

CONTEXTUALIZING PLATONISM AND DECONTEXTUALIZING ARISTOTELIANISM IN THE ONTOLOGY OF MUSIC

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This paper argues against a widespread view that links musical Platonism and Aristotelianism with opposite ways of individuating musical works. This view assumes that Platonism is bound to individuate works of music in sonicist and non-contextualist terms, while Aristotelianism is tied to instrumentalist and contextualist accounts on work-individuation. I argue that this assumption is wrong. I provide an argument that shows that the differences between musical Platonism and Aristotelianism concern the existence conditions of musical works qua types, but not their identity conditions. Assuming that the existence and individuation conditions of types are given by their associated properties, I defend that the disagreement between Platonism and Aristotelianism is about the principle of instantiation of properties, regardless if these properties are monadic (sonicism and non-contextualism) or relational (instrumentalism and contextualism).

I. INTRODUCTION

Musical Platonism and Aristotelianism are, strictly speaking, responses to the categorial question in the ontology of music. They are answers to the question of what sort of thing musical works are. Both views identify musical works with abstract objects, namely, with the category of types. A type is an abstract and generic entity that becomes instantiated when a token holds certain properties. Tokens are concrete particulars. The relation between types and tokens is assumed to be that of *exemplification*: a token is not a copy that resembles a type, but an exemplar of it where the type occurs (Dodd 2007). Having tokens is what makes types repeatable. This feature, repeatability, is usually taken to distinguish types from other kinds of abstract objects (Wetzel, 2009: xi). Traditional two-levels type/token theories in the ontology of

music identify musical works with types, and the different performances of the same musical work are said to be tokens of the same type. Musical Platonism and Aristotelianism are two ways of understanding the nature of types, and hence of musical works.

The most relevant difference between Platonic and Aristotelian views concerns the existence conditions for types: Aristotelianism holds that types have a temporal origin, while Platonism rejects this idea. This divergence has been developed in multiples ways. The most typical way to draw this contrast is to say the Platonist claims that types have independent existence apart from their tokens, whereas the Aristotelian holds that the existence of types is dependent on their first instantiation. Nonetheless, there are Aristotelian accounts that assume the ontological independence between types and tokens, locating the temporal origin of a type in its possibility of being instantiated, rather than in its first actual instantiation.

However, the differences between musical Platonism and Aristotelianism are assumed to involve issues beyond the existence conditions of types. In particular, on the one hand, there is a rooted assumption in the philosophical literature that links Platonism with sonicism (i.e. the view that musical works are individuated by colourless sound structures) and non-contextualism (i.e. the idea that the identity of musical works does not depend on any aspect of their context of composition). On the other hand, it is also broadly assumed that Aristotelianism is linked to instrumentalism (i.e. the idea that the performing means prescribed by the composer's score determine the identity of musical works) and contextualism (i.e. the view that musical works are individuated by their context of composition). Both assumptions concerning the differences between musical Platonism and Aristotelianism will be labeled here as the *received view*.

The thesis I defend in this paper is that the received view is wrong. I will argue that the differences between musical Platonism and Aristotelianism concern the existence conditions of types, and hence of musical works, but not their identity conditions. It will be shown that Platonism is compatible with instrumentalism and contextualism, whereas Aristotelianism is compatible with sonicism and non-contextualism. With this aim, the received view on Platonism and Aristotelianism will be analyzed in more detail in the following section. In section 3, an argument for the compatibility of Platonism with contextualism and instrumentalism, on the one hand, and of Aristotelianism with sonicism and non-contextualism, on the other, will be introduced. Finally, in section 4, I will respond to the objection that the argument does not apply to Jerrold Levinson's account on types.

II. MUSICAL PLATONISM AND ARISTOTELIANISM: THE RECEIVED VIEW.

In the philosophical debate, there is a moderately widespread philosophical intuition that links musical Platonism to non-contextualism and sonicism, and musical Aristotelianism to contextualism and instrumentalism. This intuition, which I call here *the received view*, has rooted motivations in the philosophical tradition. Platonism in ontology is usually taken to place abstract entities within a realm set apart from the sphere of causality governing the physical world. Accordingly, if musical works are identified with abstract objects (namely, with types), it is natural to attribute to the Platonist the idea that musical works are not caused by anything in the physical world. Consequently, it is sensible to think that musical works' identity is independent of the composers' actions, time of composition, and specific timbre of musical instruments. In turn, Aristotelianism is usually seen as a reaction against Platonism, one that pushes

abstract objects back to earth, making them immanent to the physical world. It is thus also plausible to ascribe to the Aristotelian the idea that, if musical works are abstract objects, their identity causally depends on the actions and intentions of composers, time and place of composition, and normative instructions for performing means. This is, in crude terms, the received view of musical Platonism and Aristotelianism.

Going into a more detailed analysis of the received view, the usual way of linking musical Platonism with sonicism and non-contextualism can be identified with the following line of reasoning:

- (1) Musical works (MW) are types.
- (2) Types have no temporal origin.
- (3) If (1) and (2), MW pre-exist the activity of their composers.
- (4) If MW pre-exist the activity of their composers, the identity of MW do not depend on musico-historical (contextual) properties.
- (5) Thus, Platonism entails sonicism and non-contextualism.

Premise (1) is the ontological realist statement that musical works are abstract objects, namely types, whose main motivation is the explanatory power of this ontological category to account for the repeatable nature of musical works in their performances (Dodd 2007; Kivy 2002; Wolterstorff 1980; Wollheim 1980). Premise (2) is the Platonist commitment to the existence conditions of types. The Platonist regards types as existing independently of any of their instances and as having neither temporal origin nor location.¹ The conjunction of premises (1) and (2) implies (3): musical works pre-exist the activity of their composers. According to the Platonic story, musical works are not created by their composers, but discovered by them. Crucially, (4) is the claim that establishes the link between musical Platonism and the identity conditions of musical works. According to (4), if musical works have no temporal origin, the context

of composition plays no role in fixing their identity. Since a musical work exists independently of its composer's activity, its identity does not depend upon properties emerging from the actions taken by the composer in her particular context, but just upon the relations between the sonic elements of the work's sound structure. This view also applies to instrumentation, given that the historical development of musical instruments is bound to contextual aspects. Only the artistic and aesthetic properties dependent upon the internal relations of the work's sound structure are relevant to the work's identity because the work exists before and independently of any external items to it. The conclusion that follows is that, if musical works are platonic types, they are individuated according to the theses of sonicism and non-contextualism.

