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The changing concept of aesthetic experience in music education

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ABSTRACT

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The article's goals are to contribute to the clarification of the term aesthetic experience used in the context of music education, and to discuss different interpretations of Kant in this context. As the musical aesthetic experience may be said to be at the core of music education, it should be of vital interest to music education research to clarify the term. Usage of this term in some Nordic literature confirms the impression of a strong influence by Anglo-American thinking at the expense of German ideas and discussions in the last decades. The article reveals how different understandings of the term in the Anglo-American and German fields, respectively, give rise even to contradictory statements concerning the meaning and implications of the term.
Keywords: Aesthetic experience, music education, philosophy

Introduction

The philosophy of music education can be regarded as a discursive field where contending participants take part in the ever-ongoing debate on professional and ideological issues. One of the features recurring time after time is the concept of *aesthetic experience.* The term *aesthetic* is often understood as synonymous with "beautiful" and belonging to an archaic philosophy of art (Varkøy 2010: 25. See even Pio & Varkøy 2012). This common understanding seems to have influenced the perception of the term aesthetic experience as well. The present article intends to show how this term is used by contesting agents in parts of the scholarly field of philosophy of music education. However, this is a field in which we ourselves are participating. Our own position concerning this specific topic is characterized by the opinion that the above-mentioned understanding of the term is inadequate.

The term aesthetic appears to be charged with conflicting potential of meaning, a circumstance that makes it a carrier of paradoxes, ambivalence and ambiguity. This sometimes causes tensions and misunderstandings when the term is used; however, it also has a productive impact (Fossum 2010: 6). Ambivalence and ambiguity are typical hallmarks of discourses (Jorgensen 1992: 91). Such misunderstandings and tensions do not have to be seen as something unfavourable, rather as productive elements of the power that creates and shapes knowledge, discourses and the possible conditions for social practise (Jørgensen & Phillips 1993: 23). Nevertheless, the term aesthetic appears to have significant potential for developing controversy between different discourses of philosophy of music education (see e.g. Dyndahl 2008, Dyndahl & Ellefsen 2009, Elliott 1995, Frith 1996, Knudsen 2010).

This is the background and stage for our philosophical endeavour, whose goal is to contribute to the clarification of the term aesthetic experience as used by some music educators from the Anglo-American, Nordic and German traditions. As Immanuel Kant seems to be a sort of "scapegoat" (or "Prügelknabe") in a number of discussions of the term, we will discuss interpretations of his aesthetics in this context as well. It should be of vital interest to the field to clarify this term, as musical aesthetic experience, in a certain sense, may be said to be the core of both teaching and research (Eidsaa & Kamsvåg 2004: 15ff, Fossum 2010: 31, Kjerschow 1993: 16, 108). In the current Norwegian curriculum plan, "Kunnskapsløftet", the music plan is even built upon the recognition of the musical aesthetic experience as the basis and core objective of the school subject music (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2006, Kalsnes 2010: 64, Varkøy 2010).

The usage of the term aesthetic experience among some Nordic researchers confirms the impression, in the last decades, of the strong influence by Anglo-American thought at the expense of ideas discussed in the German tradition (Varkøy 1993, Vogt 2003). Different understandings of the term in parts of the Anglo-American/Nordic and German fields, respectively, give rise even to contradictory statements concerning the meaning and implications of the term, as will be shown below. Our main intention is to discuss some fundamental different usages and understandings of the term, not to map the whole field of Anglo-American, Nordic and/or German discussions involving the term. This is why a number of Anglo-American, Nordic and German contributions to the discussion of the term will *not* be focused on in this article (see e.g.: Alperson 1991, 2010, Kaiser 1991, 1996, 1998, Määttänen 2000, 2003a, 2003b, Regelski 1998, 2005, 2010, 2011, Rolle 1999, Westerlund 2003).

Symptoms of the philosophical: clarification of terms

The fact that this article is a contribution to the field of philosophy of music education makes it difficult to fit it into traditional structures of reporting on research methods. Is it, for example, possible to talk about a certain "philosophical method"?

In the *Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* (Colwell 1992), Estelle Jorgensen makes an effort to do so. She claims the existence of certain features or conditions that indicate that philosophy is taking place, features she calls "symptoms of the philosophical". These features or criterions can be observed across style and orientation, and are listed as four actions in the following sentence:

> Philosophy clarifies its terms, exposes and evaluates underlying assumptions, relates its parts as a systemized theory that connects with other ideas and systems of thought, and addresses questions that are characteristically philosophical (Jorgensen 1992: 91).

