24) and that the masters often tell stories about topics such as themselves, their former students, other famous musicians and composers, music, and the profession itself (see, e.g., Lalli, 2004; Göllerich, 2010).

In an earlier interview study, I have argued that piano teachers' and students' verbalisation and negotiation of what musical interpretation is or could be, affects students' development of musical interpretation (Holmgren, 2020). I have also suggested that transposing the characteristics of musical interpretation and the learning thereof to contexts such as mythology and classical literature can isolate the core problems of a learning situation (Holmgren, 2020). Thus, in this article, I will, first, report an empirical study of a master class setting in the context of Western classical music in higher education, investigating teaching and learning of musical interpretation and, second, philosophically discuss the results using three components extracted from an ancient literary dialogue concerning the learning of magic as well as my experiences of apprenticeship.

The title of this article alludes to the triad of Disney,[1] Dukas, and Goethe, with the two former items being based on the latter's poem *Der Zauberlehrling* (1797). This also resonates with the tendency, both found within higher music education and in ancient stories of (the learning of) magic, to emphasise genealogical aspects, i.e., who studied with whom.[2] More directly, the title, as well as the topic of the article, relate to the triad's ancient forerunner told in Lucian's *Philopseudes* (c. AD 150 or c. AD 170), often described as a satire, mocking people who believe

[1] The films by Disney treating the Sorcerer's Apprentice subject themselves form a triad: *Fantasia* (1940), *Fantasia* 2000 (1999), and *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (2010) (see, e.g., Kalitan, 2012; Labbie, 2012; Zipes, 2017, pp. 59–63). However, the first cinematic adaption of this poem featuring Dukas' music was *The Wizard's Apprentice* (1930). The similarities between the versions are so striking that it is plausible to assume that the forerunner influenced Disney. One must also note that the punishment of the apprentice present in Disney's version(s) is not included in the film from 1930 (Zipes, 2017, pp. 59–61).

[2] For examples of emphasis on genealogical aspects in music education, see Kogan, 1987; Kingsbury, 1988, pp. 45–46; Horowitz, 1991; Nettl, 1995, pp. 68–72; Wagner, 2015. For examples from magic, see, e.g., Graf, vi1994, p. 162; Ogden, 2007a.

in the supernatural (Ogden, 2007a, p. 2).[3] However, according to Zipes (2017, pp. xiv, 12, 28), the memeplex of 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' consists of two distinctive story types, namely 'The Humiliated Apprentice' – having *Philopseudes* (33–37) as one of its primary written sources – and 'The Rebellious Apprentice'. This memeplex, in essence, highlights humankind's all-important struggle to 'know ourselves, our desires, and our talents' (Zipes, 2017, p. 28). Consequently, how such conflicts are resolved philosophically 'determine[s] the nature of what it is to be human and humane' (Zipes, 2017, p. xiii).

Philopseudes is a frame dialogue containing an account of a gathering where one medical doctor and philosophers from different schools attempt to persuade the narrator of the efficacy of magical practices and the existence of ghosts (Ogden, 2007b, p. 177).[4] The three components that I will use in the philosophical discussion are from the story of how Eucrates intended to have Pancrates share the secret[5] knowledge that he had learned from the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis (*Philopseudes* [33–37]), and supposedly had at least partly stored in written form (component 2). However, owing to jealousy, Pancrates does not teach it (component 1). After having overheard his incantation, Eucrates casts a spell on a pestle but later finds himself unable to reverse it. Finally, Pancrates appears, breaks the spell, and disappears for good; thus, he dissolves their master–apprentice relationship, irreversibly withholding the secret knowledge from Eucrates (component 3). These three components are essential for the following article as the results and the philosophical discussion are structured according to them.

Earlier research

Master classes are and have for a long time been common within Western higher music education. Masters, teachers, and students regularly claim that such classes are effective for students' development (e.g., Hanken, 2008; Stabell, 2010; Hanken, 2011; Hanken and Long, 2012; Hanken, 2015; 2016; 2017) and retrospective studies indicate that exceptionally accomplished individuals almost always had studied with a master teacher (Sosniak, 2006, p. 298). However, until recently, research on master classes has been quite sparse (Hanken, 2008, p. 27; 2011, p. 149). Nonetheless, the existing research mostly reports students' positive experiences of being able to perform for and to receive advice from a master (e.g., Creech, et al., 2009; Long, et al., 2011b). However, regarding musical interpretation, the lasting effects of teaching and transfer of learning in a master class setting have not yet been studied.

A typological mapping of master classes suggests that the dimensions of content and interaction between teacher and student are useful for understanding such classes (Long, et al., 2011b, p. 27). The content ranged from what the authors call artistic-based classes, focusing on improving students' performances of specific musical works, to work-based ones, focusing on developing work skills, such as performing orchestral excerpts and performing auditions. The interaction ranged from a master-dominant approach to a collaborative, student-centred approach (Long, et al., 2011b, p. 27).

Criticism has been formulated against both the artistic-based classes and the master-dominant approach. The former, focusing on the specific works studied, seemed to limit the potential for students' transfer of learning (Long, et al., 2011b, p. 11), whereas the latter has been questioned, as it supposedly 'stifles creativity and encourages passivity on the part of the

[3] When referring to the text of *Philopseudes*, the paragraph for the relevant section is given in parenthesis. I have mainly relied on the translation found in Ogden (2007a, pp. 45–64), comparing it with Costa (2005) and Page, et al. (1921).

[4] For an overview of the layout of the dialogue and the contents of the ten tales, see Ogden (2007a, p. 15; 2007b, pp. 178–179).

[5] In this article, secret knowledge is conceptualised as the knowledge whose sharing is regulated through factual or metaphorical non-disclosure agreements (see also Holmgren, 2020, p. 121).

student' (Long, et al., 2011b, p. 18; see also Westney, 2003, pp. 175–179; Lalli, 2004; Edwin, 2018). Nonetheless, researchers in Music Education have repeatedly argued for the effectiveness of demonstration and imitation, frequently found in artistic-based master-dominant classes (e.g., Nielsen, 1999; Hanken, 2008; 2017). Three examples: first, Long, et al. (2011b, p. 13) stated that they could observe that students acquired new ways of handling issues and that students' 'thinking skills were challenged and expanded' during master classes; second, Hanken and Long (2012, pp. 8–9) testified that the symposium participants 'witnessed that it was possible for a master teacher to polish and refine students' artistic, communicative and performance skills'; and, third, Hanken (2017, p. 78) claimed that 'traditional, master-dominant masterclasses can themselves contribute greatly to developing the student's creativity, although this might not be obvious at the time'.

Earlier research has indicated that instrumental teachers during lessons tend to relate to their own rather than the students' interpretations of musical works (Lehmann, 1997, p. 157; see also the description in Kogan, 1987, pp. 87–89). Therefore, students without sufficient prior knowledge might be hindered from benefitting from such advice (Hultberg, 2008, p. 20). Further, students do not necessarily learn to transfer the specific skills developed within instrumental teaching to other contexts, such as other pieces within the same genre or category of musical works, or to make independent decisions regarding their musical interpretation (see, e.g., Hultberg, 2000; Mills, 2002; Gaunt, 2009, p. 180).

I have previously argued that a shared understanding between student and teacher of the current *interpretative paradigm*, i.e., what musical interpretation is supposed to be about, seems to be essential for students' development of musical interpretation (Holmgren, 2020; see also Holmgren, 2018, pp. 58–59). Verbalisation and negotiation of such understanding should be beneficial in decreasing both student passivity and master dominance. Thus, one could expect that establishing a shared understanding of such knowledge should be central in the metaphorical educational contract between master and apprentice in higher music education (see Nielsen and Kvale, 2000, p. 30).

Developing students' personal and authentic artistic understanding of musical interpretation is one of the overarching goals and most significant challenges for higher education within the Western classical music tradition (Silverman, 2008, p. 249). As knowledge about musical interpretation usually is handed down orally by demonstration and imitation (Lehmann, Sloboda, and Woody, 2006, p. 85), students' past and current teacher(s) directly influence both their view of what musical interpretation is or could be (Holmgren, 2020) and their strategies for musical interpretation (Hultberg, 2008, p. 12). However, the potential differences between how a master class teacher, the students, and the students' regular teacher understand the teaching and learning of musical interpretation during a master class have not yet been critically studied.

Aim

In this article, the overarching aim is to further the understanding of teaching and learning of musical interpretation through a critical hermeneutical analysis of a seven days long piano master class.[6] The analytical approach includes a philosophical discussion in which I use three components extracted from an ancient literary narrative concerning the learning of magic as well as my own experiences of apprenticeship.

[6] The master class was in the form of a self-contained university course. The master, not part of the university's permanent staff, was handpicked for the class, open to both Swedish and international students. Henceforth, the term 'master class' is, unless otherwise stated, used only for classes taught by external teachers.