Premise (4) is usually assumed by outstanding defenders of a platonic view in the ontology of music. For instance, Julian Dodd claims that the Platonist "treats musical works as sound structures pure and simple, and thus admits the bare metaphysical possibility that the *Archduke Trio* was composed earlier than in fact was, and by another composer" (Dodd 2002, 387). These words suggest that there is a strong link between a sonicist and non-contextualist view about the individuation of musical works (regarding them as "pure and simple" sound structures) and the idea that musical works have no temporal origin.² Similarly, Peter Kivy also assumes (4) when he argues that the way to decide whether "musico-historical properties of music are damaging to Platonism is to determine whether they are essential or accidental properties of works" (Kivy 1987/1993, 61). As a Platonist, he defends that such properties are not essential to works of music. But the relevant point here is that he is endorsing the following conditional: if musical works are individuated by musico-historical properties (contextual properties dependent on the actions developed by composers to indicate the works' sound structures), Platonism fails (i.e. musical works are not entities that pre-

exist the activity of their composers). This conditional is the contrapositive of (4), and hence it is logically equivalent to it. It states, in the same sense as (4), that Platonism is incompatible with musical works being individuated by musico-historical properties:

(4*) If musical works' identity depends on musico-historical (contextual) properties,
musical works do not pre-exist the activity of their composers.

Crucially, again, the assumption of (4*) is the mainstay for the received view on musical Aristotelianism. To account for musical works' repeatability, Aristotelianism also holds that musical works are types. However, in contrast to Platonism, it maintains that the types with which musical works are identified have temporal origin. Aristotelian accounts identify musical works with creatable abstract objects: for instance, with what Levinson calls initiated types (Levinson 1980, 21) or Stephen Davies labels Aristotelian universals (Davies 2003, 32, 35). It might be thought *prima facie* that this identification is grounded in an attempt to jointly accommodate the idea that musical works are repeatable and the strong intuition that musical works are brought into existence by the composers' compositional activity. However, this is not the usual practice that can be found in the ontological debate. The defenders of Aristotelianism arrive to identifying musical works with creatable abstract objects from contextualist considerations about the identity conditions of musical works. Accordingly, this identification is based on the assumption of (4*).

The motivations to assume (4*) have to do with two additional desiderata identified by Levinson to be met by any account in the ontology of music: the *fine individuation* requirement (the intuition that musical works are individuated by the reference to the composer and to the context of composition), and the *inclusion of performance means* requirement (the idea that specific means of performance or sound production are integral to musical works) (Levinson 1980; cf. Howell 2002; Davies 2003). Both requirements are taken to be better grounded than the creatability

requirement.³ They correspond to the overall intuition that many of the aesthetic properties that determine a work's identity depend on relations between the work's sound structure and items of its context of composition.⁴ Given that the prescription of instrumentation in a work's score by its composer depends on the development and availability of musical instruments at the composer's time, the composer's prescription of performing means is also a parameter that determines the identity of a musical work. Aristotelians usually find well motivated the antecedent of (4*). However, the relevant point is that they do not only assume the antecedent of (4*), but the whole conditional. This movement leads Aristotelians to assume also the contrapositive of (3): if musical works do not pre-exist the activity of their composers, either musical works are not types or types have temporal origin. In order to preserve the explanatory virtues of a type-ontology to account for musical works' repeatability, they opt to keep (1) (the thesis that musical works are types), but reject (2) (the idea that types have no temporal origin). By this way, the link between the identity conditions of musical works (entities individuated by contextual properties) and the idea that musical works are initiated types is obtained.

Strong evidence can be found of this way to assume the standard view by Aristotelian accounts. Levinson, for instance, explicitly endorses premise (4*) when he defines his position in the following terms:

My view, recall, is that a musical work is not a pure structure of sounds—a Platonic universal, as Kivy styles it—but instead a sort of universal brought down to earth: a contextually qualified, person-and-time-tethered abstract object, what I call an *initiated type* (Levinson 2011, 216).

In these words, Levinson assumes a strong link between a claim concerning individuation issues (something being 'a contextually qualified, person-and-time-tethered abstract object') and a statement belonging to the ontologico-categorical realm

(something being ‘an initiated type’). On the one hand, when we speak about a contextually qualified, person-and-time-tethered object, we speak about the set of parameters that individuates an object, which can be specified in an indicated structure. On the other hand, when we speak about initiated types, we speak about an ontological category of a certain nature and with existence conditions of a certain sort. The assumption of (4*) leads Levinson to claim that ‘all indicated structures are, perforce, initiated types’ (Levinson 1980, 21). In other words, if something is an indicated structure, it is an initiated type. Similarly, Davies (2003, 35), Saam Trivedi (2002, 81) and Robert Howell (2002, 112) also assume also (4*) on the basis that the contextual properties that individuate a musical work are not eternal, and hence, the types with which such works are identified cannot also be eternal.