Jorgensen's first "symptom of the philosophical", *the clarification of terms*, includes ensuring the greatest possible precision in meaning by clarifying the denotation and significance of terms used. The philosophy is vitally concerned with the meaning of words, as they are vehicles for communicating ideas. Without this clarifying work, the meanings of ideas are necessarily vague and ambiguous. Ambiguity and vagueness are common features of discourse; nevertheless, making it difficult to compare ideas and systems of thought because one is uncertain of what is being compared, Jorgensen says.

As this article's objective is to contribute to the clarification of the term aesthetic experience, it could be argued with Jorgensen that this project of clarification is based upon and makes use of philosophical methods. Our endeavour assumes that usage of the term in varied studies inadvertently leads to statements about different things. Jorgensen appears to believe that philosophy is capable of solving such problems through the clearing of terms.

The German Jürgen Vogt, however, sounds cautiously optimistic about philosophy's possibilities for clearing terms, at least when it comes to comparison of paradigms, concepts, ideas, and terms from, respectively, the German and Anglo-American traditions. In his discussion of the use of philosophy in Anglo-American music education from a German point of view, he considers whether the lack of "transatlantic communication in music education" could have to do with the numerous and significant differences between German and Anglo-American philosophies of music education. He even asks if it could be that "the paradigm(s) of the philosophy of music education in

North America are so different from those in Germany that even the most basic concepts and definitions of music education are fundamentally different" (Vogt 2003: 2).

Vogt also discusses the definitions of philosophy and philosophical inquiry from both David Elliott's and Bennett Reimer's respective philosophies of music education. He finds Reimer's definition the more careful and "harmless", even if it is not very convincing from a German point of view. For Reimer, philosophy is "not science as we have come to understand that word in the modern world but science in the sense of systematic, precise reflection about ideas, beliefs, values and meanings" (Reimer in Vogt 2003: 5). Vogt criticises the inventing of new "philosophies" in the field of music education: "Philosophy (and its branches or divisions or subdivisions) exists as an academic discipline and it is not, or should not be, the task of music education to invent some new philosophy or new branch of philosophy" (Vogt 2003: 5). Vogt himself considers, with Wayne Bowman, "*any* philosophical endeavour basically as a 'process devoted to the systematic examination of the grounds for belief and action.' Therefore, 'philosophy is a systematic, *reflective* discipline; philosophy is a *process* of exploration or inquiry (...); and philosophy takes as its objects not so much facts and essences, not so much immutable or eternal truths, as human *beliefs* and the *practices* in which they are both embedded and which tend to shape them" (Vogt 2003: 4. For further critique of Reimer's and Elliott's respective philosophical concepts, see Määttänen 2000, 2003a).

In spite of this scepticism towards the Anglo-American way of defining philosophy, - and Jorgensen's position must be said to be fairly similar to Reimer's, we choose to include Jorgensen's notion of "clarification of terms" in this article. That does not prevent us from approving and applying Vogt's and Bowman's notion of philosophy as a "process of exploration and inquiry" as well, as we actually also focus on "human beliefs and the practices in which they are both embedded and which tend to shape them".

Aesthetic experience and "the aesthetic"

A need for clarification

The term aesthetic experience is currently, in both Nordic and International music education debates, sometimes used in a way that could indicate the existence of a universal consensus of the meaning of the term. The fact is that the term appears in various contexts and with differing and even contradictory denotations and significances. This article will compare and discuss a few American/Canadian, Nordic

and German understandings and usages of the term in current philosophy of music education literature. Our discussion will primarily include texts from the decades just before and after the turn of the millennium, except for the German contributions, which will also include texts from the late 1960s. We believe it is important to initiate this type of discussion across borders of culture and language, not the least due to the tendency in the Nordic community stated above to be heavily influenced by Anglo-American literature and thinking, while at the same time we seem to be quite distanced to, and maybe even unaware of, the German tradition in this field. It must be said, though, that there are exceptions, for example, Frede V. Nielsen and Frederik Pio in Denmark are representatives who are *not* unaware of the German tradition of philosophical aesthetics. Their positions will therefore not be discussed on this occasion.