Theoretical framework, design of the study, and production of empirical material

In this section, I will first shortly describe how musical interpretation is viewed within this study, and then outline the theoretical framework underpinning the design of the study. The view of musical interpretation, and the learning thereof, in this article, is affected by the stated aim for the studied master class, namely that students should 'acquire knowledge *about* [my emphasis] the interpretation' of musical works at a very high artistic level. The exact wording, in line with the formulation in Swedish,[7] is essential, as it, instead of focusing on improving students' performances, aims at developing more general knowledge of how repertoire could be interpreted. Thus, musical interpretation is viewed as referring to a more general understanding rather than work-specific knowledge, inspiration, or insights that might materialise in the longer run. Consequently, learning of musical interpretation explicitly implies at least some aspects of meta-learning in order to foster the transfer of learning in contrast to transfer learning (see, e.g., Haskell, 2001). Musical interpretation itself is viewed as the understanding of a piece of music, and such an understanding is commonly manifested in, but not limited to, musical performance. Thus, musical interpretation is viewed as the process of and knowledge about a 'more or less motivated and coherent' (Lehmann, Sloboda, and Woody, 2006, p. 96) selection and application of performance choices to a composition. Such decisions are usually based on conventions, styles, practices, and personal taste; and the resulting, often subtle, nuances are essential in musical interpretation (Lehmann, Sloboda, and Woody, 2006, p. 85). Consequently, I view the interpreter's freedom to make such choices as both aesthetically valuable (see the discussion about the old [original] and new contract between composer and performer in Kivy, 2007, pp. 100–103) and unavoidable as the musical score under-determines performance (Davies and Sadie, 2001, p. 498).

The theoretical framework in this study is based on selections from the hermeneutical philosophy of Gadamer (2013 [1960]) and Ricœur (1991 [1986]). The concepts of pre-understanding, parts and the whole, and the fusion of horizons which 'takes place in conversation, in which something is expressed that is not only mine or my author's, but common' (Gadamer, 2013 [1960], p. 406) are of paramount importance for how the earlier stages of understanding of a phenomenon are viewed. From such a hermeneutical stance, humans approach a phenomenon based on their pre-understanding and seek to conduct a dialogue leading to mutual change. Such dialogues can further the understanding of one's own as well as others' worlds. However, gaining a deeper understanding of a complex phenomenon is not only viewed as centring on finding a shared and expanding common ground. In order to address ruptures, conflicts, and paradoxes, texts are treated as posthumous, i.e., 'complete and, as it were, intact', in the sense that '[t]he author can no longer respond' (Ricœur, 1991 [1986], p. 103). Thus the aim is to understand what 'unfolds, as it were, before the text' (Ricœur, 1991 [1986], p. 127) instead of trying to find the 'lost intention' behind the text (Ricœur, 1991 [1986], p. 33).

In research, hermeneutical interpretation should both offer a richer understanding of the phenomenon of the original text and argue for the presented interpretation. Consequently, my hermeneutical process will be described in each of the four steps that took place during this study: first, in the design of the study; second, in the production and analysis of the empirical material; third, in the description of the results; and fourth, in the philosophical discussion of the results. Furthermore, when the reader meets the text in the article and begins to ask questions to it, a fifth hermeneutical step will occur.

[7] In Swedish, the wording is 'tillägnat sig kunskap *om* [my emphasis] interpretation'.

Design of the study

The research reported in this article consists of a study of one piano master class in the form of a self-contained university course that took place during seven days in the summer of 2017. The studied master class was selected both due to pragmatic aspects such as geographical location and familiarity with the master class teacher (henceforth referred to as 'master'), but also due to her[8] status as an internationally acclaimed master with almost half a century of teaching experience and a successful career as a soloist. It also mattered that some students in the master class were currently finishing or had just finished their studies with one of the master's former students (three years of higher music education) and that I knew that teacher. In sum, a possibility for applying a three-generational perspective encompassing master, students, and the students' main instrument teacher (henceforth referred to as 'teacher'), presented itself.

I intended to create a multifaceted empirical material through observing and writing field notes during lessons, audio and video recording lessons as stimuli for video-stimulated interviews (henceforth referred to as VSI[s]), collecting students' annotated scores, and conducting qualitative semi-structured follow-up interviews (henceforth referred to as FUI[s]). Two criteria limited the selection of students. First, due to practical reasons, as the master class took place during seven days, I had to limit the number of participating students, and consider that I only could schedule one relatively long (3 hours) VSI session with the master. Second, the students had to currently be studying or just having finished their studies with the teacher. As a consequence of these constraints, the maximum number of participating students was set to two; at the same time, this number was considered a minimum in order to obtain sufficient information about the studied phenomenon. The selected students consisted of one student in the first year of the artistic bachelor programme in music and one in the second year of the artistic master programme in music, both having the teacher as their main instrument teacher and participating in the master class. However, the master student had finished her studies with the teacher at the time of the follow-up interviews. Thus, instead a third student (henceforth referred to as 'S3'), who was studying in the third year of the bachelor program with the teacher and who had also participated in the master class, was selected. This addition was made to avoid a singular student point of view, and also as a way of member checking more of my field notes. For ethical reasons, in order to provide students with an acceptable level of confidentiality, it is not indicated which of the two students (henceforth referred to as 'S1' and 'S2') that refer to the student in bachelor and master programme respectively. As the quotes presented from the follow-up interview with S3 contained less potentially sensitive information, I have chosen to make it possible for the reader to distinguish her from S1 and S2.

Production of empirical material

During the master class period, I observed and wrote field notes during 18 of 27 lessons (about 1 hour each), including at least one lesson each for all of the nine participating students. All lessons took place in a rather large assembly hall equipped with two grand pianos, a music stand for the master to use during students' initial playing, and three rows of chairs, approximately capable of accommodating an audience of up to 50 persons.

The two students' three lessons were documented using video cameras from two or three angles, and the audio was also separately recorded. The second lesson for each student, lasting about one hour and ten minutes, was used for one video-stimulated interview (VSI) each with the student, the master, and the teacher. The students' sessions were conducted the day after

[8] The third-person singular pronoun used for the participants is 'she', both to acknowledge that Isis, in *Philopseudes* (34), is described as the source of the secret knowledge, and as a pragmatic decision based on the wish to protect their confidentiality.

the lessons, the master's three days after, and the teacher's about six months after the lessons. The VSIs intended to focus on the participants' reflections rather than their recall (van Braak, et al., 2018; cf. Bloom, 1953, p. 161; see also arguments in Haglund, 2003; Lyle, 2003; Rowe, 2009; Nielsen, 2010), thus, striving to 'negotiate an intersubjective understanding' (Brooks, Östersjö, and Wells, 2019, p. 213) of the recorded lessons together with the researcher. These sessions were documented using video cameras from two angles, and the audio was also separately recorded. The computer screen, showing the stimulus and the score, was also recorded, and the scores were digitally annotated during the VSIs. Three perspectives were given on the first 30 minutes of each lesson as it was not possible to cover the whole in any VSI.[9] Further, to capture the master's annotations, the students' scores were scanned before the first and after each of the three lessons.

During the following autumn, I conducted one audio-recorded qualitative semi-structured follow-up interview (FUI; about 1 hour and 15 minutes) (Brinkman, 2013, pp. 21–25) each with two students and the teacher to let them verbalise their understandings of the master class from a somewhat more distanced perspective.

In sum, the following empirical material was produced:

- transcriptions of field notes written during observation of 18 lessons (24 pages);
- scanned versions of the two students' scores including annotations by the master (242 pages);
- transcriptions of video-stimulated interviews (VSIs) with master, teacher, and the two students (125 pages);
- transcriptions of qualitative semi-structured follow-up interviews with teacher and two students[10] (71 pages);
- transcriptions of selected fragments from the recorded lessons used in the VSIs (11 pages); and
- transcriptions of students' verbal utterances during the six recorded lessons (13 pages).

All participants gave their informed consent, and ethical aspects were discussed both at the beginning of the master class period and during each VSI and FUI. Both the VSIs and FUIs were conducted in the researcher's mother tongue Swedish. The participants got to read and approve of the transcripts thereof in Swedish. After the analysis, the researcher translated and adapted the quotes presented to standard conventions of written language.

Analysis

The analysis consisted of seven stages, each one consisting of one or more fusions of horizons. First, before the master class took place, I systematically went through my experiences and thoughts about teaching and learning of musical interpretation, master classes in general, and this master in particular as I had first-hand experiences of taking part in lessons with her. Although I was not able to find my diaries from that period, the master's annotations in my scores were still distinctly recognisable. However, during the preparation, I rediscovered material relating to a master class with another master, in which I had participated during the summer of 2002. It included my application letter and audio recording, a letter from the master, some photographs, a diploma, as well as my annotations written during the course.

[9] The VSI sessions with the students lasted about two hours each, that with the master three hours, and those with the teacher about one hour each. As the students' sessions were the first and only had to cover their own lesson, the material treated in these was about 45 minutes.

[10] See comment above regarding participating students in the FUIs.

Furthermore, I discussed that material with both the teacher that I was studying with at that time and current colleagues.