Accordingly, the received view links Platonism and Aristotelianism with opposed views on work-individuation: while Platonism is tied to sonicism and non-contextualism, Aristotelianism is bound to instrumentalism and contextualism. These ties are made upon the assumption of (4) or its contrapositive (4*). In the next section, I will introduce an argument to show that the received view is wrong because (4) and (4*) are false. It will be shown that, against the received view, musical Platonism is compatible with instrumentalism and contextualism and that musical Aristotelianism is compatible with sonicism and non-contextualism. Ben Caplan and Carl Matheson have already pointed out the misleading picture drawn by the received view when they argue in the following terms:

It might seem that the question of whether a musical work can be created is intimately connected to the question of how a musical work should be individuated. In particular, Levinson argues that any view that satisfies the creatability requirement also satisfies the fine individuation requirement, according to which a musical work must be individuated in part by the musico-historical context in which it is composed. But the converse

implication does not hold: a view that satisfies the fine individuation requirement need not satisfy the creatability requirement (...). In the end, those who care most about how a musical work should be individuated and other questions in the philosophy of art need not settle the question of whether a musical work can be created (Caplan & Matheson 2004, 134).

My contention goes beyond Caplan and Matheson's point. I will not merely argue that, at least concerning the ontological category of types, "a view that satisfies the fine individuation requirement need not satisfy the creatability requirement". I will also argue that, at least concerning the category of types, a view that satisfies the creatability requirement need not satisfy the fine individuation requirement. To this extent, I will also argue that those who care most about whether musical works qua types can be created need not settle the question about how a musical work should be individuated.

III. REJECTING THE RECEIVED VIEW: CONTEXTUALIZING PLATONISM AND DECONTEXTUALIZING ARISTOTELIANISM

As noted above, the received view links Platonism and Aristotelianism (two accounts concerning the categorial question) to specific accounts on the individuation of musical works. The thesis I defend is that the differences between musical Platonism and Aristotelianism merely concern the existence conditions of types, and hence of musical works, but not their identity conditions. To this extent, this thesis opposes the received view. In support of this thesis, I provide the following argument:

- (11) A type is individuated by the condition that must be satisfied by its properly formed tokens.
- (12) This condition is a property.

- (13) This property can be a monadic aural property (non-contextualism and sonicism) or a relational property involving elements associated with context-dependent parameters (contextualism and instrumentalism).
- (14) Types inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties.
- (15) The existence conditions of properties depend on the principle of instantiation of properties.
- (16) If we reject the principle of instantiation of properties, types are eternal (Platonism), regardless of whether their associated property is a monadic or a relational one.
- (17) If we endorse the principle of instantiation of properties, types are initiated (Aristotelianism), regardless of whether their associated property is a monadic or a relational one.
- (18) Therefore, Platonism is compatible with contextualism and instrumentalism, and Aristotelianism is compatible with non-contextualism and sonicism.

In order to develop this argument, let me start considering two metaphysical distinctions. The first one is the opposition between universal and particular entities. Universals are entities that can be instantiated by other entities, while particulars cannot be, although they can instantiate universals. A second distinction is between abstract and concrete entities. An abstract entity exists outside space but it may have multiple temporal locations, while a concrete entity exists in both space and time having a specific and single spatiotemporal location. These two distinctions are not mutually exclusive. An example of this is the dispute between *universalia ante rem* and *universalia in re*. A universal *ante rem* is a universal that exists outside its instances and, if its instances are concrete objects, that universal exists outside space and time or, at least, it lacks a specific spatiotemporal location. That is, a universal *ante rem* is an abstract entity. Meanwhile, universals can also be taken to be concrete entities (Armstrong 2010, 7-16; Lewis 1986: 64-67; Rodríguez-Pereyra 2011; Swoyer & Orilia 2014). A universal *in re* is a universal that exists in its instances and, if its instances are concrete objects, the universal exists in space and time.

Types are multiply instantiable entities that are deemed to exist outside space and to may have multiple locations in time. Accordingly, types are abstract universals (Wetzel 2009, 124). A type is individuated by the condition that must be satisfied by concrete objects in order to become properly formed tokens of that type. This condition is a property associated to the type (Wolterstorff 1980, 47; Dodd 2007, 49). This property is ‘being a properly formed token of that type’, because there is no property that all and only tokens of a type have in common besides being tokens of that type (cf. Wetzel 2009, 106-112). These ideas are accounted by premises (11) and (12) of the argument. For simplicity, it will be said that if K is a type, ‘being a k ’ is the property associated with the type K that must be satisfied by the properly formed tokens of K . However, there is no constraint *prima facie* about whether this property is a monadic or a polyadic one. There is nothing in the nature of types precluding either option. This is the idea captured in premise (13).

Premise (14), the idea that types derive their existence conditions from the existence conditions of their associated property, is a consequence of accepting (11) and (12) (cf. Dodd 2007, 60). The discussion between Platonism and Aristotelianism thus hinges on the existence conditions of the associated properties of types, on which the existence conditions of types depend. For Platonism, properties exist independently of being instantiated, while Aristotelianism rejects this claim. That is, Platonism rejects the *Principle of Instantiation of Properties*, while Aristotelianism endorses it. In its more general formulation, the principle of instantiation can be formulated in the following terms:

There are no uninstantiated properties. For properties: to be is to be exemplified (Swoyer & Orilia 2014).

Read at its face value, this principle states that if a property has not yet been instantiated at a time t , it does not exist at t .⁵ The principle does not say that there are no

uninstantiable properties, but *uninstantiated* ones. Accordingly, if a property exists at t , it has been instantiated before t or at a time identical to t . It has temporal origin, the time at which it is instantiated by the first time, and this is the idea embraced by Aristotelianism and rejected by Platonism. However, Platonism and Aristotelianism are not concerned with the identity of those associated properties. A type is individuated by its associated property, and this property can be ontologically dependent on having instances or not. An independent issue is which conditions this property establishes for something to be a properly formed token of its associated type. While the discussion between Platonism and Aristotelianism belongs to the categorial question, the determination of which is the associated property that individuates a musical work qua type –that is, the condition that must be upheld by performances qua properly formed tokens of a work– is an independent discussion, one that belongs to the individuation question. Accordingly, Aristotelianism and Platonism are equally compatible with contextualism and non-contextualism, on the one hand, and with instrumentalism and sonicism, on the other. Let us examine this last point in more detail.