Not only does the term aesthetic experience appear to need clarification, but also the single term aesthetic itself, as indicated above. In current philosophy of music education literature, both in Anglo-American and Nordic contexts, we sometimes find these expressions used with negative connotations. Especially in literature influenced by ideas from the field of *cultural studies*, one can find the terms aesthetic and aesthetic experience solely linked to issues such as "passive listening to western classical music", to "the culture of the 'cultivated' social classes" and to the idea of "a canon of essential, great works of art". As the primary underlying source of such agendas, Immanuel Kant's aesthetics is often hinted at. (Even though Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* only to a limited extent can be referred to as *aesthetic theory*, or as *aesthetics*, we will use this expression in this article. See Vogt 2007: 59). Yet, it often seems to be the reception history of Kant, i.e., the historical interpretations of his thought, which is the problem (Varkøy 2003: 175). His thinking is, in these writings, not seen as relevant to today's music education (Dyndahl 2008: 321, Dyndahl & Ellefsen 2009: 22, Elliott 1995: 125, Knudsen 2010: 161ff).

The term "aesthetic" - the central point of contention in the Reimer-Elliott-debate?

Bennett Reimer's concept MEAE, "Music Education as Aesthetic Education", building on Charles Leonhard's usage of the term *aesthetic education* (Leonhard 1953), has been exposed to harsh critique since the 1990s. In the first edition of his book, *A Philosophy of Music Education* (1970), Reimer seemingly still uses the term aesthetic unconcerned with the massive waves the usage of the term should provoke in the time to come. His concept of MEAE, often referred to as "the aesthetic ideal" (Heneghan 2003), "the aesthetic ideology" or "the official aesthetic philosophy" (Elliott 1995),

should become something akin to a red cloth to his antagonists. To Reimer, the term aesthetic in the beginning had nothing but a positive denotation. When David Elliott in *Music Matters* (1995), is commenting on Reimer's concept, the term aesthetic at once shows negative connotations. Elliott actually turns the term aesthetic into an insult, a term of abuse, when he says:

> To perceive music *aesthetically* is, in fact, to adopt a socially embedded ideology of music and listening that owes its implausible tenets to a small group of dead, white, European, male thinkers (Elliott 1995: 193, our italicization).

Elliott omits using the term aesthetic because of its connotations. Instead of the term aesthetic experience, he chooses to use the term *musical experience*. This leads his adversary, Bennett Reimer, to do likewise, even if the concept of aesthetic experience was - and still is - at the core of his own philosophy of music education (Heneghan 2003: 345, Kerz-Welzel 2003: 47, Reimer 1970/1989/2003:x preface). In the latest, 2003-edition of his *Philosophy of Music Education: Advancing the Vision,* he, as well, has changed the term aesthetic experience to *musical experience*, which does not exactly contribute to illuminating the matter. Actually, the term aesthetic appears to be *the* central point of contention in the debate between Reimer and Elliott.

Dismissing Kantian aesthetics and the "great-works-aesthetics"

Musicking and *musicing*

Elliott criticises the term *aesthetic experience* and the term aesthetic in particular by linking these expressions to Immanuel Kant's philosophical aesthetics, which, for example, can be seen by the usage of the words "disinterested", "purposeless" and "distanced" in the following texts:

> (A)n aesthetic experience is something that supposedly arises when a perceiver focuses exclusively on the structural elements of a musical work. In the aesthetic view, a truly musical experience serves no practical purpose. An aesthetic experience is (and must be) intrinsic, immediate, disinterested, self-sufficient, and distanced. Any meanings, functions, or experiences not directly related to a work's structural patterns are deemed incidental, irrelevant, referential, or non-musical (Elliott 1995: 124).

Instead, Elliott, as already mentioned, finds an alternative in the term musical experience. Such experiences are, according to him, "multidimensional social constructions". He describes musical experiences as follows:

> In sum, musical experiences are not impractical, purposeless, disinterested, or intrinsic or the one- dimensional outcomes of perceiving aesthetic qualities. (…) (A) truly musical experience is not aesthetic in its nature or value, as conventional music education philosophy maintains (Elliott 1995: 125).

The aesthetic-philosophical position that Elliott sketches in the first quotation comes quite close to what in German is called *Werkästhetik*, which could be translated as "aesthetics of the great works of art". In the *Werkästhetik*, the listener or the subject focuses on the *works* of music, the *objects* or the *products* of musical creativity (mostly from the past), and it is assumed that the work of art is conveying an objective truth.