Second, at the end of each day during the master class period, I read my field notes, and went through my experiences, trying to clarify how my understanding of the teaching and learning of musical interpretation had evolved, particularly highlighting disruptive changes, as a preparation for the next day.

Third, I watched the six recorded lessons and read my written field notes multiple times. I combined all scanned versions of each score into a version where the master's annotations could be analysed. During the transcription of the video-stimulated interviews (VSIs) and the qualitative semi-structured follow-up interviews (FUIs), I wrote comments on utterances that appeared to be of importance for the whole. I then reread the transcripts multiple times, further commenting on utterances that seemed to be of importance. Later, tentative keywords and concepts were identified, and I tried to understand the context in which they appeared. The written field notes were then transcribed, and annotations that seemed to be of importance were marked for further analysis. These notes were printed and read through while writing tentative concepts that appeared to be usable for further analysis.

Fourth, selected passages of the six recorded lessons containing what I understood as misunderstandings or non-understanding, or otherwise deemed important were studied in great detail, including viewing the recordings multiple times and transcribing selected fragments. This led to a better understanding of the communicative aspects and how they might affect the learning outcome.

Fifth, I zoomed out to view the bigger picture, which led to an interest in the magical and mythological elements contained both in the general master–apprentice model and in this particular master class. These elements appeared increasingly crucial for the understanding of the lessons and the participants' actions. This new view led to further investigations of the empirical material, as well as to an excursion to the origins of the Sorcerer's Apprentice story, enhancing my understanding of the master class as a socio-cultural phenomenon.

Sixth, I focused on the (lack of) verbal communication between student and master during the lessons, and related them to the master's, teacher's and students' understandings of content, interaction, and learning outcome.

Seventh, I yet again scrutinised the empirical material and, based on my new understanding of the (lack of) verbal communication between student and master during lessons and the the master's tendency to verbalise her arguments and philosophy of music in discussions with me, created one *ethnodramatic collage*. This ethnodramatic collage on the teaching and learning of musical interpretation was intended to function as a complex condensation, both placing the core issues of the studied master class in the foreground and striving for a 'dramatic impact' (Saldaña, 1998, pp. 184–185; see also Saldaña, 2003; 2005; 2011).[11] By using the term 'ethnodramatic collage',[12] I intend to openly state the fact that the presented verbal exchange did not take place, meaning that the three characters never interacted with each other in this

[11] The ethnodramatic collage has not yet been professionally staged and performed in front of a live audience. However, it constitutes the basis for an audio-paper (in review) addressing the master–apprentice relationship in the music conservatoire. Further, during autumn 2020, master students in music performance at one institution for higher music education in Sweden, after a short preparation, got to read the lines out loud, i.e., perform the collage. Based on the responses from the students, I strongly believe that performing such ethnodramatic collages can be highly valuable for students, staff, and researcher to further discussions regarding topics such as power relations and what musical interpretation and learning is or could be.

[12] The etymology of the word 'collage' goes back to Old French *coller* 'to glue', from Greek *kolla* 'glue' (*Online Etymology Dictionary,* 2020).

way;[13] the utterances presented in the collage took place when talking with me. This led me to believe that the participants had the capacity of verbalising more than took place during the master class. However, my intention was neither to dismiss the master class as an educational setting nor to strive to industrially smooth out the apparent discrepancies of the participants' understandings. Further, the dramatist Terrence McNally in his 1995 play *Master class* (1996), (loosely) based on some of Maria Callas' master classes given at Juilliard 1971–1972, has, to great public success, explored the topic of teaching and learning in such a context.[14] Lastly, I find that it makes sense to present at least parts of the results in a dialogical form as the components applied in the philosophical discussion are taken from such a context, *Philopseudes* being a re-telling of stories to a friend (see also Saldaña, 2005, p. 20). As a result, I, like the narrator Tychiades ('Mr. Commonsense' [as suggested by Hall, 1981, p. 511]), invite the reader to be that friend (Philocles).[15]

In sum, the process has been a continuous movement to and from the parts and the whole, on multiple levels of analysis, generating deepened understanding of the phenomenon studied.

Results

The results centre on the following three themes: first, the students' learning of musical interpretation is hindered owing to the master's beliefs and actions; second, the lessons centre on the master's privileged access to secret knowledge mediated in writing; and, third, the metaphors of gods, ghosts, and *Weihekϋsse* ('kisses of consecration'), can be used to understand the master's storytelling and teaching. These themes will be elaborated after the following ethnodramatic collage.[16]

[13] In the ethnodramatic collage, the character 'Student' consists of an aggregate of the three participating students. This choice was made both to achieve consistency of naming, and to indicate the overarching similarities of the students' understandings.

[14] I am grateful to Johnny Saldaña for introducing me to this play. For reviews and descriptions of the play see, e.g., Gurewitsch, 1997; Shengold, 1997; Holland, 1999; Clum, 2018, pp. 112–114. For a transcription of the master classes given by Maria Callas that inspired McNally, see Ardoin, 1998.

[15] For a discussion of the multiple meanings of the name Tychiades, and whether or not the character represents Lucian, see Ogden (2007a, pp. 18–21; 2007b, pp. 180–184) and Whitmarsh (2004, pp. 468–471); for a discussion of Philocles, see Ogden (2007a, pp. 30–31).

[16] References to the empirical material are given for all utterances in the ethnodramatic collage and quotations in the running text. The following abbreviations are used for referring to the empirical material: VSI (video-stimulated recall), FUI (follow-up interview), L1–18 (lesson 1–18); M (master), S1–S3 (students 1–3), and T (teacher). Thus, 'VSI:S2-T' means that the quote is taken from the transcription of the video-stimulated recall with the teacher using the recorded lesson with S2 as the stimulus, 'L18' refers to the field notes from lesson number 18, and 'LT1' to the transcript of the recording of lesson 1. Further, 'EC:1–27' (ethnodramatic collage) refers to the lines in the script of the ethnodramatic collage. As these script lines also contain references to the empirical material, they function as a repository of quotes when referred to in the rest of the text. However, Saldaña completely advises against such practices of adding references and footnotes to scripts and states that 'a play is not a journal article' (2011, p. 36, 37, 112). His 'cautionary mantra' (2011, p. 117) is that the researcher should 'stop thinking like a social scientist and start thinking like an artist' (2011, pp. 35, 37, 117, 133, 209; 2005, p. 33). I have discussed this issue in an e-mail correspondence with him and settled on the current pragmatic solution, although it violates one of the foundational principles of ethnodramatic practice. On a positive note, I believe that the current solution does not infringe on the aesthetics too much, and also, at least for some doubters, partly demystifies the ethnographer's magic.

Ethnodramatic collage on the teaching and learning of musical interpretation

1	MASTER:	I can help the students to develop their horizon to music, its different styles, and the instrument, piano or others used in chamber music.[17]
2	STUDENT:	After one had played the piece, she demonstrated, stopped, and like, try to play it this way instead. See what happens.[18]
3	MASTER:	The patients always need something, right? It is essential to quickly understand what they need the most, and what they need less.[19]
4	TEACHER:	Interestingly, the students' playing became so good in such a short time.[20]
5	MASTER:	Now, the students' playing sounded very nice. See, after I have demonstrated it three times, their playing is good.[21]
6	STUDENT:	It is not always easy to understand what the master wants.[22]
7	MASTER:	I demonstrated and showed in such great detail so that they would understand.[23]
8	TEACHER:	I do not think that the students understand at all what the master is trying to achieve.[24]
9	MASTER:	I am unsure of how much they will remember.[25]
10	STUDENT:	All teachers have their own secret ingredients that they can share.[26]
11	TEACHER:	The lessons were only about students imitating the master.[27]
12	STUDENT:	When one goes to a master class, the master puts the parsley on top of the dish.[28]
13	MASTER:	If I all the time need to show and ask students to imitate, then I get bored.[29]
14	TEACHER:	The students do not really think for themselves. The master gives them everything.[30]
15	MASTER:	If the students did something crazy, it would be fantastic, because then they create something. But if they wait for me to do it for them, then it is worse.[31]
16	TEACHER:	If the students got to analyse the master's demonstration afterwards, it would justify her extensive playing. Otherwise, I do not think that it is so valuable.[32]
17	STUDENT:	It is difficult to apply other students' lessons to your own learning, as everyone has different playing styles and works with different pieces.[33]

[17] VSI:S1-M
[18] FUI:S2
[19] VSI:S2-M
[20] VSI:S1-T
[21] VIS:S2-M
[22] VSI:S2
[23] VSI:S2-M
[24] VSI:S2-T
[25] VSI:S1-M
[26] VSI:S2
[27] VSI:S1-T
[28] FUI:S2
[29] VSI:S2-M
[30] VSI:S1-T
[31] VSI:S2-M
[32] FUI:T
[33] FUI:S3