Platonism rejects the Principle of Instantiation for properties, positing that properties exist without being instantiated. The existence of properties does not depend on the existence of any object of the physical world. Consequently, if there are properties, they exist without temporal origin. It is intuitive to claim that an aural property such as ‘being a φ ’ (where φ is a simple sound structure) exists eternally. It makes sense to consider a sound structure to exist even though it has not been instantiated. However, this intuition does not seem to be so clear when we take into account properties such as ‘being a φ -as-indicated-by-a-in- t ’ (where a is a composer and t the time of composition) that involve contingent individuals. In the literature, these properties have been called ‘impure properties’,⁶ i.e. properties whose specification

includes the reference to another entity (Dodd 2002, 391). We might take the existence of such properties to be dependent upon the existence of the entities referred to in their specification. On this view, a property such as ‘being a son of Barack Obama’ exists only if, and when, the contingent individual Barack Obama exists. Analogously, the property ‘being a ϕ -as-indicated-by-a-in- t ’, whose specification requires the reference to a composer, would not exist until the composer involved in the specification of that property exists. This property can be expressed in relational terms as follows: ϕ being composed by a in t . Similarly, the property ‘being an ϕ -as-performed-by-a-violin’ can be specified as a relational property: ϕ being performed by a violin. The point is that the existence of both properties (typically appealed by contextualist and instrumentalist views on work-individuation) would depend on the existence of contingent individuals (composer a and the violin), entities that have temporal origin.

Nonetheless, the Platonist can hold that impure properties are also eternal ones claiming that a relational property exists beyond the existence of its relata (cf. Dodd 2002, 396). Since it makes sense to talk and think about relational properties whose relata do not yet exist, have ceased to exist or cannot exist, it also makes sense to talk about the existence of relational properties independently of the existence of their relata. For instance, consider the property ‘being the first child born in EEUU in 2025’. We are now in 2019, so this property cannot be instantiated at this moment. But from the fact that a property is not instantiated now, it does not follow that the property does not exist. Indeed, I can wish that the first child born in 2025 would be my son, we can make bets on whether the first child born in 2025 will be of European origin, we can imagine how fortunate the parents of the first child born in 2025 would feel, and so on. Since we can say and think about all these things, it is not unintuitive to claim that the property exists even though it has not been instantiated yet. The Platonist could be more radical

and claim that the existence of a property is completely independent of whether the property is instantiated, or less extremist, as Dodd (2007, 61) is, and maintain that a property exists if and only if it is metaphysically possible for it to be instantiated at some time (past, present or future). However, in both cases the Platonist holds the intuition that the property pre-exists the first of its instantiations, being an eternal existent.

Applying the Platonist view about impure properties to the musical phenomenon, the property ‘being a φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759’ is a property that pre-exists the act of indication made by Haydn in 1759, despite involving contingent individuals in its specification. Accordingly, if musical works are types and the existence conditions of types are determined by their associated properties, Haydn’s *First Symphony* pre-exists the act of indication made by Haydn in 1759. However, the identity of this symphony is not given here by an aural property, such as ‘being a φ ’, but by a relational property that involves the relation between the sound structure φ and two elements associated with the context of composition of the piece: a composer (Haydn) and a time (1759).

More generally, we can see now the compatibility between musical Platonism and contextualism. Consider the type φ -as-indicated-by- a -in- t (where a is a composer and t a time). This type is individuated by the property ‘being an exemplar of φ -as-indicated-by- c -in- t ’. If this property is eternal, and there is no reason to suppose it is not from the Platonist point of view, the type is eternal, too. However, in contrast to the property ‘being an exemplar of φ ’, ‘being an exemplar of φ -as-indicated-by- c -in- t ’ is a relational property that establishes a relation involving a sound structure (φ) and two elements, i.e. a composer (a) and a time (t), traditionally associated with context-dependent parameters. Thus, the type φ -as-indicated-by- a -in- t is an eternal type;

however, its identity is given not only by structural parameters, but also by context-dependent parameters as well, such as ‘the composer’ or ‘the time of the composition’. Therefore, musical Platonism is compatible with a contextualist account on the individuation of musical works.

For the same reason, Platonism is also compatible with instrumentalist accounts. Properties such as ‘being an exemplar of ϕ -as-performed-by-a-violin’ is also an impure property because its specification includes the reference to another entity, in this case, a violin. This property could not be instantiated until violins came to exist, back in the 17th Century. If we reject the Principle of Instantiation, this property has to be regarded as existing prior to its first instantiation. Consequently, a musical work whose composer prescribes specific instruments for performance can pre-exist the existence of such instruments. Therefore, if a type is individuated by the property ‘being an exemplar of ϕ -as-performed-by-a-violin’, and this property is an eternal one, types such as ϕ -as-performed-by-a-violin are also eternal. Consequently, Platonism is compatible with instrumentalism. We can also make this property to be conjunctive with other properties such as ‘being an exemplar of ϕ -as-indicated-by-*a*-in-*t*’. In other words, we can defend both an instrumentalist and a contextualist account regarding the individuation of musical works, claiming that a type is individuated by a property such as ‘being an exemplar of ϕ -as-indicated-by-*a*-in-*t*-and-as-performed-by-*i*’, where *i* is the name of an instrument or a set of instruments. The type associated to this property is ϕ -as-indicated-by-*a*-in-*t*-and-as-performed-by-*i*, which is equivalent to Levinsonian’s indicated structures: sound/performing-means-structure-as-indicated-by-*a*-in-*t* (Levinson 1980, 20). Accordingly, if we reject the Principle of Instantiation, this conjunctive property is eternal and, consequently, the associated type is also eternal, despite being individuated by a relational property that involves contextual features. This shows that (4), the

premise that motivates the received view about musical Platonism, is false, either in its positive or in its contrapositive form (4*). Even if musical works pre-exist the activity of their composers, their identity may depend upon items of their context of composition and musical instrumentation. We may have independent motivations to think that musical works are contextually individuated, given the role played by contextual aspects in their aesthetic content, and to think, at the same time, that they are not created but discovered. In addition, if (4*) is false, it is also false Levinson's idea that all indicated structures are perforce initiated types. It is not true that if something is an indicated structure (i.e. something individuated, not only by a sound structure, but also by reference to the composer and time of composition), then it is an initiated type (a type that has temporal origin).