Elliott's own position can be seen as an antithesis of such an "aesthetics of the great works"-position, which most explicitly becomes obvious through Elliott's usage of the term *musicing* (1995). This term is also known as *musicking*, which is Christopher Small's spelling of this notion in his much-noticed book with the same title from 1998. We choose to refer to Small's term in this article, as this appears to us to be the more comprehensive and recognized concept (Fossum 2010: 58ff). Moreover, the concept of *musicking* may be traced back to a paper written by Small for a MENC-conference in 1990 (Small 1990). The primary idea of this term is to think of music as a verb, an activity, instead of a noun, a *thing* or an *object* existing independent of human beings partaking in it. Small writes:

> The fundamental nature and meaning of music lie not in objects, not in musical works at all, but in action, in what people do. (...) *To music* is to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by (...) composing, or by dancing (Small 1998: 8f).

Small goes on to mention the ticket-seller and the cleaner as possible contributors to the musical event, something that is reinforcing the democratic aspect of the idea of musicking. The wish to turn away from a focus on great works and western, classical music, and to include popular music in music education, certainly also witnesses the democratic wave that has influenced educational thinking since the late 1960s, and somewhat delayed, also music education (Ehrenforth 2005: 492ff, Fossum 2010: 72ff, Helms et al. 2005: 26ff, Vogt 2001: 12).

A couple of Nordic perspectives

Elliott is not the only one having a problem with Kant's aesthetics. In a Nordic context, Petter Dyndahl, in referring to the sociologists Simon Frith and Tia DeNora, suggests *dismissing* Kantian aesthetics in order to see music as functional, although also including aesthetic functions (Dyndahl 2008: 321). Dyndahl, who himself, in another context, emphasises his connection to the field of cultural theory (Dyndahl & Ellefsen 2009: 10), suggests seeing musical-aesthetic experiences as meaning-creating praxis rather than as "reflections of an inner nature". To him, music cannot be an autonomous object generating meaning in itself. The aesthetic experience must involve both subjective and cultural, collective identity and is, therefore, discursively constituted as a connection between music, ourselves and the socio-cultural context in which we stay. He concludes by stating that a reconstruction of the term *aesthetics* cannot be based upon Kant's *Critique of Judgment* (Dyndahl 2008: 321).

In another and later context, Dyndahl and Ellefsen make a slightly changed statement: "(…) we are advised *both to recognize and bid farewell to* Kantian aesthetics and in its place try to see all music – and musicking – as functional (…)" (2009: 22, our italicization). At first sight, this recognition of Kantian aesthetics may seem like "a logic that recognizes both/and", without "accepting a hierarchical either/or-logic" (ibid: 17), which is how Dyndahl and Ellefsen argue with Derrida against dichotomized discourses, in order to instead regard binary oppositions as "arbitrary relations (…) in a sociocultural system" (ibid: 17). Nevertheless, this recognition still ends with a farewell to Kantian aesthetics, which is quite much the same as dismissing his thought, and with it saying that there is no place for his perspective in this sociocultural system.

Jan Sverre Knudsen in turn states that the idea of the aesthetic experience belongs to the old European philosophical tradition:

> The idea of an "aesthetic experience" as a particular and specific valuable way of experiencing developed together with the idea of "art" and "the great works of art" in the 17th and 18th centuries in Europe. The idea of an aesthetic experience came into use as a philosophical tool to understand, appreciate and legitimate the experience of art works inside the 'cultivated' social classes (Knudsen 2010: 161, our translation).

Now then, can all of these statements about the term aesthetic experience, with the explicit link to "the great works of art" and to Kant, be said to be correct? The answer must be both yes and no, as we will show in the next section.

Another story about the aesthetic experience

Aesthetic experience - a symbol of a movement away from the artwork-orientated aesthetics

Moving on to contemporary Germany, one can actually find another story about the term aesthetic experience. According to Joachim Küpper and Christoph Menke in their much-noticed book *Dimensionen Ästhetischer Erfahrung* (2003), the term, which in German is called *ästhetische Erfahrung*, emerged anew in the aesthetic debates in the late 1960s, after already having been celebrated as the central term in Dewey's art philosophy in the 1930s (Dewey [1934] 1988). The term was re-introduced by Hans Robert Jauß in association with his concept *Rezeptionsästhetik* within literary theory, which can be translated into "aesthetics of reception" (Jauß 1972). The aesthetic experience now became central in a way of thinking that *turned away* from the traditional artwork-orientated aesthetics and instead focused on the processes of acquisition. Thus, the aesthetic experience became a symbol of a movement *away from* the artwork-oriented aesthetics, from the *products* of art, and towards a more contemporary, process-oriented view (Küpper & Menke 2003: 7).