18	MASTER:	I can show the students one way of playing and encourage them to watch and listen. If they are talented, they understand it. If they are not gifted, they will not learn, isn't it so?[34]
19	STUDENT:	It was really difficult for me to change my playing at a moment's notice during the lesson, so sometimes I felt a little bit helpless.[35]
20	MASTER:	I can never know what use students will have of my annotations. Maybe much, if they can transfer the specifics that we have worked on to other works. It must be automatic that when the teacher demonstrates such details, students should transfer them to other pieces too.[36]
21	TEACHER:	Yes, but it does not happen that students extrapolate particulars to generalisations.[37]
22	MASTER:	I think the students are old enough. They should be at a little different stadium in their piano playing now.[38]
23	STUDENT:	What one learned was, I would say, the things she told about how to perform the specific pieces. But I cannot say that it changed my life in a way that I think about all the time.[39]
24	MASTER:	The question is if the students will have problems with their pieces again, develop them further, or forget what I had demonstrated.[40]
25	STUDENT:	I have always understood the master.[41]
26	TEACHER:	Regarding the question of what the students have learned, I am really unsure of what they understood.[42]
27	MASTER:	One that is a born musician cannot play it that way. That is why I am a bit sceptical against the students, even if they have a good teacher. They will forget what I have said in fourteen days.[43]

Hindered learning of musical interpretation

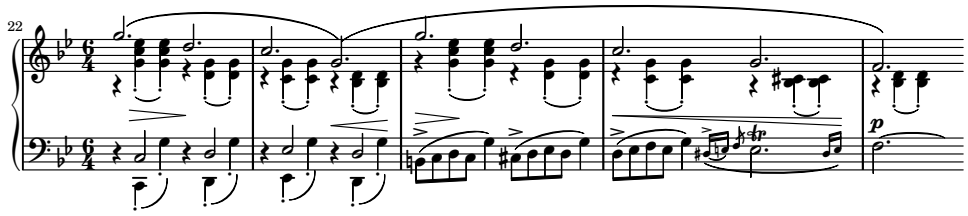
The students' learning of musical interpretation seemed to be hindered in three overarching ways. First, the master appeared to view talent as inherited, i.e., having an absolute view of musicality (e.g., EC:18, EC:20, EC:24, EC:27). Such a view decreases the master's need for scrutinising her actions, as students' lack of learning is attributed to their lack of talent, relieving the master from educational responsibilities. Further, less talented students and those that were not creative enough in their musical interpretation made the master resort to even more extensive cycles of demonstration and imitation (e.g., EC:13, EC:15). Such cycles bored the master (EC:13), and she – as well as the teacher – doubted their efficacy for students' lasting learning (EC:9, EC:24, EC:26). Consequently, the master increased her use of pedagogical devices whose efficacy she doubted when teaching students categorised as not talented or creative enough.

[34] VSI:S1-M
[35] FUI:S3
[36] VSI:S2-M
[37] FUI:T
[38] VSI:S2-M
[39] FUI:S3
[40] VSI:S1-M
[41] VSI:S1
[42] VSI:S2-T
[43] VSI:S2-M

Lack of shared understanding of learning content and learning outcome

Second, I found a substantive lack of shared understanding between master, student, and teacher regarding both the intended learning content and the actual learning outcome of the master class. Regarding intended learning content, the students seemed to understand it – to the degree that they actually understood the master – to centre on specifics, i.e., the practical performance of the works studied (EC:6, EC:12, EC:23, EC:25). In contrast, the master emphasised her intention to develop the students' general relationship to all Western classical music and its instruments in a broader sense (EC:1). The teacher, however, thought that, in general, the students were unable to generalise from specifics independently (EC:21).

One example that indicates lacking shared understanding of intended learning content is the master's correction of how the student performed the trill in bar 26 of Chopin's *Ballade no. 1 in G minor*, Op. 23 (see Example 1).[44]



Example 1. Chopin: *Ballade no. 1 in G minor,* Op. 23 (1835), bars 22–26.

During the student's playing, the master started to tell a story:

> Yes, I remember my professor. She always said that it was wrong, wrong. But you do not have to yell like crazy. She was a great expert of Chopin and was the head of the jury for [name of famous piano competition] in [name of large city]. She always wanted this dissonance [demonstrates]. So that is what she wants, at the same time with an accent. (LT12)

The teacher described her understanding of what the master tried to accomplish during this sequence:

> Well, she wants the d-sharp at the same time as the g [the pre-trill notes in bar 25:6]. On the beat. But it is not easy to understand. She mumbles. And she plays, and she plays. It is not so easy for the student to understand what the master wants. Now she has heard at least five or six bars. (VSI:S2-T)

However, the student expressed her understanding as:

> When the right hand has its g, she wanted you to play it at the same time as the d-sharp. (VSI:S2)

During the VSI, when I asked about the advantage of performing the trill in that way, the master elaborated:

> This trill should be played at the same time as the d-sharp, so there is dissonance followed by consonance. Of course, harmonic tension and release are very important for finding where phrases are going, and they also determine the plan of the dynamics in the music. If the harmonic [tension] intensifies and you play decrescendo, you will be seen as less clever, and reversely, if the harmonic leads to consonances and you start to make a crescendo, it will be seen as something unnatural. Harmony is a key factor in determining the dynamic plan. (VSI:S2-M)
>
> Sometimes an experienced musician who knows [the piece] and has played it herself is needed. Quite many errors have accumulated in new editions of piano pieces. It is irresponsible of the

[44] The music examples are typeset based on the editions used during the master class: Chopin (Henle from 2008, edited by Norbert Müllemann) and Janáček (Hudební matice from 1924).

> editors as one should remain faithful to the text, preferably the ones that the composer had checked before printing. Not like the Paderewski edition of Chopin when the jury sits down and changes it and still writes that it is Paderewski. Precisely the same label, the same book. Twenty, thirty years later, it is quite different, some notes are changed, and there are many errors. I am flabbergasted that some famous pianists have learned the wrong notes. When one reads, and after a while starts to trust these errors, it has gone far. Then much is lost. And it has happened many times that the big stars are not large enough to admit their mistakes. That is catastrophic. (VSI:S1-M)

I understand this as an indication that the master, teacher, and student viewed the situation as having different intended learning outcomes. Further, the master's presentation of arguments in support of her musical interpretation appeared to be situationally bound or requiring direct questions. During the lesson, the master emphasised that it was important to use the correct edition approved by her. Although both the Paderewski and the one used by the student (Henle) are correct regarding this trill, the master referred to them as faulty. By focusing on the selection of the edition, tying it to her private knowledge through referring to her former teacher as an authority, the master likely hindered the student's development of an understanding of the overarching problem, namely how trills of this particular type, according to Chopin, are to be performed in his music (see Eigeldinger, 1986, p. 131). Further, the relationship between the particular trill and the musical structure was not addressed.[45]

The students were in general highly satisfied with the master class. However, they could not describe their learning, except in terms of how the master wanted specific passages performed (EC:23). Moreover, both the master and the teacher severely questioned the extent of the students' actual learning (EC:8–9, EC:11, EC:14, EC:16, EC:18, EC:20–21, EC:24, EC:26–27). In my understanding, metaphorically, the master had treated the students' specific symptoms through demonstration and imitation, expecting that they independently should understand how to cure the underlying diseases (EC:3, EC:20). However, the master neither stated that students should generalise from specifics nor how they were supposed to accomplish that. Consequently, the students did not understand the master's intention, which could have negatively affected both the lasting effect and the transfer of learning. As expressed by the teacher's reflection:

> It can quickly become a bit parrotlike if you copy the demonstration. In the end, it really is somebody else playing. (FUI:T)

Musical interpretation is neither verbalised nor negotiated

Third, during lessons, musical interpretation was neither verbalised nor negotiated. The master seemed to focus on moulding the students' performances into aligning with her conception and interpretative paradigm (EC:5, EC:7). However, the students emphasised that their understandings of the studied pieces were in line with the master's, although hers were more clear and logical:

> We have the same understanding of the piece, and I hear that her demonstration is how I strive to play the music. (VSI:S1)

Consequently, the students seemed to adapt to the master's view through the cycles of demonstration and imitation (e.g., EC:2–5). In these cycles, the master solely judged the quality

[45] On a structural note, it cannot be left without comment that the trill in bar 25 is a part of a written-out stretto, i.e., an intensification of the quavers that began in the bass in bar 24, preceded by crotchets in bar 22 (themselves, from bar 9 onwards, preceded by two crotchets of the same pitch which could be viewed as quasi-minims). Thus, if one would begin the auxiliaries of the trill before the beat, the intensification would be structurally anticipated, thus breaking the musical architecture.

of the students' performance and improvement, which could limit their development of autonomy. The master thus acted as a guardian and preserver of the tradition.