In contrast, Aristotelianism holds the Principle of Instantiation of Properties. This principle can be understood as allowing properties to be located in space and time and exist only in their instances (Swoyer & Orilia 2014). This idea can be motivated by a more demanding reading of the principle, according to which a property exists at t if and only if it is instantiated at t . That reading would make properties immanent to their instances, existing at the spatiotemporal point at which their instances are located (Caplan & Matheson 2004, 127–8). Under this interpretation, types would be universals *in re*, that is, universals that are ontologically dependent upon their instances and that exist only in their instances. However, this interpretation is precluded for musical Aristotelianism for two reasons. Firstly, since universals *in re* exist *in* their instances, if the instances of a universal *in re* are spatio-temporally located entities –for example, the performances of a musical work–, the corresponding universal will not be an abstract entity, but rather a concrete one, i.e. spatio-temporally located. However, types are by definition abstract entities and cannot be identified with universals *in re*. Moreover,

Aristotelianism would lose a clear distinction between a musical work and its performances, which is crucial to explain musical works' repeatability.⁷ The second reason is that, since universals *in re* exist *only* in their instances, if there is no instance of the universal, the universal does not exist. Universals *in re* come into, and go out of, existence. If types were universals *in re*, the associated property to the type would exist only when it is instantiated. However, Aristotelianism would resist the idea that Beethoven's 5th *Symphony* exists only when it is performed and that it ceases to exist when nobody is playing it.

Consequently, musical Aristotelianism must interpret the principle of instantiation of properties in a way that is compatible with the assumption that types are universals *ante rem*, i.e. abstract universals. The Aristotelian can adopt a simpler and less committing view: once a property has been instantiated at *t*, it exists at any time after *t*.⁸ Following this view, a property needs only an initial instantiation in order to exist and, after that first instance, the property continues to exist even if it is not instantiated again. Accordingly, the properties 'being a φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759' and 'being a φ ' are not eternal from the Aristotelian viewpoint. Both properties begin to exist only when their first instantiation takes place —that is, when the first properly formed token of the type exists. The property 'being a φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759' began to exist when, for the first time, a performance reproduced a sequence of sounds indicated by Haydn (φ) in a way that reflects Haydn's conception of music and the predominant style of performing music in Haydn's context.⁹ Since types inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties, the type φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759 comes into existence by means of that performance. In contrast, in order to exist, the property 'being a φ ' only needs the sound structure φ to be performed for first time. The type φ does not require, to be properly instantiated,

being performed in a way that reflects Haydn's conception of music and the predominant style of performing music at Haydn's time. The property 'being a φ ' establishes a less demanding condition for something to be an appropriate performance of Haydn's *First Symphony*. The first instantiation of the property 'being a φ ' could have taken place either with Haydn playing his work on the piano before the official premiere, or with musicians performing φ in a Romantic style, or with a computer accurately reproducing φ . Those performances may count as a first properly formed token of the type to which the property 'being a φ ' is associated, and, since types inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties, the type φ may begin to exist by means of any of those performances.

Both properties, 'being a φ ' and 'being a φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759', can be regarded as having a temporal origin. Consequently, the types associated with those properties also have a temporal origin. They are thus Aristotelian (initiated) types. However, 'being a φ ' is an aural property that makes no reference to the context of composition, and to the composer, while 'being a φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759' is a relational property that involves a sound structure (φ) and two elements, i.e. a composer (Haydn) and a time (1759), both entrenched in the spatio-temporal realm. They establish two different conditions for something to be an appropriate performance of Haydn's *First Symphony*. The condition established by 'being a φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759' is more demanding than the one required by 'being a φ '. The first requires, not only that a performance reproduces accurately the sound structure φ , but also that this performance must be related to the style of performing music in Haydn's context. Both properties settle the individuation of Haydn's symphony qua type in a different way: in one case, the work is individuated by reference to the context of composition and to the composer according to a contextualist approach, while in the

other case the work is individuated just by its sound structure. Therefore, Aristotelianism is equally compatible with contextualist and no-contextualist accounts on the individuation of musical works. We may have motivations to preserve the intuitions that musical works are repeatable and created by the composers, and have independent formalistic motivations to think that relational properties of musical works involving aspects of their context of composition play no role in fixing their aesthetic content, and hence their identity.

Therefore, the contention that musical works are Platonic or Aristotelian types is compatible with both contextualist and non-contextualist accounts and, at this point, the individuation question does not depend upon the categorial question. The same also applies to the impact of performing means in a work's identity. The relevance of the context of composition or the performing means concerns the degree demanded by the associated property to a musical work qua type for something to be an appropriate token of that type. The degree is more demanding in the case of contextualism and instrumentalism than in the case of non-contextualism and sonicism: there are more requirements to be satisfied for a performance to be an appropriate performance of a work. To decide whether performing means or the context of composition fix the identity of works of music, we need not to consider matters regarding the existence conditions of types and the nature of their associated properties. Rather, we need to attend to matters concerning the requirements established by the property associated with the type for something to be an appropriate token of that type. And this is a matter of identifying and accommodating our practical intuitions about whether we hear in different performances the same or different works. Alternatively, to decide whether musical works qua types are created, we need not to attend to individuation issues. Rather, we have to discuss the plausibility of the principle of instantiation to account for

the creatability intuition, as well as for other related philosophical and musical intuitions.¹⁰

IV. SOME REMARKS ON LEVINSON'S ARISTOTELIANISM

A possible objection might be raised at this point. It might be argued that the argument introduced in the previous section against the received view does not apply to Levinson's account on (Aristotelian) initiated types. Aristotelian types have been characterized in the previous section as abstract entities that come to exist by means of the generation of their first instance. In the case of musical works, this first instance would be the work's first performance. However, the objection goes on, levinsonian types do not come to exist by the production of their first instance. Instead, they come to exist just at the moment in which it is *possible* for them to be instantiated. Accordingly, the objection may come in two forms. The first one is that, for Levinson's account of types, it is not true that the existence conditions of the properties associated to those types depend on the principle of instantiation. This would be to say that premise (15) of the argument is false. The second one is that levinsonian types do not inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties. This would mean that premise (14) is false. Consequently, the argument against the received view would not apply to Levinson's account of types. In the remaining of this section, I will show that this objection fails in either its two forms.