This is exactly the opposite understanding of the term aesthetic experience to the understanding expressed in the quotations from Elliott, and most obviously, in Knudsen's case. Knudsen links the aesthetic experience to the artwork-oriented aesthetics alone. These examples show gaps between at least parts of the German tradition and, respectively, the Anglo-American and the Nordic fields of music education. They also show some of the ambiguities of the term aesthetic experience and the term aesthetic, which carry various connotations according to the different times and places where they are used and to the diverse discourses in which they are embedded (Fossum 2010).

Aesthetic experience – synonymous with aesthetics?

Knudsen certainly uses the term aesthetic experience synonymous with the term aesthetics, which has actually become quite common during the last decades, also in Germany, as Küpper and Menke confirm. Alongside the contemporary, process-oriented understanding of the term, the term aesthetic experience developed gradually from being a part of the field of aesthetics to being nearly conterminous with the term aesthetics. As a consequence of this development, one could have defined aesthetics as "science of aesthetic experience". Problematic with such a definition, though, was the growing doubt concerning the relationship between aesthetic experience and science, and it was questioned if one should assign aesthetic experience to *any* science at all (Küpper & Menke 2003: 7ff).

The difference between the German thinking referred to by Küpper and Menke, and the examples from American/Nordic thinking, is mainly that the latter authors seem to be unaware of the process-oriented understanding of the term, and therefore solely use it as if the understanding synonymous with aesthetics should be the only one. Furthermore, the linking between this understanding, Kant, the "aesthetics of the great works"- position and notions of "culture as property of objects", carries along some problems.

Knudsen, together with all who use the term aesthetic experience synonymous with aesthetics, presupposes that the traditional European philosophical aesthetics, as put forth by Kant, can be said to be about the aesthetic experience. Kant himself is not using this term, he is merely writing about "aesthetic judgments". The author of the introduction to the Norwegian translation of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, Kjetil Jakobsen, as well, uses the expression *aesthetic experience* in his treatment on Kant's aesthetics in the preface to Bourdieu's *Distinksjonen* (Jakobsen in Bourdieu 2002). In Kant's *Critique of Judgment* from 1790, the possibility and logical status of "judgments of taste" is investigated. To speak about aesthetic experience in Kant's case is hence a questionable practice, possibly linked to the quite common combination of Kant's ideas and concepts on the one side, and the reception history of his thought on the other. It might be legitimated through the fact that part of Kant's project is to show how the subject constitutes the work of art through his reflective attitude by the sensation of an artwork, or by *experiencing* it.

Kant: The beautiful and the sublime - property of an artwork or not?

One may say, therefore, that Kant focuses on the *subject*, the recipient of artworks, rather than on the *object,* the artwork itself, or even on *the great works of art*. His aesthetics are largely a philosophy about the possibilities and the preconditions of the subject to pass subjective universal valid aesthetic judgments on works of art or natural sensations in the categories *the beautiful* and *the sublime.* Kant states that the beautiful and the sublime *are not property* of an artwork or a natural phenomenon, but instead a consciousness of the pleasure which attends the "free play" of the imagination and the understanding. Kant argues that this "free play" must occur under the same circumstances for all human beings. Therefore, Kant speaks about "subjective universal" judgments, even if this seems to be an oxymoronic term. The aesthetic judgments are based upon *cognitive capacities* shared by all. This means that Kant's aesthetics are *not* mainly linked to *Werkästhetik*, to "aesthetics of the great works". Kant is not so much focusing on the *objects* of art as the perceiving *subject*,

the human understanding and appreciation of art (Jakobsen in Bourdieu 2002: XXXI, Kant 1790/1995, Küpper & Menke 2003: 9–12).

The Anglo-American and Nordic literature referred to in this article is based upon the assumption that the aesthetic experience is equivalent to the reception of great works. The notions of aesthetic experience and "great works" do not belong in Kant's vocabulary, as they were during his time yet to be expressed. On the other hand, it may be said that Kant's reception history has contributed to the opinion that the reflective attitude that, according to him, one needs to perceive artworks, is an attitude only the well-educated classes or a clerisy can develop. Pierre Bourdieu's work *The Distinction* is perhaps the most well known work discussing this situation (Bourdieu 2002, Varkøy 2003: 175–190).