I understood the musical dialogue to be limited, as the students did not seem to understand the master's intentions (see also EC:6, EC:25). As described by the teacher:

> It is difficult to understand what the master means. After all, she is a magician. It is not always clear what she wants, but she creates a special mood. She is very skilled at creating excitement. She has incredible charm. She is a magician, and I think that she can make gold out of nothing. (VSI:S1-T; FUI:T)

As the current interpretative paradigm was neither verbalised nor negotiated, and the master did not make sure that the students' understanding was the same as hers or at least compatible with it, the master's personal paradigm could be understood as having a regulative function. However, the master declared that it was not necessary to impose her vision if the performance already was brilliant. This line of thought opens for an understanding of musical interpretation, where multiple ways of performing a piece brilliantly exist:

> I am open to everything. If it is brilliant, I am happy to recognise it. As a pianist and musician, I have such a stature that I can determine when something is excellent. When something is not, I think my own thoughts. If something is genuinely brilliant, I will not intervene and make it mediocre again, no. (VSI:S1-M)

However, what characterised such performances, how they related to or were possible to generate within the current interpretative paradigm, was not articulated:

> I do not want you to play exactly like me, but there has to be a logic. (L14)

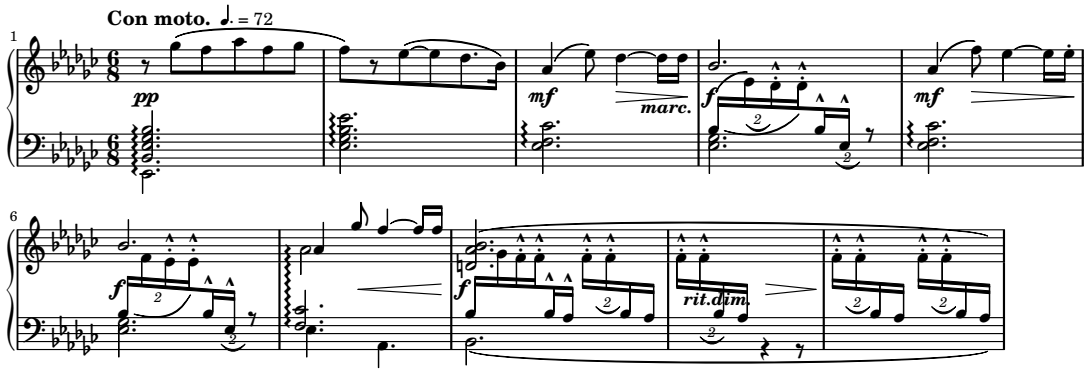
In sum, although the master explicitly mentioned some very general principles of musical interpretation, while only alluding to others, she did not present any argumentative support for the principles prescribed except favouritism (L3, L8–L12, L14–17) and authority (L12). Thus, the principles could have been perceived by the students as both objective and at the same time embodied in the master. No actual verbal dialogue took place during the lessons: neither the master nor the students asked any real questions, nor did the students contribute verbally by making any substantial statements other than answering questions regarding their repertoire (i.e., 'What do you have more?' [L2–3]), scheduling of lessons (L2, L8), agreeing on where they were in the score (i.e., 'Where are we?' [L6, L8, L16]), and transitional questions, i.e., 'You know?' or 'Do you understand?', asked without the student being able to or choosing to answer (L5–6, L9, L14–15). However, in my discussions with the master, she could, if asked, clarify her reasoning on a higher philosophical level of abstraction (VSI:S1-M, VSI:S2-M). Nonetheless, such a clarifying dialogue did not take place during lessons, as relevant questions were not asked.

Mediation of secret knowledge

I understood the lessons to centre on the master's mediation of secret knowledge, either through her decoding of the notation of the musical works studied or encoding it in her annotations in the students' scores (EC:18, EC:20). First, the master's privileged access to a supposedly correct musical interpretation of the works studied was exemplified by utterances during lessons such as:

> You do not respect what the master has written. (L5)
>
> That is not how it is written by Chopin. (L7)
>
> A little more like Beethoven has written. (L8)
>
> It is the composer's pedalisation. He[46] wants it that way. (L15)

Such comments indicated that the master supposedly could correctly decode composers' notation, and potentially also understand their underlying intentions. The students described the master as 'being very faithful to the score' (VSI:S1, VSI:S2). However, sometimes, they seemed to think that she took too many liberties in her musical interpretation, as exemplified by a student's understanding of the beginning of the first movement, 'Předtucha' (Presentiment), of Janáček's *1. X. 1905* (L9) (see Example 2):



Example 2. Janáček: *1. X. 1905* (1905–1906), I. 'Předtucha', bars 1–10.

STUDENT:	The [four] notes [semiquaver duplets in bar 4] are notated equally accented. Nonetheless, she accentuates the last ones, and I do the opposite, a decrescendo. But I totally buy her version and think that it forms a whole. That is so paradoxical.
CH:	However, what is really interesting is that the notated articulation actually differs.
STUDENT:	Oh, wow! I had not noticed it until now, haha. Di rap pa pa bom bom, yes!
CH:	So, both staccato and marcatissimo[47] on the first two. But, on the last two, only marcatissimo are notated, which might make her think of them as a bit more…
STUDENT:	Longer, yes.
CH:	I would guess.
STUDENT:	Look, she was more faithful to the score than I thought! (VSI:S1)

When I mentioned that the student had not observed the difference in articulation (cf. EC:25), the master responded:

> So she has not noticed. Well, that is disastrous, because it is so important for this music[al work]. (VSI:S1-M)

[46] In order not to obfuscate whose opinion is referred to, 'he' is used as the third-person singular pronoun as the composer was male.

[47] In this article, the term marcatissimo refers to the circumflex sign, denoting a stronger accent than the horizontal marcato wedge.

However, neither the notated difference in articulation, nor the formal structure of the passage, nor its relation to the rest of the work had been addressed during the lesson (L9).[48] Further, the connection between the master's interpretation and the written score was not clarified during the student's third lesson when the same piece of music was worked on (L14).

Second, the master extensively annotated the students' scores, mainly during students' initial playing, and tended to emphasise the importance of these annotations at the end of the lessons (L1, L3, L5, L9, L12, L15). It seems, however, that the students neither fully valued nor understood the master's annotations. Further, at least a couple of students used scores borrowed from libraries. The lasting value of the master's annotations could thus be questioned (see EC:20). One example of this tendency was that one student, in taking up a musical work that she had not studied for a while, neglected to use the score that contained annotations from her regular teacher. Consequently, she re-practised mistakes that had earlier been corrected (at least in the form of written annotations) (VSI:S2-T). Moreover, the teacher reflected on having noticed identical annotations in the student's scores as she got during her studies:

> Of course, you start to reflect when you recognise the same annotations in a student's score as when you studied the piece twenty-five years ago. There might be a little problem if you put the ritardando sign in the same place twenty-five years later. Do you understand what I mean? It is difficult to say, but it becomes very subjective. If I did not do that ritardando first but eventually did, and now it is done in the same place by students twenty-five years later. I do not know. It is not certain that it is necessary. (FUI:T)

Ghosts, gods, and *Weiheküsse*

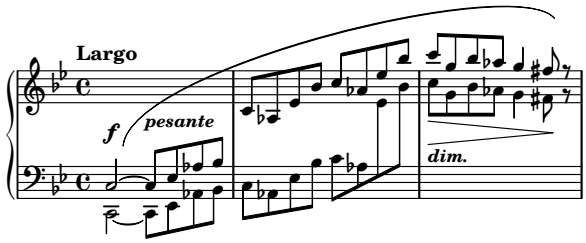
The metaphors of ghosts, gods, and *Weiheküsse* ('kisses of consecration') can be used to understand the master's storytelling and teaching through contextualising them. First, the conception of ghosts traditionally includes their capacity to disappear suddenly. That characteristic can both further the understanding of a master class as an isolated educational event where the master afterwards immediately leaves, and highlight that the lasting learning for the students could be questioned (EC:24, EC:26–27). The master expressed doubt regarding whether the students had learned anything that would permanently remain after the master class (EC:24, EC:27). This doubt was supported by the teacher's description of the lessons as consisting merely of demonstration and imitation, without the students having to think for themselves (EC:11, EC:14, EC:16). However, both the teacher and the master acknowledged that the students' playing rapidly improved during lessons (EC:4–5). Their statements might thus indicate that improvement in students' playing is not a reliable measure of their learning.

Second, the metaphors of gods and *Weiheküsse* can be fruitful in understanding the master's storytelling as a means of ascribing high status. Traditional beliefs about gods commonly include them being omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. During the master class, the master mediated all valuable knowledge primarily through her demonstrations, or verbal arguments based on favouritism and authority. Further, the master emphasised her seemingly otherworldly capacity of learning challenging repertoire such as Liszt's concertos and Beethoven's late sonatas very quickly, being able to perform them to great public acclaim

[48] The formal structure of the ten opening bars of the movement could be viewed as consisting of 4 (2 + 2) + 2 + 4 bars, and the material presented in the first four bars as more or less containing the thematic material for the whole work (see the description and analysis in Adès, 1999, pp. 26–29; Murphy, 2009, pp. 448–457; Kalhous, 2013, pp. 79–85; Ahn, 2018, pp. 17–19). The relation between the material in bar 3 and the slightly altered and diminished version in bar 4 is also essential (see the discussion of Janáček's concept of sčasovka in Beckerman, 1994, pp. 81–95 and Wingfield, 1999, pp. 221–225). For a discussion of the elements of Moravian folk music in *1. X. 1905*, see Murphy, 2009, pp. 404–481.

without making any mistakes (VSI:S2-M). The master expressed that she always notices errors and detects how students' playing could be improved. Such extreme attention to detail and the assertion that she is 'not possible to deceive' (L5, L14; VSI:S1-M) could be understood as the master's supposed omnipresence, at least during lessons.