To start with the first form of the objection, let me recall the general statement of the principle of instantiation of properties. According to it, for properties, to be is to be exemplified. As noted above, Aristotelian views accept it, in its different formulations, in order to account for the Aristotelian intuition that types have temporal origin. In contrast, Platonists reject it in order to preserve the Platonic intuition that types have no temporal origin. However, Levinson's view seems to be independent of this dialectic.

He argues that types have temporal origin and, if types inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties, those properties should also have temporal origin. Nonetheless, in Levinson's case, the temporal origin of such properties is not given by the fact of those properties being exemplified. Levinson's point is that a work comes to exist by means of the act of indication of that work by its composer. Through this act, the composer specifies a set of norms for performance (usually in a score) that makes possible to instantiate the work. The type with which that work is identified has temporal origin, and its existence conditions are given by the possibility of being instantiated enabled by the composer's act of indication. Therefore, accounting for the Aristotelian intuition that musical works qua types have temporal origin would not require endorsing the principle of instantiation, and thus the differences between Platonism and Aristotelianism would not rest on that point.

A straightforward answer to this form of the objection is that the existence conditions of the properties associated to types in Levinson's account depend on a variant of the principle of instantiation. This new formulation of the principle may be regarded as inspired by David M. Armstrong's version of the principle of instantiation. According to Armstrong, a property exists if and only if it is instantiated somewhen in the actual world (Armstrong 2010, 15; 1989, 75–6). More precisely, a property exists at t if and only if it is instantiated at t^* in the actual world, being t^* a time before, identical or after t . Two important remarks are to be made about this formulation of the principle. First, it accounts for the Aristotelian intuition that properties have temporal origin. Second, the principle does not require that a property has already been instantiated to exist. The existence of a property may be prior to any of its instantiations. These two features are satisfied by a reformulation of the principle of instantiation that applies to Levinson's view. This formulation would run as follows: a property P exists at t if and

only if it is possible for P to be instantiated in the actual world at t^* , being t^* a time before or identical to t (cf. Dodd 2007, 64). Accordingly, a property comes to exist just at the moment in which it is possible to instantiate it in the actual world. Its associated type, in turn, comes to exist just at that moment, when it is possible to produce something that satisfies the condition established by such property. In the case of a musical work, this moment is the time at which its composer finishes her act of indication of that work. Consequently, the existence conditions of the properties associated to levinsonian types depend on endorsing this version of the principle of instantiation. If that is the case, premise (15) is true, and thus the argument of section III also applies to Levinson's account.

The objector, nonetheless, might resist calling this a principle of *instantiation*. The reason is that, in contrast to Armstrong's principle and the other versions of the principle of instantiation, it does not require the generation of any instance for a property to exist. In other words, this formulation allows the existence of uninstantiated properties and, if this is the case, we should not truly call it a principle of *instantiation*. In this scenario, what I propose is a reformulation of premise (15) in the following terms:

(15*) The existence conditions of properties depend on the principle of actual initiation of properties.

The *principle of actual initiation of properties* can be formulated as follows:

For properties, to be is to be initiated in the actual world.

This principle is more comprehensive than the general formulation of the principle of instantiation. It allows properties to be initiated in two forms: either by having instances in the actual world (as demanded by any version of the principle of instantiation), or by means of providing the suitable conditions for their instantiation in the actual world¹¹ (as demanded by the principle introduced in the previous paragraph

that seems to be endorsed by Levinson). This modification would also require modifying (16) and (17) in the following terms:

(16*) If we reject the principle of actual initiation of properties, types are eternal (Platonism), regardless of whether their associated property is a monadic or a relational one.

(17*) If we endorse the principle of actual initiation of properties, types are initiated (Aristotelianism), regardless of whether their associated property is a monadic or a relational one.

Nonetheless, the conclusion of the argument would be the same as express in (18), namely, that Platonism is compatible with contextualism and instrumentalism and that Aristotelianism is compatible with non-contextualism and sonicism. The only difference between contextualist/instrumentalist views and non-contextualist/sonicist ones is that the former state that the condition that something must satisfy to be a properly formed token of a type is more demanding, including relational properties that involve contextual parameters. However, this debate is independent of the debate about whether the properties involved in the condition, and hence the type, are eternal or initiated.

Let us attend now to the second form of the objection. This form of the objection claims that premise (14) is not true, namely, that types do not inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties. Accordingly, the existence conditions of a levinsonian type are given in terms of possibility of instantiation, rather than in terms of the existence of the property associated to the type. The possibility of instantiation of a levinsonian type is given by the act of indication made by the composer. This fact, the objection goes on, would constitute for Levinson a reason to include the reference to the composer and time of composition as constitutive elements of a musical work, and this is why levinsonian types are bound to contextualism and instrumentalism.