Since Kant states that the beautiful and the sublime are *not property* of an artwork, it is appropriate to question how the opposite opinion is ascribed to him. One example is when Dyndahl and Ellefsen, by quoting the cultural theoretician John Storey, argue against "aesthetic approaches", positions linked to Kant's aesthetics, which in their opinion consider aesthetic value as a fixed property of an object of art:

> Objects do not have a value which is inside waiting to be discovered: evaluation is what happens when an object is consumed. Aesthetic approaches make a fetish of value: what derives from practices of human perception is *magically transmuted to become a fixed property of an object.* Against this, I would insist that the value of something is produced in its use (the coming together of subject and object); *it is not in the thing itself. The trouble with aesthetic approaches is that they drain the world of both the activity and the agency which goes into the making of evaluations; they inevitably reduce culture to a property of objects.* Inevitably, 'textual fetishism' produces two things: an imaginary museum of objects to be preserved, and a pedagogy which insists that people have to be trained to recognize the intrinsic values of selected objects, which invariably leads to a division being drawn between the minority who can and the majority who cannot. In this way, aesthetic value can be used as a mechanism to exclude" (Storey 2003: 105 in Dyndahl & Ellefsen 2009: 18, our italicization).

In the German context, Kant-critique is offered as well, but one does not recommend his dismissal. He still plays a role in current German thinking addressing the aesthetic experience. According to Jürgen Vogt, there has been a return to Kant's thinking from the 1970s, the end of the "great works"-era, meaning a return to the *subject* of aesthetic experience, as stated above in connection with Küpper and Menke's work (Vogt

2012: 16). Rüdiger Bübner and Hans-Robert Jauss, among others, are exponents of this return (Küpper & Menke 2003).

Herrmann-Josef Kaiser (1998, see even 1991, 1996) regards Kant's *sensus communis*-concept as a possible explanatory model for an understanding of the aesthetic experience as an inter-subjective experience (Rolle 1999: 79). In the German context, the term *ästhetische Erfahrung* is also an issue of current interest, both in music educational literature and in numerous interdisciplinary projects studying the interrelationship between the arts (Brandstätter 2008: 13, Heiss 2009, Martin 2008, Rolle 1999, Seel 2004, Soldt 2007, Zenck et al. 2006).

Concluding remarks

We find the situation concerning the use or disuse of a term such as aesthetic experience very interesting – not the least from a philosophical point of view focusing on the question of discursive power and marginalization.

The examples displayed in this article show the necessity of calling into question common usages of terms, such as linking the term aesthetic experience with Kant and other "dead, white, European, male thinkers" (Elliott 1995: 193). This article's discussion highlights the importance of being critical of what must be called our construction "Kant", that means, our own and other people's receptions and interpretations of what Kant said. One should be aware of the possible differences between Kant and "Kant", between Kant in original and Kant's reception history. One should know Kant as an important reference, even for the purpose of being able to criticize him in an appropriate way (Vogt 1998: 37). In addition, maybe we, after this perusal, will find the postulation "a reconstruction of the term 'aesthetics' cannot be based upon Kant's *Critique of Judgment*" (Dyndahl 2008: 321) would mean to throw the baby out with the bath water.

Küpper and Menke describe in their book how the art criticism of the 1960s drew upon earlier concepts in its reformulation of the aesthetics. The aesthetic experience, for example, was in the new formulated aesthetics no longer described as consumption of an aesthetic object; rather it was the way in which the individual was dealing with the aesthetic object, its mode of behaviour, that was referred to as aesthetic. This again led to the old "problem" that the individual's level of education affected the aesthetic experience. Kant's aesthetic view notably requires an attitude of "disinterestedness", and the "reflective judgments of taste" require a certain cultural education (Fossum 2010: 65, Küpper & Menke 2003: 9). What Küpper and Menke say, is that new ideas

and conceptions most often draw upon older concepts, and that these new conceptions at the same time inherit the older concepts' problems (ibid).

Jürgen Vogt (2003: 2) misses a genuine exchange or discussion between the Anglo-American and the European philosophy of music education, despite attempts to establish some sort of international community of music educators in this field. He finds it striking that, for example, Nordic and Dutch authors who deal with philosophy of music education do not discuss the German scholarly work in this field; nor do German authors generally acknowledge Anglo-American writings (There are exeptions, for example Andrea Kerz-Welzel, who has made several contributions to the understanding of the relation between the German and the Anglo-American field of music education. See Kerz-Welzel 2003, 2004, 2005, 2008a, 2008b). Estelle Jorgensen (1992) discusses how we, without clarifying the terms used in our discussions, may speak about different things. When it comes to the term aesthetic experience, it appears that this might be the case. This problem is naturally reinforced through the geographical and cultural distance between the places where the term is used. A rethinking of central terms such as aesthetics and aesthetic experience should be based upon both a deep understanding of what is left behind, as well as one should be open to new ways of understanding and new ideas.

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