I identified four different types of metaphorical *Weihekü*sse in the empirical material. In the history of Western music, the concept of such actions goes back to the story of the *Weihekuss* that Liszt claimed to have gotten from Beethoven (Keiler, 1988; Walker, 2005, pp. 1–10; see also the 'postmodern gender-fantasy' on the episode [Saffle, 2004, p. 227] in Kopelson [1996, pp. 61–79]). First, the master mentioned one of her former teachers (as previously described) (L12; VSI:S1-M), thus inscribing herself in a specific historical lineage. Second, the master contextualised both her correction of the student's playing and her teaching practice by telling a story about one of her former students, since the 1990s an internationally famous pianist. When the former student played Chopin's *Ballade no. 1 in G minor*, Op. 23, she also got the same correction as the student: 'She played with the same accents on the C's [in the beginning, bars 1–3], and I got mad.' (L12) (see Example 3).



Example 3. Chopin: *Ballade no. 1 in G minor*, Op. 23 (1835), bars 1–3.

During the VSI, when I asked the student why she thought that the master had mentioned the former student, she commented:

> I was also a bit surprised, actually. Probably because we had the same problem or what you should say. Nonetheless, I thought it was quite fun to hear in that way that also a famous … it was very comforting in an indescribable way. (VSI:S1)

Later, when, during the FUI, I brought up that the master had said that the student was not the only one who had had that problem, she elaborated:

> Something that also stuck was that [former student's forename], that [former student's full name] also had the same problem. It was actually very nice, and it gave me some hope. I am not the only one who has had problems with this section. It also felt like I got, maybe it is wrong to say connection, but I have listened quite a lot to [former student's forename], and I think that she is really good. So, I kind of connected with her. (FUI:S1)

I understand the quotes above as indicating that the student enjoyed being included in what could metaphorically be described as the same herd as the former student. When the students ascribed high status to the master, they thereby inscribed themselves in a tradition of famous students who had studied with the master.

Third, the master ascribed high status to her teaching directly by stating that she had taught many pianists who became successful, exemplified by her utterance about the teacher:

> I am delighted to teach [former student's] students as I can see that she does a good job. And I can also see that she got such a position that she deserved. She was one of those that I think was too little valued, because she was as good as [mentions one of her even more famous students]. (VSI:S1-M)

A couple of times, the master commented that the students' scores contained good annotations (L2, L9; VSI:S1-M). When asked about her utterance that the students' teacher had written many good annotations, the master replied:

> Yes, it was most likely a Russian teacher who perhaps had a little bit of Slavic temperament. In the score, I could see that many things were annotated. So, I did not have to correct anything general about tempo or so. (VSI:S1-M)

At that moment, the master seemed to not remember or understand that the teacher who had annotated the scores was her former student. When I asked the student, whose annotated score was discussed, about the master's positive comment, she said:

> It is her own student, her former student, [name of students' main instrument teacher]. Indirectly, she says that she taught her children properly. (VSI:S1)

Fourth, I understand the following utterances from the master to me at the end of the VSI session as a metaphorical *Weihekuss*:

> I am delighted that we talked about these things. It was a little challenging as I have never really spoken about these things in such an intimate way before. I have never met anyone who asked such interesting questions. Often, I have gotten unnecessary questions, but it seems like you know what you are talking about, what the problem is, and when you ask something, I understand what you are getting at. I was not prepared for this turn of events. It really made me happy that I could tell you some of my secrets, and that there exist crazy fanatics like us. (VSI:S2-M)

On some level, the master acknowledged that we understood each other. Thus, it seemed that I had passed the test and gotten access to the secret knowledge, through already knowing it. Regardless of her intentions, that passage encapsulated multiple entanglements for me as a researcher and potential initiate, including aspects such as positioning on the continuums of emic–etic and insider–outsider. It also seemed to highlight the master class's function as an initiation or rite of passage. Thus, my experience was in line with that of the students and with the headline of the official course description: it can be motivating and inspiring to be recognised by a master.

Philosophical discussion

Before the philosophical discussion, a summary of the results and a recapitulation of the three components from the literary narrative will follow. The results indicated that (1) the students' learning of musical interpretation is hindered owing to the master's beliefs and actions; (2) the lessons centre on the master's privileged access to secret knowledge mediated in writing; and, (3) the metaphors of gods, ghosts, and *Weihekü*sse, can be used to understand the master's storytelling and teaching. These results harmonise with the three components extracted from *Philopseudes*, as well as my experiences of apprenticeship: (1) a master hinders an eager student's learning (35; see Ogden, 2007a, p. 232); (2) the secret knowledge is mediated through writings in different forms (31; see Ogden, 2007a, p. 232); and, (3) at a decisive moment, the master suddenly breaks the master–apprentice relationship, leaves for good, irreversibly withholding the secret knowledge that the student seeks (36; see Ogden, 2007a, pp. 233, 237–241; 2006, pp. 131–133).

Hindered learning

Thinking about *Philopseudes* and the results of the study made me remember a remark that one of my earlier piano teachers made when I asked a question about something that I cannot recall: 'Since you ask, you do not deserve to know.' At the time, I thought of it as a joke, albeit a weird one. It seemed counterintuitive to imply that learning required the knowledge to be

acquired beforehand – at least outside of Plato's doctrine of *anamnesis* (see *Meno* and *Phaedo*; see also the discussion of this concept in Scott, 1987). On the other hand, an analysis that does not acknowledge the pedagogical dimension of teachers' fostering of students' question-asking would certainly be a shallow one. The Songhay sorcerer Adamu Jenitongo is reported to have said that

> [i]f you have the knowledge to ask the good question, then I shall answer you. But I will not talk to you unless you ask the correct question. (Stoller and Olkes, 1987, p. 86)

Thus, my recollection, the quote above, and the results highlight the importance of how teachers handle students' explicit or implicit requests for disclosure of valuable knowledge. This also resonates with the stance that '[k]nowledge for teaching is not the same as knowledge for some other purpose' (Stigler and Miller, 2018, p. 441). In *Philopseudes* (35), Pancrates ('all-powerful') acts jealously and does not want to share (at least one of) his secrets with Eucrates ('well-powerful') (Ogden, 2007a, p. 253). Such a non-disclosure policy is incompatible with higher education. Nonetheless, there are at least two possible forms of non-disclosure in an educational context. I view *unwillingness* to share knowledge as active non-disclosure[49] and *inability* to share knowledge as passive non-disclosure. Furthermore, I conceptualise these two forms of non-disclosure as different in degree but not in species, as both hinder students' learning.

To avoid passive non-disclosure, teachers need to make sure that students understand them.[50] However, both the students and the teacher describe the master and her teaching as being quite challenging to understand, at least partly due to her style of speech and tendency to talk while playing (L11, L14; VSI:S2-T; FU:S3).[51] Such unclear and unprecise feedback and instructions limit students' potential engagement in deliberate practice both during and after lessons (see, e.g., Tait, 1992; Ericsson, Krampe, and Tesch-Römer, 1993; Lehmann and Ericsson, 1997; Lehmann, Sloboda, and Woody, 2006, pp. 66, 186, 190–191, 198; Lehmann, Gruber, and Kopiez, 2018). Nonetheless, in discussions with me (VSI:S1-M, VSI:S2-M) the master could elaborate in more detail about her teaching, aesthetic and philosophical principles, and formulate arguments not only based on favouritism and authority, i.e., the two lowest levels in the competency model suggested by Rolle (2013, p. 46).

A broader understanding of the efficacy of magic and alchemy first requires finding out what type of spell has been cast. In *Philopseudes* (35–36), two different spell-types are superimposed: spells that animate objects without transforming them and spells that create all-purpose human-like servants (Ogden, 2007a, p. 255). If the master's magic is interpreted in the former way, her teaching does not lead to any real learning for the students as they are only temporarily animated. This could be understood as relating to some of Liszt's piano students who testified that merely being in the same room 'turned one temporarily into a better pianist', and that

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[49] This is in line with the current professional ethics of The International Brotherhood of Magicians (2018) and is a recurring theme in literature regarding magic (see, e.g., Malinowski, 1948; Stoller and Olkes, 1987; Graf, 1994, pp. 165–167; Zipes, 2017, pp. xi–82). Such a tendency is also suggested within the realm of music: 'For example, some performers – similar to magicians – try to guard certain trade secrets and do not disclose all relevant details' (Lehmann, Sloboda, and Woody, 2006, p. 62). See also Rancière's (1991 [1987], p. 21) argument on how the master 'always keeps a piece of learning – that is to say, a piece of the student's ignorance – up his sleeve.'

[50] Such understanding could be attained through both verbal and musical dialogue (see Schön, 1987, p. 165). However, regardless of the medium for the dialogue, understanding is a prerequisite for learning.