This form of the objection may be complicated if we consider Robert Howell's remarks on Levinson's approach. Howell distinguishes between properties, patterns and types (Howell, 2002: 115-116). Properties are predicative features of objects. Patterns are specified by properties. They are arrangements of parts or features possessed by an object. A pattern is individuated by the property that specifies it and thus, according to Howell, the pattern exists if the property that individuates the pattern exists. In the musical case, patterns are identified with sound structures. However, Howell's point is that although types (musical works) involve patterns, their existence requires more than the existence of the property that individuates the pattern. Musical works are cultural types, and they only exist if there are cultural practices that allow their instantiation. First, only through the indication of a pattern by the composer within a specific community the pattern becomes a type. Second, by means of the act of indicating the *5th Symphony*, 'Beethoven sets up a specific practice of producing and recognizing certain concrete instances of the *S* pattern' corresponding to the sound structure of the *5th Symphony* (Howell 2002, 121). According to Levinson, what a composer makes in indicating a sound structure is not merely selecting some notes and drawing our attention to them. He also is establishing a rule for the correct performances of a piece (Levinson 2012, 54). The act of indication makes normative a previously existing pattern, and the result of such indication is the coming into existence of a new entity, namely, an initiated type. If this is true, initiated (cultural) types do not inherit their existence conditions from the properties associated to the patterns. Additionally, the act of indication generates this way a strong link between the composer, the cultural community in which she makes the indication and the work, which makes the reference to her and to the time of composition items that fix the work's identity. According to Howell, 'various properties of the *Fifth Symphony* (...) essentially involve Beethoven

and' his act of indication, in the sense that 'we regard' such properties 'as owing to the causal effects' of Beethoven and his act (Howell 2002, 122–3). Accordingly, musical works qua initiated types must be contextually and instrumentally individuated.

However, this second form of objection is also not harmful to the argument presented in section III. The way in which Howell introduces his view assumes premise (11), namely, that a type is individuated by the condition that must be satisfied by its properly formed tokens. In addition, he says nothing against premise (12), namely, that this condition is a property. Since premise (14) is a consequence of accepting (11) and (12), Howell is not really denying that premise. Indeed, the way in which he defends his position is compatible with the truth of premise (14). The reason he gives to distinguish a pattern from a type is that the type has a property that the pattern lacks: 'The property of functioning, for the community, to carry the meaning, formal qualities, or sorts of expression at issue' (Howell 2002, 118). And he explains: 'When, through the coming into existence of a community practice, a pattern takes on the property of functioning to carry such semantic, formal, and expressive qualities, the pattern becomes a type' (Howell 2002, 119). Both, the pattern and, in Howell terms, the type, are repeatable abstract entities. So, what is the real difference between them? It is that the type has a property that the pattern lacks. The difference between these two repeatable abstract entities (the pattern and the cultural type) is thus that they establish different conditions for something to be a properly formed token of them. Let us suppose that φ is the pattern of Beethoven *3rd Symphony*, and that this pattern became a cultural type when indicated by Beethoven because it gained the property of functioning to express a hero's character in the community c . Crucially, the associated property to φ is 'being a φ ', while the associated property to the cultural type is 'being a φ used to express a hero's character in the community c '.¹² These two properties establish different conditions for

something to be a properly formed token of the pattern, on the one hand, and of the cultural type, on the other. But, being this right, there is nothing precluding here that both the pattern and the type inherit their existence conditions from their associated properties. That is, there are no reasons to deny premise (14). And given this, the existence conditions of such properties would depend on the whether or not we endorse the principle of instantiation (or the more comprehensive principle of actual initiation). If we do not endorse none of both principles, then the property ‘being a ϕ used to express a hero’s character in the community c ’, and hence its associated cultural type, would be eternal. Therefore, the argument against the received view introduced in section III is also able to overcome this second form of the objection.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The target of this paper was a widespread view that links Platonism and Aristotelianism with opposed views about the individuation of musical works: the former with sonicism and non-contextualism, and the latter with instrumentalism and contextualism. This account, introduced in section II as ‘the received view’, has been rejected here on the basis of the argument presented in section III. This argument shows that the differences between musical Platonism and Aristotelianism merely concern the existence conditions of musical works qua types, but not their identity conditions. Accordingly, Platonism and Aristotelianism disagree about the endorsement of the Principle of Instantiation of Properties, but not necessarily about the identity conditions for types. To this extent, Platonic and Aristotelian types are compatible with different views about the individuation of musical works –contextualism, non-contextualism, sonicism and instrumentalism. The relevance of the context of composition or the performing means only concerns the degree demanded by the associated property to a

musical work qua type for something to be an appropriate token of that type. The reconstruction of the Aristotelian view of types provided in section III might not satisfy the defenders of Levinson's view on initiated types. In particular, it has been considered the objection that premises (14) and (15) of the argument are not true for levinsonian types. However, it has been shown that the objection fails and that the argument against the received view also applies to Levinson's account on types. Consequently, the conclusion of the argument seems to be right, namely, Platonism is compatible with contextualism and instrumentalism, and Aristotelianism is compatible with non-contextualism and sonicism. To this extent, the question about the creatability of musical works qua types and the question about what are the identity conditions of musical works seem to be independent.

This conclusion, achieved attending to traditional two-level type/token theories in the ontology of music, has relevant consequences for more sophisticated accounts, as the recently proposed hypothesis of nested types. The hypothesis of nested types is a multiple-level type/token theory that identifies musical works with higher-order types that are instantiable in lower-order types –a work's versions–, which in turn are instantiable in musical performances (Puy 2019). Since a work's versions usually exhibit different sound structures, can be made by different composers at different times and may exhibit different instrumentations, it is plausible to think that the identity conditions of the musical work versioned are different from that of its versions. It makes sense to think that musical works (higher-order types) are individuated in sonicist and non-contextualist terms, while their versions (lower-order types) are individuated by reference to their composer, time of composition and particular instrumentation. This situation would not constitute a problem for the hypothesis of nested types if the conclusion of this paper is right, since the category of types would be compatible with

sonicist and instrumentalist positions, as well as with contextualist and non-contextualist ones. The types with which works, on the one hand, and versions, on the other, are identified would not be different sorts of types having different existence conditions. The only difference would be that the condition for something to be a properly formed performance of a work's version would be more demanding than the condition for something to be a properly formed performance of the work versioned, without this entailing that the version is created and that the work is eternal. The question of whether both works and versions are created comes apart and concerns the endorsement of the principle of instantiation of properties.¹³

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¹ The traditional story regards types as timeless entities, i.e. as entities existing outside time. However, Dodd’s account of the lack of temporal origin of types is that they are eternal, i.e. that they exist at all times (Dodd, 2007: 58).¹ Both views are compatible with (2).