[51] Such a description also resembles the depiction of Pancrates (*Philopseudes* [34]), in itself adhering to the conventional conceptualisation of an Egyptian priest in Graeco-Latin literature (Ogden, 2004, p. 110) as highly learned and speaking the Greek students' (Eucrates and Arignotus) mother tongue with a strong accent (see also the description of teachers at Juilliard in Kogan, 1987, p. 85).

'admiration was the price of admission' (Eckhardt et al., 2001; see also Fay, 1880, p. 207; Liszt, 1905, p. 248; Walker, 1997). However, neither do the students learn anything according to the latter interpretation as they are temporarily transformed into other objects. This line of argument might function as a reminder that the evidence for assuming a causal relation between momentary high-level performance and actual learning outcome quite often is lacking (see Hultberg, 2010, pp. 9–10; see also 'The gap between recall and understanding' in Light, Cox, and Calkins, 2009, pp. 51–55). A litmus test of students' understanding could be to ask them questions such as 'Have you noticed what exactly you have been doing differently now?' (Berman, 2017, p. 222), and not interpreting answers lacking satisfactory description as agreement.

Although students may choose to participate in a master class for a multitude of viable reasons, such an educational setting in the form of a (self-contained) course within higher education requires formulated aim, contents, realisation, and forms of examination.[52] In *Philopseudes* (6), Ion is described as one who thinks he ought to be admired for being the only one who has correctly understood and can present the meaning of Plato's doctrines to an audience. Such a description resembles the titular character in Plato's dialogue Ion (c. 380–370 BC).[53] However, Plato's Ion is a professional rhapsode who thinks that he speaks 'more beautifully than anyone else about Homer', an ability supposedly based on the rhapsode's understanding of 'what is meant by the poet' (*Ion*, 530c–d).[54] Socrates discusses with Ion whether he performs on account of his skill and knowledge or by virtue of divine possession. Socrates argues that Ion speaks from inspiration and not from knowledge: Ion's thoughts are given to him without requiring his understanding. By the analogy of how a magnet can draw a succession of iron rings to itself, Socrates proposes that Homer was divinely possessed when writing. Thus, Ion – and other expert rhapsodes – are considered to be divinely possessed through Homer while reciting and talking about poetry. They then pass on the inspiration to the audience listening with divinely possessed ears. Their art is thus the result of gods working through them, not of human efforts (see also *Menon*, 99c–d). Consequently, poets, rhapsodes, magicians, and other artists lack both knowledge and mastery. In the end, Ion, forced by Socrates to choose between being viewed as a man who does wrong, or as someone divine, answers that 'It's much lovelier to be thought divine.' Thus, Socrates responds 'Then that is how we think of you, Ion, the lovelier way: it's as someone divine, and not as a master of a profession'. (*Ion*, 542b)

Mediation of secret knowledge

Concerning the mediation of knowledge, the master used the expression 'her secrets' a couple of times (VSI:S1-M, VSI:S2-M). I understand these to refer to her supposedly privileged knowledge of musical interpretation and understanding of composers' intentions (see Nettl, 1995, pp. 23–24). Such secrets were, during the lessons, both manifested in the master's decoding of scores in the form of demonstration and verbalisation, and encoded as annotations in the students' scores. Furthermore, during our dialogue, she delightedly said that I 'understand them, all her secrets' (VSI:S2-M), which could be thought of as a form of initiation. In

[52] For information about the course aim and how it has affected this study, see the section 'Theoretical framework, design of the study, and production of empirical material'.

[53] I am grateful to Daniel Ogden for making me aware that there is no evidence of the character Ion in *Philopseudes* being a rhapsode. For a discussion of the character of Ion in Lucian's work, see Ogden (2007a, pp. 25–26; 2007b, pp. 189–192).

[54] When referencing Plato's *Ion* and *Menon*, I follow the established scholarly system of Stephanus pagination. I have mainly relied on the translation found in the edition by Cooper and Hutchinson (1997).

connecting musical apprenticeship with magic and alchemy, it might be fruitful to return to de Certeau (1995, p. 57) who reminds us that

> [a]lchemy is, in fact, based on the difference between the visible and the readable. It likens esoteric signs (visible but illegible) to 'carefully hidden' knowledge. Thus it separates a not-knowing from a knowing how to read.

Reflecting on the concept of secret knowledge mediated in writing, I remember one of my former piano teachers loaning me her own private scores with her annotations for a full academic year. I thought of it as a very nice gesture and appreciated being entrusted to handle the material as it belonged to the teacher, a person that I had very high thoughts about. Also, other successful students of hers had been entrusted with handling these scores, so I felt included in the inner circle (see Kogan, 1987, p. 85; Nettl, 1995, pp. 68–72; Wagner, 2015, p. 62). However, completing my studies with her, I, in youthful negligence, neither photocopied the scores nor transferred the annotations, as I knew them by heart. Now, not remembering them anymore, I no longer explicitly possess the knowledge as encoded in the annotations. This resonates with the empirical material: the master annotated extensively in the scores, but at least a couple of students used scores borrowed from libraries, and one student, in taking up a musical work that she had not studied for a while, re-practised mistakes that had earlier been corrected by her teacher (at least in the written annotations).

Thus, I understand the master's extensive annotations in the scores as intended to function as a mediator of her knowledge (see *Philopseudes* [31]). However, the students seem not to fully value nor to understand these. Consequently, the master's annotational practice could be understood as an unsuccessful dialogue. Another perspective could be the symbolic deification of the master's knowledge, now appearing in written form at the brink of *Mount Olympus*, guarding and preserving the tradition in the form of an unpublished edition of the musical work.

Ghosts, gods, and *Weiheküsse*

In *Philopseudes* (36), Pancrates suddenly leaves for good, reminiscent of ghostly behaviour (Ogden, 2006, pp. 128–129), dissolving the master–apprentice relationship at a decisive moment containing rich learning opportunities. Besides solving the urgent crisis, the master could by adding description and joint reflection turn it into a potentially fruitful pedagogical situation (see argument by Rosenstein, 2002, p. 258), possibly including shared problem-solving (see Rogoff, 1990, p. 39) which could lead to a fusion of horizons. The master class's one-off nature could perhaps also be argued to require an even higher degree of students' understanding than recurring lessons with the same teacher. However, viewing master classes as 'unscripted, unrehearsed performances given by the student performer and master teacher' (Hanken and Long, 2012, p. 16; see also Holland, 1999; Westney, 2003, pp. 175–182) might not facilitate such an outcome.

Reflecting on the concept of disclosure of or initiation into the crucial knowledge 'by a god or a ghost' (Ogden, 2007a, p. 233; see also Malinowski, 1948; Graf, 1994), it seemed important for the master to emphasise her quasi-godlike experience both as pianist and teacher (see Lévi-Strauss, 1969 [1964], p. 18; Kogan, 1987, pp. 85–86; Kingsbury, 1988, pp. 45–46; Nettl, 1995, p. 41). She also mentioned some of her teachers as well as former students, and thus established a pianistic pedigree using what Kingsbury (1988, p. 41) called 'reciprocal prestige-lending' (see also Wagner, 2015, pp. 3, 149). Before and during the master class, it was emphasised that this was the last time that she taught at this particular place (personal conversation with the course leader; personal conversation with the master; L18; FU:S3). However, the master later decided to return the following year.

Under the influence of the master's metaphorical *Weihekuss*, watching and re-watching the six recorded lessons, I often seemed to understand the logic and the implicit argumentative support of the master's actions, for example regarding why the master wanted the trill referred to earlier to be performed in a particular way. However, during lessons, the master neither gave a historical or theoretical background nor presented argumentative support except favouritism and authority. Nonetheless, it was hard for me – both as initiate and researcher – to un-know that knowledge. For some time, it made me believe that the master had actually addressed the underlying problems, which the master did not (cf. Schön, 1987, p. 208; see also Kogan, 1987, p. 86), i.e., I was experiencing the ethnographer's classical problem of establishing too much rapport and getting blinded by being accepted as an insider, going emic, or 'native' (as it is still nowadays said, however pejoratively sounding), and thus starting to believe and act as such.[55] In their study of apprenticeship among the Songhay of Niger, Stoller and Olkes (1987, p. 229) note that ethnographers who know too much 'must swear an oath of silence' to avoid potentially severe consequences.[56]

Nevertheless, for example, the student could not articulate what the problem with her performance of the trill was. Neither did the teacher react to the fact that the trill was not performed according to traditionally accepted practice. In sum, during the master class, I found the master's teaching to be quite understandable and addressing important musical matters. However, my understanding was not from the perspective of an apprentice but more like that of an expert (I also noted in my field-notes [L1] that my perception of the master's teaching had changed during the course of nearly 20 years that had passed since my first encounter with her). Consequently, I viewed the teaching differently than the students as I, at least partly, was able to (re)generate the underlying rules that supposedly motivated the master's actions. This difference of perspective is essential, as it highlights how crucial it is that teachers address students in ways that they can comprehend, without overestimating their knowledge and pre-understanding (see Kogan, 1987, p. 86; Rancière, 1991 [1987], p. 5; Persson, 1994, p. 87; Chronister, 2005, pp. 15, 21; Pinker, 2014, p. 68). Further, for students to be able to achieve such a foundation, they need to be presented with an education that opens for such learning. Nonetheless, the master expressed the view that it was the students' talent, not the master's actions, that determined the actual learning outcome. As formulated by Kingsbury (1988, p. 60), 'the dynamics of talent entail the irony that in music education, it is the talented few who can be taught that which may in the end be unteachable.' During one VSI (S1-M), the master said that one student did not inspire her to 'save' her. Expressing her doubts about the student, the master stated that the student, within two weeks, most likely would forget what she had said and return to playing as before the lesson (VSI:S1-M).[57]

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[55] On the topic of over-rapport, see Miller, 1952. For the question of researchers' values, see Becker, 1967. For more general discussions of the problems regarding the insider–outsider issue, see Headland, Pike, and Harris, 1990; Herndon, 1993; Alvarez-Pereyre and Arom, 1993; Toy-Cronin, 2018; see also Wagner, 2015, pp. 213–231. On a Philopseudian note, the question was whether I had begun to become affected by listening to and re-telling stories as the narrator and narratee (39–40), thereby running the risk of becoming a local trying to make a living out of telling stories to tourists (4). At this moment, it might also be of interest to return to the three quotes from music education research presented in the introduction subscribing to the effectiveness of demonstration and imitation, frequently found in artistic-based master-dominant classes.

[56] On the topic of secrecy regarding rituals and magic, see, e.g., Luck, 1999, p. 165.

[57] Connecting the students' allegedly non-permanent learning, the master's supposedly chrysopoeian capacity of transmuting nothing into gold, as expressed by the teacher, and the master's ghostlike disappearing at the end of the master class, I began to think of 'The canon's yeoman's prologue and tale' from Chaucer's *The Canterbury tales* (1476). The tale contains two canons: one fleeing and one that had sold an ineffective alchemical recipe. On the topic of monetary transactions concerning the postulated effect of magic, Lucian seems to have isolated the core

Concluding reflections

In sum, I have intended to further the understanding of teaching and learning of musical interpretation in higher music education, focusing on three components from an ancient narrative concerning the learning of magic as well as my experiences of apprenticeship. From a critical hermeneutical perspective, the dialogue and its function as both the site and the method for knowledge production are central. Further, Wittgenstein (1953, § 341) states that '[s]peech with and without thought is to be compared to playing a piece of music with and without thought'. The master emphasised the importance for students to possess a solid philosophical foundation for their musical interpretations (L10, L12; VSI:S1-M, VSI:S2-M). However, there seems to be a discrepancy between her sensibilities in finding lack of clarity and conviction in the pedagogical domain compared to the musical one. This raises the question of whether the master class was a dialogical setting or primarily consisted of parallel monologues (cf. Hanken, 2008). From a hermeneutical perspective, the potential for both understanding and learning is severely diminished, unless all parties in a conversation strive towards putting something at risk. Three aspects seem to be of paramount importance here: first, to be open for change (i.e., to overcome the fear thereof [Rogers, 1961, p. 18]; see Dutt and Gadamer, 2001, p. 44; see also the argument about emancipative education by Rancière [1991 (1987), pp. 29–30]); second, to (better) understand the opponent's view and supporting argument (Mill, 1859, p. 35); and third, to refuse (blind) acceptance of appeals to authority, tradition, and prejudgments (Dutt and Gadamer, 2001, p. 44).

Students may participate in a master class for a multitude of viable reasons, including getting tuition, obtaining study structure outside the academic year, getting motivated and inspired by a charismatic master, or striving to improve their curriculum vitae. The aim of the course, that students should obtain knowledge about musical interpretation at a very high artistic level, has directed this study to focus on the more general understanding of musical interpretation instead of work-specific knowledge, inspiration, or insights that might materialise in the long run.

The results presented and discussed raise some questions to be addressed in further studies including (1) clearly defining and discussing the aim and purpose of master classes, taught by internal or external teachers, including how they could be integrated more fruitfully into the regular curriculum (see Long, et al., 2011b; Hanken and Long, 2012); (2) how teachers within higher music education can be supported to better understand the consequences of their actions for the student's (lack of) learning; and (3) analysing the practices and power relations affecting the decisions made within higher music education, at an institutional level. One suggestion is that it would be interesting to explore the metaphorical parallels between higher music education and myth and magic, following Wood (2010; 2018), exploring the relevance of the concept of *functional stupidity* (Alvesson and Spicer, 2016) and using the increased inclination to continue pursuing activities after having invested money, effort, or time, termed *sunk cost fallacy* (Arkes and Blumer, 1985), as an analytical lens. In sum, research on higher music education might be ready to initiate an enlightening re-negotiation of the competencies that an internal or external master class teacher could and should have (see, e.g., Persson, 1994; 1996; 2000, p. 34; Stigler and Miller, 2018). At this moment, I would like to emphasise that although *Philopseudes* is an old story, it is still relevant, highlighting 'human desire for social justice, autonomy, and knowledge' (Zipes, 2017, p. xii). Although such stories might not contain the solution to problems within the master–apprentice relationship, they should be of

problem in *Philopseudes* (13–15): owing to the prestige and build-up of the Hyperborean mage, people readily pay and believe his workings to be effective (see Luck, 1999, p. 141).

use to increase the consciousness thereof (see Zipes, 2017, p. 29). Thus, my sincere wish is twofold: first, that master classes, taught by internal or external teachers, as a phenomenon should be investigated more thoroughly, and, second, that research problematising this educational setting is not banned as Lucian's oeuvre was by the Roman Catholics (see Green and Karolides, 2005).

However, on a more forward-looking note, learning in the sense of permanent Damascene conversions might be unusual but not unheard of. This possibility resonates with the master's persuasive and potentially life-changing comment: 'If you play like this, you will become a new person.' (L6, L11) Extended to the realm of higher music education, expressed in the words of the teacher, reflecting on how she will change her teaching based on her reflections made during this study:

> In the future, I will at least try to make sure that what we have covered during the lessons is understood. I will use a little more of the last time of the lessons to ask questions and have the students recapitulate what we have been talking about. Make sure that they remember how we practised specific sections instead of just letting them go. I will demand much more responsibility from them to give me something back so that I understand that they have understood. At least I will try that. (FUI:T)

Consequently, I believe that research and practice in higher music education should strive for and hopefully succeed in empowering potentially humiliated apprentices – regardless of their position – into becoming more rebellious ones, preferably without any blood being spilt.[58] Thus, I suggest a collaborative re-negotiation of the master class per se and the competencies that teachers of such classes should have.

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[58] On the topic of the risk for potentially harmful outcomes in such situations, Zipes (2017, p. 29) writes: 'The rebellious apprentice's actions comprise resistance per se, not a solution. Symbolically, the apprentice as learner stands as permanent negation in a dialectic that leaves him, in most instances, no choice but to kill to save himself. In rare cases he avoids the role of killer when arbitration allows him to gain the recognition that he desires. In general full knowledge and individuation are not guaranteed, but the apprentice learns to use magic/mana to preserve himself and attain a modicum of self-consciousness, consciousness of the world, and happiness.' Moreover, regarding unnecessary tragedies, Janáček, at the request of the publisher Hudební matice (1924), added the following motto in Czech to *1. X. 1905*: 'The white marble of the steps of Brno's Besední dům / The simple labourer Frant. Pavlík falls there, stained with blood – – – He came merely to campaign for higher education – and was killed by brutal murderers' (Janáček, 2019, p. v). For a further perspective on *1. X. 1905* as a socio-political commentary, see, e.g., Tyrrell, 2006, pp. 633–634; Murphy, 2009, pp. 445–447; Kalhous, 2013, pp. 76–78.

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Abstract

Master classes, arguably the pinnacle of the master–apprentice tradition, have been common within higher education of Western classical music. Although claimed to be effective, teaching and learning of musical interpretation in this setting are not well-researched. One seven day long piano master class in the form of a self-contained university course was critically analysed from a hermeneutic perspective and philosophically discussed using three components from the ancient dialogue *Philopseudes* concerning the learning of magic as well as my experiences of apprenticeship. The empirical material consisted of observations of and field notes from 18 master class lessons; six video-stimulated interviews with two students, master class teacher, and the students' regular teacher; qualitative semi-structured follow-up interviews with two students and the students' regular teacher; and scanned versions of the students' scores. The analysis indicated that the students' learning of musical interpretation is hindered owing to the master's beliefs and actions; the lessons centre on the master's privileged access to secret knowledge mediated in writing; and, the metaphors of gods, ghosts, and *Weihekü sse*, can be used to understand the master's storytelling and teaching. I suggest re-negotiating the master class and the required competencies of teachers for such classes within higher music education.

Keywords

Higher music education; Western classical music; musical interpretation; master class; master–apprentice tradition; *Philopseudes*; magic; hermeneutics.

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