² Nevertheless, this assumption seems to be removed in Dodd’s more recent papers (Dodd 2007), where he derives his sonicist position –which holds that work-identity conditions consist merely in acoustic indistinguishability– from an independent principle; namely, from what he calls ‘moderated aesthetic empiricism’, the thesis that ‘a work’s aesthetic properties supervene on its acoustic properties and its category’ (Dodd, 2007: 211).

³ Concerning this point, Levinson acknowledges that “the creatability requirement is perhaps the least firmly grounded of the three (the others being *fine individuation* and *inclusion of performing means*)” (Levinson 2011, 216–217).

⁴ Aristotelians typically illustrate the strong entrenchment of this intuition by means of facing us with scenarios in which different composers, isolated between them and belonging to different musical contexts, indicate the same sound structure. Aristotelians highlight that we usually conclude that both composers have indicated different works on the basis of aesthetic differences implied by their different contexts of composition. For instance, if a composer today, Damitz, ignorant about all facts concerning Stamitz, indicates a sound structure identical to one of Stamitz’s symphonies, he will be said to have composed a different work because it has a different aesthetic content: given their contextual emplacement, Stamitz’ symphony is regarded as exciting, while Damitz one, after dodecaphonism and serialism, would be regarded as funny or silly (Levinson 1980, 12; 2011, 224-5).

⁵ Of course, there are more ‘liberal’ interpretations of this principle, as the one endorsed by David M. Armstrong, according to which a property exists if it has been ever (now, past or future) instantiated (Armstrong 2010, 15; 1989, 75–6). There are also more restrictive ones, as the one pointed out by Caplan and Matheson, according to which a property exists at *t* if and only if it is instantiated at *t* (Caplan & Matheson 2004, 128). These different readings will be discussed below.

⁶ Of course, a metaphysician might deny the existence of impure properties. However, this would be a problem, not for the argument I am presenting here, but for contextualism. Impure properties are non-aesthetic ones. They have been otherwise called contextual properties, and defined as relations ‘of the object to the artistic context in which it occurs’ (Levinson 2011, 135). Without the appeal to impure properties, the contextualist will find difficulties to explain the supervenience or grounding of a work’s aesthetic properties. However, the goal of this paper is not to examine the plausibility of the contextualist account.

⁷ As Marcus Rossberg has noted, under this approach, ‘musical works would be nothing over and above their concrete performances’ (Rossberg 2012, 65). One of the costs of this view is that we would lose the duality between work and performance in a relevant sense for the ontology of music. The work *qua* type *in re* would be a part of any performance of it that ‘occupies the whole spatiotemporal region’ that the performance itself occupies (cf. Lewis 1986, 64). But, first, the parthood relation does not explain in an adequate way the duality work/performance of our appreciative practices: we have two objects of aesthetic appreciation that can be appreciated isolated one from the other, as well as appreciated for the way a work (one object) occurs in one of its performances (other object). Secondly, and relatedly, the sound, tempo, intonation and expressive character of, say, Beethoven 5th *Symphony* do not overlap with the sound, tempo, intonation and expressive character of any of its particular performances. This idea of overlapping is implausible in the musical case, even for those who firmly defend a strong position about historical authenticity, for Beethoven 5th *Symphony* admits to be repeated in performances that differ in sound, tempo, intonation and expressive character. This makes a clear contrast with the plausibility of the universal of charge overlapping with charged particles.

⁸ The plausibility of this interpretation of the principle of instantiation lies in four aspects. The first is to avoid the undesirable consequences for the explanatory power of universals under an immanentist view of properties, as the ones exemplified in the previous paragraph concerning the musical case. The second is to retain, at the same time, the motivations of a minimalist view on properties: establishing some constraints on the existence conditions of properties to keep them sparse, in contrast to maximalist approaches, which put no constraints in this respect, taking properties to be abundant (cf Swoyer & Orilia 2014). The third is that the principle of instantiation understood this way is strong enough to exclude uninstantiated and uninstantiable properties, keeping an empiricist spirit: our explanations can only appeal to properties that have already been instantiated. And fourth, this principle accounts for the folk intuition that a musical work begins to exist once it has been premiered, i.e., once it has been put into real sounds.

⁹ Alternatively, we could contend that the existence of the work's score is a sufficient condition for the existence of the work. For a competent musician, the musical work is manifested in the score when he reads it. Accordingly, the specification of the sound structure φ must count as the first instance of the type's associated property. In the case of type φ , it would be enough for the instantiation of its associated property that the sound structure φ is specified at any time and for any composer. In the case of the type φ -as-indicated-by-Haydn-in-1759, it is also necessary for Haydn to have specified the sound structure in 1759. However, our argument also works under this view. Moreover, if the score is not an instance of the musical work and the musical works begin to exist with the score, then Musical Aristotelianism would face a problem, since the existence of the work would precede the existence of its first instance. Therefore, Musical Aristotelianism would not be Aristotelian *in sensu stricto*, but a kind of ersatz Platonism.

¹⁰ See, for instance, the motivations pointed out in endnotes 8 and 9 to endorse a particular view of the principle of instantiation. Additionally, it has been argued, for instance, that understanding musical works qua types as eternal existents is in a better position than understanding them as initiated types to accommodate the intuition that musical works are modally flexible entities (Puy 2018).

¹¹ Dodd (2007, 70–1) seems to be right when he argues that this would be to confuse instantiation conditions of properties (or the conditions for tokening a type) with existence conditions for properties. However, my goal here is not to ascertain this point. It is rather that to show that, even if we assume Levinson's account on the existence conditions of initiated types, the argument against the received view applies to it.

¹² See Dodd (2007, 79) for similar considerations on this point.

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